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Diachronic Semantic and Morphological Analysis of Abstract Noun Doublets of Norman-French and Anglo-Saxon Origin

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to show how Norman-French influenced the modern English language with an emphasis on abstract nouns. Old English spoken by Angles, Saxons and Jutes provided roots for only about a half of the commonly words used in the modern English language. Apart from all the other languages like Norse, Latin, Dutch, Greek, Arabic, Hindi (from India), Spanish and Native American languages that have also contributed to Modern English it was Norman-French that changed it completely. Beginning with the Norman invasion in 1066, Norman-French or Anglo-Norman, which was a French dialect that had considerable Germanic roots in addition to the basic Latin roots, caused metamorphosis from Old English to Middle English. Due to the fact that Norman-French was spoken by the aristocracy that tended to express themselves in an exalted manner, there are many abstract nouns of Norman-French origin that have survived and become a part of Modern English. However, those words have not completely replaced the Old English equivalents, they have rather existed simultaneously. This paper will provide a semantic and morphological analysis how those noun doublets have changed and developed through the history. Although in the paper not all the existing doublets

are analysed, but only 10 pairs of them, and although some of them cannot be thoroughly analysed due to a lack of adequate sources, it will be possible to draw certain conclusions and realize some tendencies.

Keywords: Abstract nouns, Middle English, Modern English, Morphological analysis, Norman-French dialect, Old English, Semantic analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 Short History of the English Language

English is a West Germanic language and, like languages from Slavic, Romance and some other language branches, belongs to the Indo-European family of languages. With respect to both native and non-native speakers, it is probably the most widely spoken language in the world, although, depending on a criterion, some rank it second, next to the Chinese language. This criterion is mostly derived from the fact whether or not distinctions in the latter are classified as "languages" or "dialects". The estimates suggest that there are about 375 million native English speakers and at least 470 million people using English as a second language, though certain recent researches indicate that the total of English speakers in the world may shoot up to a remarkable figure of 1.27 billion. English is the dominant language in various fields of human activity such as science, aviation, computing, diplomacy and tourism. It holds the status of the official language in 53 countries around the world, not counting the United Nations, European Union and similar international organizations, and is used by the majority population in many other countries where it has no official status (Crystal and Potter, 2021). English has become the unofficial international language of the world since it regulates over a half of all business deals and guides most activities in the above fields of human dealings. Moreover, English plays an important role in language attrition and has a prevalent part in the cultural, political or economic life in more than thirty countries.

Indo-European and Germanic Influences

English is a member of the Indo-European family of languages. This widespread family involves most of the European languages spoken today. These are the major branches thereof:

- Latin and the modern Romance languages;
- The Germanic languages;
- The Indo-Iranian languages, including Hindi and Sanskrit;
- The Slavic languages;
- The Baltic languages of Latvian and Lithuanian (but not Estonian);
- The Celtic languages; and
- Greek.

The influence of the primal Indo-European language, called proto-Indo-European, is still present today despite of a lack of written records. The word for *father*, for example, is *vater* in

German, *pater* in Latin, and *pitr* in Sanskrit (Wilton, 2001). These words are all cognates, similar words in different languages that share the same root. Among these branches of the Indo-European family, one can surely single out the two most relevant branches for the purposes of studying the development of English. These are, of course, the Germanic and the Romance branch (the latter is called that way because the Romance languages originate from the language of ancient Rome). As mentioned above, English belongs to the Germanic group of languages. This group developed as a common language in the Elbe river region about 3,000 years ago. At some time around the second century BC, this Common Germanic language diversified into three distinct sub-groups:

- East Germanic was practised by people who migrated back to south-eastern Europe. East Germanic languages became extinct a long time ago and the only East Germanic language surviving in scripts is Gothic.
- North Germanic transformed into the modern Scandinavian languages of Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, and Icelandic.
- West Germanic is the ancestor of modern German, Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, and English.

Old English (500-1100 AD)

West Germanic tribes from Jutland and southern Denmark: the Angles (the name Angles can be traced back to the tribe's land of origin Engle while their language was called Englisc, resemblance of which with today's language requires no further explanation), Saxons and Jutes, started to inhabit the British Isles in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. They were able to understand each other and used a language similar to modern Frisian - the language of the north-eastern region of the Netherlands - this language is the prominent Old English. Particular tribes went to the Brittany Coast of France where nowadays a fair number of their descendants still speak the Celtic Language of Breton. These invaders relegated the original, Celtic-speaking inhabitants from what is now England into Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and Ireland. What they have left behind are a few Celtic words. These Celtic languages appear today in Gaelic languages of Scotland and Ireland and in Welsh. Celtic words have also been preserved but mainly in place and river names (Devon, Dover, Kent, Trent, Severn, Avon, Thames). Cornish is, sadly, a dead language now. The historical influence of this language on the British ground can be best experienced in place names and their derivations. Old English dispersed into four different dialects, Northumbrian in the north of England, Mercian in the Midlands, West Saxon in the south and west, and Kentish in the Southeast. During the 7th and 8th century, Northumbria's culture and language established its dominancy over other British regions. The Viking invasions of the 9th century shook this domination. The Vikings introduced many North Germanic words into the language and the north of England was most exposed to this influence. For instance, the word *dream* had meant 'joy' until the Vikings changed its meaning into the current meaning thereof. This word was adapted to the language from the Scandinavian cognate *draumr*. The similar thing happened to *skirt* which has kept existing with its native English cognate *shirt* (Wilton, 2001; Stockwell and Minkova, 2009). Moreover, the Vikings supplemented Old English with many Norse words: *sky, egg, cake, skin,*

leg, window (wind eye), husband, fellow, skill, anger, flat, odd, ugly, get, give, take, raise, call, die, they, their, them (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009). The development of the English language has revealed that many pairs of English and Norse have been preserved to give us two words with the same or slightly differing meanings (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009).

Norse	**English**
Anger	wrath
Nay	no
Fro	from
Raise	rear
Ill	sick
Bask	bathe
skill	craft
skin	hide
dike	ditch
skirt	shirt
scatter	shatter
skip	shift

By the 10th century, the West Saxon dialect had prevailed over other dialects and become the official language of Britain. Written Old English mainly refers to this period. It was recorded in an alphabet called Runic, the origins of which are to be found in Scandinavian languages. The Latin alphabet came to Britain via Ireland, mostly with Christian missionaries. The Old English period finished with the end of the 11th century. There are various speculations regarding this date, still it has been chosen because it followed the most important event in the development of the English language, the Norman Conquest.

The Norman Conquest and Middle English (1100-1500)

William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, occupied and conquered England and the Anglo-Saxons in 1066. The newly established nobility used to speak a dialect of Old French known as Anglo-Norman. The Normans were also of Germanic stock ("Norman" comes from "Norseman") and Norman-French was a French dialect with considerable Germanic features opposite to its Latin roots. Prior to the Norman conquest, Latin had not had any major effect on the English language. It arrived on the British soil with the Roman legions, but it did not root within the common people. The conversion of Britain to Christianity in the 7th century gave some space to certain Latin words too (Latin donated English with words like *street, kitchen, kettle, cup, cheese, wine, angel, bishop, martyr, candle* and ecclesiastical terms such as *priest, vicar* and *mass*). Unlike the two previous attempts, this period was characterized by a wholesale infusion of Romance (Norman-French) words (Wilton, 2001). One historical event played an important role in the development of the English language. It was King John's surrender of the province of Normandy to the King of France. The acquisition resulted in the tendency of Norman nobles to gradually lose links with their French cousins. England became

the centre of their interest rather than their manors in France, which implicitly made them accept English as their native tongue. About 150 years later, the Black Death (1349-50) devastated the British Isles killing almost one third of the English population, which also caused changes in the native tongue structure, but a growing importance of craftsmen and merchants brought to the general preference of English over Norman-French. The combination of the two languages appears to be known as Middle English. The year 1362 represents the end of the linguistic division between the nobility and the commoners. In that year, the Statute of Pleading was adopted, which made English the official language, i.e. it became the language of the courts and the Parliament. The Middle English period lasted until the year 1500. Around that year, its gradual replacement with Modern English began.

Early Modern English (1500-1800)

The next wave of linguistic innovation in English was closely related to the Renaissance. Latin and Greek words were mostly used in scientific and literary conversations and soon afterwards in language as well. These borrowings were purposely imported into the language. Despite particular attempts to protect the language from the new vocabulary, most of them have been preserved in English until the present day. One of the interesting language-related things from the Early Modern English period is the Shakespeare's style, which is often incomprehensible to common readers, although he wrote in Modern English. Many familiar words and phrases were invented by Shakespeare, some 2,000 words and countless catch-phrases are his. "One fell swoop", "vanish into thin air" and "flesh and blood" are some examples of Shakespeare's phrases while *critical, leapfrog, majestic, dwindle* and *pedant* are examples of his coins (Wilton, 2001). Two other major factors reflect the crucial distinction between Middle and Modern English. The first was the Great Vowel Shift. The shift refers to a change in pronunciation that began around 1400. The Modern English pronunciation sounds more familiar to the contemporary native speakers than the Middle English pronunciation does. In Modern English, long vowel sounds began to be made higher in the mouth and the high vowels /i:/ and /u:/ were diphthongized. The letter "e" at the end of words became silent (Middle English ē, as in sweete 'sweet,' had already acquired the value [i] that it currently has – Algeo, 2010). Chaucer's *Lyf* (pronounced "leef") became the modern *life*. In Middle English, *name* was pronounced "nam-a," *five* was pronounced "feef," and *down* was pronounced "doon". Another change occurred when the "th" of some verb forms became *s* (*loveth, loves: hath, has*) (Crystal, 2004). However, these changes had no effect on spelling since it was fixed and standardized by the time of Chaucer. As far as linguistics is concerned, the shift was rather sudden, the major changes occurring within a century. The change in vowel shift has not come to a standstill, however, vowel sounds are still shortening although the change has become considerably more gradual. The last major factor in the development of Modern English was the invention and adoption of the printing press. William Caxton brought the printing press to England in 1476. It was of one of the main triggers of language standardization. The dialect of London, due to the seat of most publishing houses, became the standard. Spelling and grammar were not flexible anymore, so this situation facilitated the appearance of the first English dictionary. This dictionary was published by Samuel Johnson in 1604.

Late Modern English (1800-Present)

The main distinction between Early and Late Modern English is about vocabulary. Pronunciation, grammar and spelling remained mostly the same, but Late Modern English has many more words. These words came from two historical factors. The first one is the Industrial Revolution and the accompanying rise of the technological society. The new situation required new words for things and ideas that had not previously existed. The second one was the British Empire when Britain ruled one quarter of the world and thus English overtook numerous foreign words from the languages spoken in English colonies. The industrial and scientific revolutions led to creation of neologisms to describe the 19th century inventions and discoveries. For this, English took advantage of Latin and Greek. However, English did not directly borrow new vocabulary from the two classical languages. Instead, words like *oxygen*, *protein*, *nuclear* and *vaccine* had to be derived from Latin and Greek roots. Such neologisms were not solely tailored from classical roots, but English roots also did their share in creation of compounds such as *horsepower*, *airplane*, and *typewriter* instead (Wilton, 2001). Neologisms are still being introduced to the language as the technological advancement continues. This is pretty obvious in the field of electronics and computers. *Byte*, *cyber-*, *bios, hard-drive* and *microchip* are good examples thereof. The upheaval of the British Empire and the development of worldwide trade contributed not only to dissemination of revived English vocabulary but also to acquisition of words into English. Due to Britain's long occupation of India, Hindi and the other languages of the Indian subcontinent gave us many words such as *bangle, shampoo, pyjamas*, *jungle* (Elbouhssini, 2015). Virtually every language on Earth has added something from its corpus to English, from Finnish (*sauna*) and Japanese (*tycoon*) to the vast contributions of French and Latin. Borrowed words refer to names of animals (*giraffe, tiger, zebra*), clothing (*pyjama, turban, shawl*), food (*spinach, chocolate, orange*), scientific and mathematical terms (*algebra, geography, species*), drinks (*tea, coffee, cider*), religious terms (*Jesus, Islam, nirvana*), sports (*checkmate, golf, billiards*), vehicles (*chariot, car, coach*), music and art (*piano, theatre, easel*), weapons (*pistol, trigger, rifle*), political and military terms (*commando, admiral, parliament*), and astronomical names (*Saturn, Leo, Uranus*) (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009). Nevertheless, some languages have provided English with more words than others have. These are Latin, Greek, French, German, Arabic, Hindi (from India), Italian, Malay, Dutch, Farsi (from Iran and Afghanistan), Nahuatl (the Aztec language), Sanskrit (from ancient India), Yiddish, Portuguese, Spanish, Tupi (from South America) and Ewe (from Africa) as well as native American languages. The list of borrowed words is never-ending.

The British Empire spread its influence mostly on the sea, so it is no wonder that various nautical terms approached the English language. Words and phrases like *three sheets to the wind* and *scuttlebutt* owe their origins to ship crews (Wilton, 2001). Eventually, in the 20th century, the world suffered two world wars and military expressions flooded the language, particularly during the second half thereof. *Blockbuster, nose dive, camouflage, radar, roadblock, spearhead* and *landing strip* are just some examples thereof (Wilton, 2001). The vocabulary of English is the largest of any language, which is supported by a Global Language Monitor announcement claiming that the English language crossed the 1,000,000-word threshold on June in 2010.

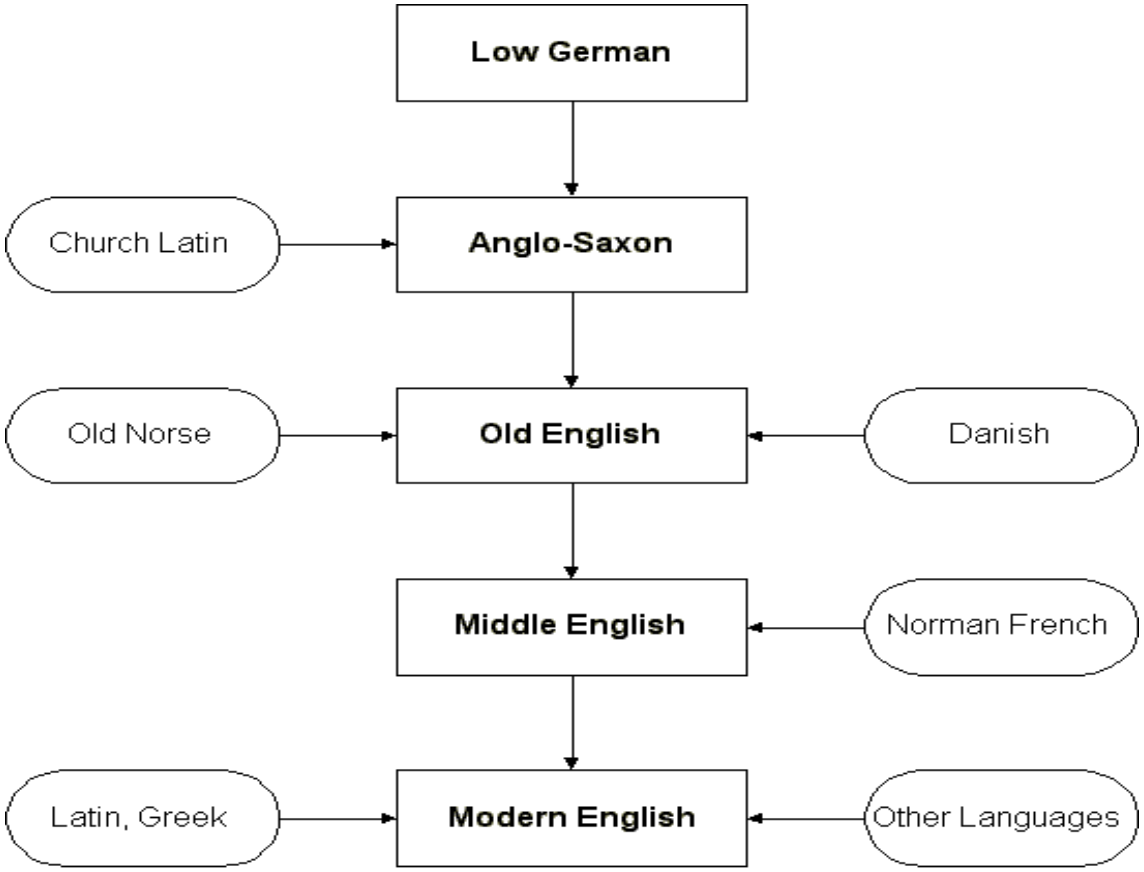

Figure 1. The development of the English language

American English

The beginnings of the American dialect can be traced back to the days of the Anglo-Saxon colonization of North America. Some pronunciations and semantic applications "evaporated" when they reached the American soil. In terms of particular linguistic criteria, American English is more similar to Early Modern English than modern British English is. Some "Americanisms" happen to be originally British expressions which are still in use in the colonies while disappeared at home (e.g. *fall* as a synonym for autumn, *trash* for rubbish, *frame-up* which was reintroduced to Britain through Hollywood gangster movies, and *loan* as a verb instead of lend). The American dialect also enabled entrance of many native American words into the English language. In most cases, these refer to names like *Mississippi, Roanoke* and *Iowa*. Indian-sounding names like *Idaho* sometimes came into existence regardless of native American roots. Other words like *raccoon, tomato, canoe, barbecue, savannah* and *hickory* have native American roots, although in many cases the original Indian words were mangled almost beyond recognition (Wilton, 2001). Due to an ever-growing inflow of Spanish population into the USA, the Spanish language has also exercised great influence on American English. *Armadillo, mustang, canyon, ranch, stampede* and *vigilante* are just some of many Spanish words that have found their way into English through the settlement of the American West (Wilton, 2001).

1.2 Norman and Anglo-Saxon Influence on English

The majority of words in modern English are not Anglo-Saxon words, i.e. words with Old English roots. In fact, only about one sixth of the known Old English words have managed to survive into the language. But this can be deceiving. Old English is much more important than these figures suggest. Almost half of the most frequent words in modern English are of the Old English origin. These words are *be*, *water* and *strong*, for instance (Crystal, 2004). Prior to the Norman invasion, the Old English vocabulary grouped around the Anglo-Saxon base corpus accompanied with Scandinavian (Danish and Norse) and Latin borrowings. In 1066, the Normans led by William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, defeated the Anglo-Saxons and their King Harold in the Battle of Hastings. This epic battle represented a breakthrough in the history of England and the history of the English language. The Normans brought natural profoundness in England's institutions and its language. The new masters spoke Norman-French which soon became the language of England's ruling class. The lower classes, though to a lesser extent, were also exposed to the new vocabulary. The most prominent examples in this context are the names of animals and their meat. Whereas the names of the animals have been preserved, their meat was subject to the Norman influence. This has probably something to do with its sociological background: the farmers that raised the animals were predominantly English natives and could afford to keep using their own vocabulary while those serving the meat at the dining room table to the mainly French upper classes had to conform to the French language (Table 1).

Table 1. English and French words used for animals and meat

ANIMAL	MEAT
cow	beef
calf	veal
sheep	mutton
swine	pork
deer	venison

French soon began to be used in the affairs of government, court, the church, the army and education, and the new French words quickly pushed away their former English counterparts. The influence of Norman-French with respect to linguistics was felt as long as the Kings ruled both Normandy and England. The English spoken during this period is called Middle English. As many as ten thousand French words arrived in English during the Middle English period and most of them can be heard on the streets of today (Crystal, 2003:46). Apart from the above vocabulary appertaining to the affairs of government, court, the church, the army and education, many words relating to food and fashion were introduced as well. Some fields did not even include an original English terminology. Therefore, many French terms were really needed.

1) administration: *court, crown, palace, noble, parliament, royal, warden etc.*

2) military: *army, battle, captain, enemy, guard, navy, peace, soldier etc*.

3) judicial system: *judge, jury, plaintiff, justice, crime, sue, decree, felony, legacy, pardon, attorney, verdict etc.*

4) ecclesiastical: *clergy, abbey, miracle, pray, sermon, virgin, saint, friar, virtue etc.*

5) cuisine: *sauce, boil, dinner, feast, fruit, lettuce, mustard, poultry, fry, roast, toast, oyster, sugar, stew etc.*

6) fashion: *boots, cloak, collar, dress, garment, gown, jewel, pearl, wardrobe etc.*

7) leisure and the arts: *art, beauty, colour, dance, leisure, literature, music, noun, paper, park, recreation, rhyme, romance, story, title etc.*

8) science and learning: *clause, copy, gender, grammar, logic, medicine, pain, poison, study etc.*

9) the home: *ceiling, chair, chamber, couch, curtain, lamp, parlour, tower etc.*

10) general nouns: *action, age, air, city, country, courage, error, face, flower, joy, labour, mountain, number, order, people, point, quality, river, sign, season, task etc.*

11) general adjectives: *blue, clear, common, easy, honest, natural, poor, rude, simple, special, sudden etc.*

12) general verbs: *advise, close, cry, enter, join, pass, pay, prove, receive, reply, save, suppose, wait, waste etc.* (Crystal, 2003:47)

On some occasions, French words replaced Old English words. Other times, French and Old English components shaped a new word, as the French *gentle* and the Germanic *man* formed *gentleman* (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009). There are also examples when two different words with roughly the same meaning have survived into Modern English. Hence, we have the Germanic *doom* and the French *judgment*, or *wish* and *desire* (Crystal, 2004). In terms of grammar, it came to reduction of inflections. The grammatical gender was lost and inflections merged. While the inflections of Old English disappeared, the word order of Middle English showed the tendency of gradual consolidation, i.e. it became fixed by the time. This resulted in a great loss of strong verbs. At the time when English was spoken mostly by lower classes and stayed far away from education and literature, it was no wonder that many speakers applied the pattern of inflecting weak verbs to verbs which were historically strong. This linguistic principle of adopting the pattern of a less common form to a more familiar one is called analogy. The now universally accepted pattern SVO (subject - verb - object) came into existence in the 12th century and has remained part of English ever since. The Germanic plurals (*house, housen; shoe, shoen*) were eventually replaced by the French method of making plurals – addition of *s* (*house, houses; shoe, shoes*). However, some uninflected plural forms have still survived – *deer, sheep, folk* (Algeo, 2010). The French language made some amendments to the spelling in a way that the sound formerly coded orthographically as "cw" came to be written as "qu" (e.g. *cween* became *queen*) (Crystal, 2003:41).

Doublet phrases: *law and order, lord and master, love and cherish, ways and means*.

New derivational morphology:

many suffixes: *-or* vs. *-er; -tion, -ment, -ee, -able*

most prefixes: *ex-, pre, pro, dis, re, anti- inter*.

Anglo-Saxon: *be-* in *besmirch*, or *for-* in *forgive, forstall*;

Phonology: Norman French phonemes /z/ and /v/ borrowed (Crytal, 2003:43)

More than 50% of Modern English words are of Norman-French origin (28.3% originally French or Norman-French and further 28,24 % Norman-French via Latin), but most function words and basic vocabulary are Anglo-Saxon. As King John the Lackland lost Normandy in the early 13th century, the links to the French-speaking community were eventually broken. English then slowly restored its place as a common tongue in England again. The 14th century was the time when English became dominant in Britain again. King Henry IV was the first king of England since the Norman Conquest whose mother tongue was English. By the end of the 14th century, the dialect of London had been accepted as the standard dialect of Middle English.

Despite all these borrowings, the core of the language remained Anglo-Saxon (Old English). Only about 5,000 words from this period have preserved their form, but 1,000 out of those 5,000 are the most common English words and include the basic building blocks of the language: household words, parts of the body, common animals, natural elements, most pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and auxiliary verbs. This language base has been supplemented with various and numerous words and expressions from other languages and thus has become, according to many, the richest of the world's languages.

2. Method

Due to the fact that the English language is very rich in doublets (there are nearly five hundred pairs, Miller and Meiklejohn, 2007), abstract noun doublets of Anglo-Saxon and Norman-French origin will be diachronically analyzed. Some of the pairs will be analyzed more thoroughly and in more details than the others. It depends on how much information about those nouns was available. In terms of historical development of words regards both morphology and semantics, the analysis will be based on data and quotations available in the Oxford English Dictionary. The following noun doublets will be semantically and morphologically analyzed: *freedom-liberty, justice-fairness, wish-desire, aid-help, judgement-doom, labour-work, view-sight, love-charity, stench-aroma* and *marriage-wedding.*

3. Results

3.1 Freedom-Liberty

These nouns are semantically and historically of great importance and they are as frequently used nowadays as they were before. Having regard to etymology, "liberty" comes from Latin *libertas*, i.e. from *liber* meaning "free". Interestingly, Romans used *liberi* (plural) to mean "children". French linguist Émile Benveniste (Benveniste, 1969:35) links it with a Roman

marriage formula mentioning the procreation of more free persons as the purpose of marriage ("to obtain free beings"). Such children would be free as members of a class or community of free persons (as opposed to slaves). According to the broader connections and archaic roots of *liber*, the word seems to originate from common Indo-European *leudhos* and Greek *eleutheros*, both carrying the meaning "free", as in Eleutherian. There is a similar verb in Germanic: Gothic *luidan* and Old English *leodan*, meaning "to grow". German *Leute*, "people," has grown from this verb as has Old English *leod* which has survived in poetry as "leed". English got "liberty" as Norman-French *libert é*, which then stems from Latin *libertas*, an abstract noun derived from *liber* that also gives us "liberal", "liberate" and other derivatives. The meaning of the word has not much changed through the centuries and it can be chiefly compounded "to exemption of any kind of bondages". The word entered Middle English in the 14th century in the morphological form – *libertee* or *liberte, It lay not in his libertee No-wher to gon (Chaucer, Troylus, 285, 1374).* In the next 200 years there were four variations of the same word – *lyberty, lybertie, libertie, lyberte.* Obviously, there was a tendency to change the first vowel to *y* and to insert the suffix "y" or "ie". The variation *libertie* was more frequent than the others. *A man is Master of his libertie (Shakespear, Com.Err.ii.i7, 1590).* Since the beginning of the 17th century and final conversion of the suffix "ie" into "y", the form in use has not undergone any changes at all, so today's *liberty* is the result of the post-Shakespearean period shaping. Turning to the Anglo-Saxon counterparts "free" and "freedom", the source thereof is found in Indo-European *priyos*, meaning "dear" or "one's own". Cognate words include Sanskrit *priyas* and Persian (Avestan) *fryo*, both meaning "dear", Sanskrit *prináti*, "pleases", and Slavic *prijatel*, "friend". In terms of the Celtic and Germanic tongues, "freedom" descends from Gothic *frijon*, "to love", *freis*, "free", and *freihals*, "freedom". Old English *freo* and *feols* correspond to the last two Gothic terms. *Freihals* is interesting in that it literally means "free-neck" (*hals*, "neck", lives on in German *Hals* and Scots *hawse*), that is the status of one who does not bend the neck or wear the collar of servitude.

If the root meanings of *priyos* are taken into consideration, one may easily find that Gothic *frijonds*, Old English *freond*, English *friend* and German *Freund* all originate from the same word stem. There is also, apparently, a connection with Old English *frith* and German *Frieden*, both referring to "peace". Differing suffixation has led to German *Freiheit* (= "free-hood") and English "free*dom*". The Old English suffix *-dom* comes from Indo-European **dhê-*, "set, settle, establish", yielding Greek *thesis* and *thema* ("theme") and probably Sanskrit *dharma*, not to mention English *deem* and *doom*. The word was noted for the first time in the 9th century, during the reign of King Alfred the Great when it was used as *frydom*. As it officially became a part of Old English, the meaning was already closely connected to its contemporary meanings. Since then, the meaning of the word has not varied much. Very similar to *liberty*, the main meanings of the word do not go beyond the following interpretation: "exemption or release from any kind of human and other bondages". Soon "y" in *freedom* was replaced with "oe" and the form changed into *freodom.* Along with these two variations, the forms *freedam and freodome* appeared in Middle English, but it did not take very long for the second vowel in the word, this was "e" or "o" to be cut off, so the forms *fredame* and *fredome* coexisted in the language. During the 15th century, the vowel "e" was added again and it caused the new forms of the word – *freedome* and *freedom.* (*Shakespeare, Tit Andronik i.i 17 And Romanes, fight for*

Freedome in your Choice, 1588.) In the first half of the 17th century the word *freedom* finally acquired its present form.

3.2 Justice-Fairness

The second pair to be analyzed is historically close to the first. That is *justice-fairness.* The word *justice* originates from Latin. The form used in the Roman Empire was *justitia.* Its meaning was limited to "unrighteousness, uprightness and equity", and was frequently used in Roman laws along with the aforementioned *libertas.* As a Norman-French abstract noun, the word penetrated Middle English in the 12th century. Concerning its semantics, the most common and frequent use is contained in the following definition: "the quality of just or righteous or the principle of just dealing". In the 16th century, during the era of puritans, it got religious connotations such as "observance of divine law and purity". *Justice* has got its non-abstract court related counterparts as well, e.g. court magistrates, jury etc.

In terms of morphology, the word *justice* consists of the stem *just* and the non-Anglo-Saxon suffix "ice" that could be defined as "the quality of being something". As it was introduced to Britain in the 12th century, *justice* was written in the form *Iustise.* The form *iustis* was to be found in that time as well. In the 14th century, it was changed into *iustyce* and in the 15th century in *lustyce.* In the next 100 years, "y" was to be changed in "i" again, but the form *justyce* also appeared. Before it got its today's form, there had been the form *iustice* in both the 15th and 16th century.

The noun *fairness* has got an Anglo-Saxon stem as well as a suffix *(fair+ness,* "ness" *usually* carries the same meaning as "ice"*).* It was derived from the Old English adjective *fæger* meaning "beautiful". It is interesting that there is the noun *fair* in English, but it originates from a Latin word *feriæ.* The meaning thereof is also different and the word denotes "free time or holidays". The primary meaning of this Anglo-Saxon abstract noun is not just "uprightness and equity" as it is the case with its Norman-French doublet, but primarily "the quality of being beautiful". Since the Middle English period, it has been used to "express nice weather, the state of being free from storms and rain" too. In Early Modern English, the word was often connected with "lightness of colour of the skin and hair was meant by fairness". *The whitenesse thereof (ivory) was thought to represent the natural fairness of man's skinne (Halkluyt Voy, 1599).* The noun *fairness* was first noted in the form *fæžernyss* around the year 1000. *Leas gyfu&ydel ys fæžernyss, Liber Scint 168, 100.* Until the 17th century, it had appeared in a variety of forms. That occurred because of great changes in English due to the Norman-French influence. In the 12th century, there was the form *fairnesse* similar to the current form *fairnesse* while in the 13th century, there were 4 forms *fægernesse, feirnusse, faiernesse* and *feirnesse.* In the 14th, scripts included as many as six forms. These were *feyrnesse, fairnes, fairenesse, faireness, fayreness* and *fayrnesse.* In the following 100 years, *ffeirnes and farenes* were added to this broad list. Finally, it was given its today's form in the 17th century.

3.3 Wish-Desire

The next pair is interesting because the words have got no affixes. That is the prominent pair *wish-desire. Wish* is the modern version of the Old English word *wyscan,* although this word

could not be found in the written records whereas *desire* found its way to English through French (*desir).* The latter is originally a Latin word and the first traces thereof lead us to the Latin word *desiderare.* Experts do think that the word was somehow derived from the word *star* – "wishing on a star". What also draws our attention is that both words have not varied much in terms of their meaning through centuries. The main meaning in both cases is "a feeling or emotion which is directed to the attainment or possession of some object which pleasure or satisfaction is expected". *Wish* itself is sometimes defined as "something that is rarely attainable by one's efforts". All the other meanings are very similar to the core meaning and can be freely observed as its variants.

Strangely, the words had not shown up in the scripts until the 14th century. Although *desire* can be found in the documents in its today's form as soon as in the 14th century *1340 Cursor M 10513 (Trin) by desire and by preyere in comen to goddes ere,* the most common form in the 14th and 15th century was still *desyre*. *Desir, desyer* and *dissire* found their way to Middle English as well. In the 16th century, the formation of the word finished.

Wish could not be found in a single written record in its present form until 16th century. The early Middle English forms were *wusche, wyssche, wysshe, wiss, wyss, wishe* and *wis.* They all died out in the 16th century. Even though Shakespeare already used the same word like us, some traces of the Middle English word *wysshe* are noticed in the 16th century scripts: *1542 wyatt poems 'Unstable dream' 13 Where it was at wysshe it could not remain.*

3.4 Aid-Help

Carrying on with doublets without affixes we come to the pair *aid-help. Aid* was acquired in English relatively late, in the 15th century. It was one of the last phases of the Norman-French influence on the English language. Originally, it is a Latin word. It was derived from the verb *adiuvare* which was compounded from the prefix "ad" meaning *to* and the stem *iuvare* which means *to help.* The English version has no affixes because it was taken over from French. Since entering the language, the word has had some slight variations in meaning. The basic meaning has remained the same – "help, assistance, support, relief". In the 19th century, people started using this word as "a support of a cause or charity". Likewise, in the last one hundred years it has often been used as "material help given to people in some kind of trouble". During feudalism "a pecuniary contribution by a feudal vassal to his lord" was meant under this word too.

Help is an Old English word occurring in the records for the first time around the year 900. The original Old English form used before the year 1000 had been *helpan.* Yet, *help* is not exclusively an English word. It is rather a universal Germanic word that exists in similar variant forms in almost all Germanic languages. To mention is the German word *Hilfe.* Along with the above meanings of the word *aid,* there is also a slightly different meaning of the word carried in the explanation "supplementing of action or resource by what makes them more efficient". In the 15th and 16th century, the word used in plural meant "auxiliary troops or allies", *1593 Shakes 3 Hen VI, ii.i. 178 Now if the helpe of Norfolk, and my selfe Will but amount to fiue and twenty thousand.* In the 19th century, the semantic applications of the word included "a

portion of food served". Today, the variant form *helping* is more common in this sense. *Help* can also determine "a person employed to give assistance in household or other manual work".

Eide was the form in which the word *aid* was acquired in English – *1475 Bk. Noblesse 4 Be the eide of tho thre noble princes.* The development of the contemporary form of the word lasted not longer than a hundred years and chronologically it looked like this: *eide, aide, ayde, ayd, aid.*

The doublet had a little bit more forms. Starting with *helpan,* the forms appeared in English were *helpe, heelpe, hilp, hylp, holp* and *healpe.* It is almost impossible to organize them diachronically. The most frequent form was *helpe.* What is interesting is that the word was often used in plural in the Middle Ages, which is contrary to its common today's use as an uncountable noun. It got its present forms in the 17th century.

3.5 Judgement-Doom

Judgement and *doom* constitute the next pair. The form *judgement* prevails in British and *judgment* in American English. It is unknown when *judgement* as a word entered English but the word *judge* as a stem was noted in English in the 12th century. Again, Normans brought it to English via Latin. The basic word was *juge* meaning "judge or someone who performs examining" while the Latin form was *judex.* By the 17th century, *judgement* had been closely connected with "a trial or the action of trying a cause in a court of justice". Now this meaning is rare. The other meaning common in the 17th century was "a person having good judgement or a judge". All other variations of meaning can be summarized into 3 main meanings: "opinion that you form, especially after carefully thinking about something", "the ability to make sensitive decisions about what to do and when to do" and "the sentence of a court of justice or a judicial decision or order in court".

What should be emphasized in the beginning is that the word *doom* is obsolete and archaic itself, and it can be rarely heard in every day's communication. It is an Old English word which was recorded in the language for the first time in the early 9th century. Comparing to *judgement,* it mostly tends to have more negative interpretations. Only three meanings are still in use in the modern language: "a sentence or decision in adverse sense", "fate or irrevocable destiny" (rarely with affirmative implications) – *1600 Shakes Sonn xiv 14 Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date,* and "the day of judgement". From the 9th to 19th century, the word referred to "an ordinance or decree and the action or process of judging". From the 9th to 16th century, it was also interpreted as "justice, equity or righteousness".

The word *judgement* consists of the stem *judge* and suffix "ment". This suffix was taken from Norman-French and it had not appeared in English before the 14th century. It was actually a Latin verb-stem suffix. Chiefly compounded, it means "condition of being x" and its use refers to formation of abstract nouns. These are chronologically enlisted morphological forms: *iuggement, iugement, gugement, iuiement, iugumen, iugemente, iewgement, iugisment, yugement, iugment, iudgement* and *iudgemnet.* The word got its today's form in the 17th century. Before that period the most frequent forms, especially in the 13th and 14th century, had

been *iugement, iuggement* and *iudgement – 1560 Bible (Genev) Ezek xiv 21 When I send my foure sore iudgement vpon Ierusalem.*

Although *doom* is a much older word than *judgement,* it has not had so many variant forms. Furthermore, it can be said that the only two frequently used forms were *dom* and *dome.* Forms like *doome, dum, dowme, doym, dombe* very rarely appeared and when used, it was mostly due to Scandinavian influence. The morphological formation of the word was completed in the 17th century. Nevertheless, Chaucer used the word in its present form already in the 14th century – *1386 Chaucer Monk's T Prol. 49 As to my doom Thou art a maister whan thou art at hoom.*

3.6 Labour-Work

The next abstract noun pair is *labour-work. Labour* stepped on the British linguistic soil around the year 1300. It is an Old French word that was derived from Latin *laborum,* meaning "labour, toil, distress, trouble". The current meanings of the word rarely exceed the following 4 definitions: "exertion of the faculties of the body or mind, bodily or mental toil", "physical exertion directed to the supply of the material wants of the community", "a work or task performed or to be performed" and "the pains and efforts of childbirth". In the past, i.e. till the 19th century, there had used to be meanings like "the outcome, product or result of a toil", or just "trouble or pains taken", and what is the most interesting "eclipse".

Work is an Old English word recorded for the first time in the language in the forms *werc* and *weorc.* There is no evidence when its use in the language actually began. Although there are numerous meaning variants of this abstract noun, it is possible to enlist only the three core meanings: "a job or activity that you do regularly, especially in order to earn money" – *She found work with an engineering firm*; "a place where you do your job"; "something that you produce as a result of doing your job or doing an activity" (although the two latter meanings are not abstract nouns). Only one archaic meaning can be found – "trouble, affliction, disturbance fuss, ferment". According to these definitions, it is beyond any doubt that this pair differentiates in meaning the most. It is a result of contemporary use of *labour* and may be a consequence of the appearance of the workers' class. This class is often connected with hard life and hard work. Therefore, *labour* is frequently used to describe "one's hard work", and *work,* on the other hand, in most cases describes "normal activity, not exertion".

Labour came to English relatively late, in the 14th century, and this resulted in few variant forms: *labore, labur, laboure, labour, labour, labor.* Out of those six forms, only *labur* and *labor* (the latter is in contemporary use in American English) showed up relatively often in the scripts – *1400 Destr. Troy 10770 Hit were labur to long hir lotis to tell.* The present form *labour* occasionally appeared even in the 14 and 15th century as it was an old French word, but it has been regularly in use from late 16th century.

On the other hand, *work* is a record holder when it is up to the number of morphological variant forms having appeared in English. Extraordinary, there are 38 variant forms of the noun *work.* However, it makes no sense to enlist them all. The emergence of those *numerous* variant forms has been caused by the fact that *werc* or *weorc* are Old Germanic words and they have appeared in all Germanic languages in different forms, which had a big influence on English. Among all those variants, three have had played a slightly more important role. These are *weorc, werk* and

wark. Weorc (weorrc or *werc)* had prevailed until around 1200. In the next 250 years, it was replaced by *werk (werke* or *wercke).* In the second half of the 15th century and in the 16th century, the broadest applications of the word were related to the form *wark – 1533 Gau Richt Vay (S.T.S.) 9 Inuetlie in thair hart andoutuertlie in thair word and wark.* In the beginning of the 17th century, the formation of the word finally ended.

3.7 View-Sight

Proceeding with abstract nouns without affixes, we come to the doublet *view-sight. View* approached English in the 15th century. It is an Old French word spelled *veue* ("to see") which has gone through its morphological metamorphosis in French as well – *vue, veir, voir.* Originally, it was derived from the Latin word *videre* which is connected with the same semantic interpretations as the above French word in the French language. The basic current meanings of the word can be summarized in "what you think or believe about something" and "what you are able to see or whether you can see it or scenery". Almost until the 20th century, the word had also been used to describe "a formal inspection, examination or survey". In the 16th century, the word meant "an interview or meeting", and in the 17th century, the word was linked with "the footprints of a buck or fallow-deer".

Sight was derived from the Old English word *gesiht.* Probably it has got the same root as the German word *Gesicht – face* and that root must be a verb meaning "to see". The word *sight* in the form *sihðo* was recorded for the first time in the 10th century. The basic contemporary abstract meaning of the word is closely related to "the act of seeing, i.e. to physical vision". Until the late 19th, there had been an abstract meaning revealing "display or show of something of a great number or multitude". Approximately at the same time as in the previous case another abstract meaning died out in the language – "opinion, estimate, judgement, respect, regard, view". During the 17th century, the word could replace "*aspect, appearance* and *look*".

Due to the late entry in the language, only a few variant forms of the word *view* have existed in English: *vewe, vew, veu(e), vue, vywe, viewe, vieu, vieue, viue.* Furthermore, only *vieu, vew, vewe* and *viewe* left a noticeable mark on the language in the 15 and 16th century – *1612 in Eng Hist. Rev April (1914) 249 I will be bold out of my zeale and duty to present yt (a preposition) unto his Magesties vieu.* Like in many previous instances, the word was given its present form around the year 1600.

Unlike *view, sight* has existed in English some 500 years longer. That fact caused a great variety of morphological forms which are almost impossible to enlist. In the early period until the 14th century, the form *sihðæ* had been frequent. In the next 200 years, *syghte* and *sight* took over the dominancy – *1526 Pilgr. Perf (W. de W. 1531) 306 b My hert bresteth to se this syght.* Since the beginning of the 17th century, the only form has been *sight.*

3.8 Love-Charity

The following doublet is the pair *love-charity. Charity* reached Britain as the Norman-French word *caritedh* in the 12th century, having stemmed from the Old French word *charité* and Latin *caritas.* It was often connected with *Christian love.* However, the bare root of the word was the Latin word *carus – dear.* Nowadays, the basic and probably the most common meaning is "love, kindness, affection or natural affection". It can also be defined as "benevolence to people

who need some kind of help". This has resulted in a couple of non-abstract meanings of the word – "a bequest, institution, foundation for the benefit of others, especially of the poor and helpless" and "that what is given to charity". In the past, there was an obsolete meaning strictly related to religion and *Christian love.* This usage ceased approximately 150 years ago.

Love is an Old English word or it is better to say an Aryan word because it appears in many forms in almost all Germanic and Slavonic languages. The linguistic applications on the British ground stretch back to the 9th century in the form *lufu.* The root word was probably the Aryan word *leubh.* Although it is very difficult to provide a concise contemporary definition of the abstract noun love, it may be defined as "disposition or state of feeling with regard to a person which manifests itself in solicitude for the welfare of the object and usually in delight in his, her or its presence and desire for his or her approval". This complex definition covers all four variants of love – "love for God", "love for close relatives and friends, "love for the beloved person of opposite sex" and "love for an object". The word in an abstract sense has not changed its meanings much during the centuries. Another abstract meaning has nothing to do with its basic meaning. It is "score zero or nothing in some games, especially tennis".

On the ground of morphology, the word *charity* belongs to the group of English adoptions of French words with the suffix "y". This suffix is of French origin itself and can denote "state, condition or quality". The word had relatively few variant forms – *karitedh, carited, charite, cherite, cheryte, charyte, charitee, charitie.* Before the formation was over in the beginning of the 17th, none of those forms had been in use more frequent than others and none of them had been restricted to a certain period of time.

Love, the word without affixes has not had in its almost 1200-year long existence so many variant forms as it would be expected. Moreover, it is possible to mention them all: *lufu, lufo, lufena, luve, lou, love, louf, loof, lufan, lof, lofe, luf, lufue, lufe, luff, luffe, luif, luife, luue, luwe, luyt, luiff, lwiff, loif, loue.* In the early documents, forms like *lufu, lufe or luf* were common. From 1200 to 1300 the form *luue* prevailed – *1230 Hali Meid 47 For to drahen his luue toward hire.* In the 15th and 16th century, *loue* seemed to attract most authors.

3.9 Stench-Aroma

Only little semantic similarity can be found in the doublet *stench-aroma.* This similarity is in Old English. Before it was adopted in English in the 12th century, *aroma* had had a long way to it. Originally, it was derived from the Greek word *Urwma.* Then the word was reshaped by Romans in the Latin word *aromata* with common use in plural as in Old Greece. Both languages denoted *spice* with the word. French borrowed that word from Latin and gave it their form *aromat.* The word came to England in that form and has almost kept its meaning ever since. Still, today the word means something different. The only frequent contemporary meaning is "an agreeable odour, a sweet smell". The second, much rarer meaning is "a subtle pervasive quality of charm" – *Carlyle Sterling i.ii. (1872) 11 The delicate aroma of his nature.*

What causes this pair to be given as an example for an abstract noun doublet is an Old English meaning of *stench.* In that period, the word could mean "both pleasant and unpleasant smell" and even "the sense of smell itself". In the modern English, that meaning has disappeared. Nowadays, it is used for denoting "a very bad smell or something unpleasant that makes you believe that something very bad and dishonest is happening".

Aroma is probably one of the words with fewest morphological forms. There were only four of them – *aromaz, aromat, aromate and aroma. 1220 Leg. Kath. 2225 Wiðsmirles of aromaz.*

Although *stench* is not so common word in English nowadays, in the past it was used more often, so it appeared in many variant forms – *stenc, stence, stengc, stenche, staunch, stanch, staunche, stinnch, stinch, stynche, stintch, styntche.* In the 9th, 10th and 11th century, the forms *stenc* and *stence* were in frequent use. Later, their role was featured by *stenche.* It is interesting that although the word was already used in the 13th century in its present form, in some cases it was also used as *stanch* even in the 18th century – *1711 ken. Urania Poet.Wks. 1721 iv. 473 Fear not the stanch nice Sense may meet.*

3.10 Marriage-Wedding

The next doublet *marriage-wedding* is a very popular and thoroughly researched doublet. The contemporary meanings of these abstract nouns overlap in a way that they both define "the action or an act of marrying". "The condition of being a husband or wife" now only refers to *marriage* since *wedding* has gradually lost some of its semantic features. *Marriage* was obtained from French at the beginning of the 14th century. The French spelling lacks a double "r" but with respect to semantics, the word has been interpreted in the same manner in English and French since the French language adopted it from Latin. The noun originates from Latin *maritaticum* which is a derivative of the Latin verb *maritare* – "to wed, marry, give in marriage". The stem of this verb is *mari* and its origins are uncertain, yet it is often connected with the Proto-Indo-European word *mari – a young woman* and the Sanskrit word *meryo – a young man* (Harper, 2002-2016). There are two further meanings of the word *marriage* that are supposed to be quoted here. The first one is "an intimate union in a general sense" - *c 1570 (title) A new and Pleasaunt enterlude intituled the mariage of Witte and Science.* The second one relates to certain card games. It outlines "the declaration of a king and queen of the same suit".

Despite having officially entered the English language approximately at the same time, that is around the year 1300, as its semantic equivalent, *wedding* had been known, albeit in a different form, in Germanic languages for quite a while. The Old English verb *wed* and the German *wetten*, "to wager", can be traced back to prehistoric Germanic **wathjōjan.* This prehistoric word was actually derived from the noun **wathjam*, "pledge", which also produced English *engage, wage*, and *wager* (Harper, 2002-2016). What is rather curious is that prior to the acceptance of *marriage* into the British national corpus, the word *wedding* had served as a denotation for "the state of being wed". The usual Old English word for the ceremony was *bridelope*, literally "bridal run", in reference to conducting the bride to her new home. By the time *wedding* lost its original meaning and gave way to *marriage.* In the modern context, *wedding* chiefly corresponds "to the action of marrying, marriage, espousal, or performance of the marriage rite" - *1897 S. A. Brooke in Jacks Life & Lett. (1917) II. 532, I am told the wedding went off well.*

From the viewpoint of morphology, *marriage* consists of the stem *marry* and the suffix "age". It is interesting that the word tends to be apprehended in both English and French as it were a derivative of the related word. The suffix "age" is characteristic for formation of abstract nouns adopted from French. English embraced it in the Middle English period, along with some other morphological features of the French language. The application of the suffix pertains to

"termination of abstract nouns of appurtenance, and collectives" and can be compared to that of the Latin suffix "aticum". Due to its late entrance into the language, *marriage* has not appeared in many spelling variants. One can enlist them all with ease. These are *mariage, maryage, mariag, mareagh, maryag, -ache, marrage, marag, mar(r)yge, marie(a)ge, mareag(e), mariadge and marriage.* When analyzing the diachronic development of the noun *marriage* in the field of morphology, it is hard not to spot the dominancy of the variant *mariage* in the period preceding the Shakespearean era - c *1400 Mandeville (Roxb.) xx. 89 In þat cuntree es na mariage betwene man and woman.* On the other hand, it is not easy to find any variant of the noun other than *marriage* after the first half of the 16th century - *1873 Merivale in Summary Proc. St. Etheldreda Fest. 17 The two pillars upon which God has founded the edifice of civilized society are, after all, property and marriage.*

As far as the morphological pattern of *wedding* is concerned, this noun resulted from a stem-suffix formation or, more precisely, a noun was derived from a verb by means of suffixation. *Wedding* can be divided into the stem *wed* and the suffix "ing". The latter is very common in almost all Germanic languages. It ranges from *ung, ing* and *unga* in Old English and Old High German to *unge, enge* and *inge* in Old Frisian. The only exception is Gothic which did not involve such a suffix. This suffix implies "formation of verbal derivatives, originally abstract nouns of action". Having regard to the formation of *wedding* and similar nouns such as *blessing, learning, tidings and offering,* the suffix "ing" is utilized to "express an art or a completed process, action and habit". *Wedding* seems to have occurred in even fewer spelling variants than its pair *marriage* – weddung, weddingue, weddin, -yn, weding, -yng, weddyng(e), -inge, vedding, wedding. The variant *weddung* was largely predominant in Old English - *c 1000 Gosp. Nicod. vii. 3 in Thwaites Hept. (1698), Seo weddung wæs beweddod, eal swa eowre aζene ðeoda secgaþ.* During the Middle English period, authors favoured *weddyng* or *weddyunge - a 1400 Chaucer Envoy to Bukton 24 So may happe That the were leuer to be take in Frise Than eft falle of weddynge in the trappe.* Along with the commencement of Early Modern English, *wedding* started to be preferred over other spelling variants - *1599 Shakes. Much Ado ii. i. 76 Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch ijgge, a measure, and a cinque-pace.*

4. Discussion

When it comes to the total number of words and the number of words acquired as a result of being under influence of other cultures, one can hardly deny the supremacy of English over all the other world languages. Among these influences, the Norman-French language and culture have indisputably had the lion's share. The percentage of French and Old Norman borrowings in 80,000 randomly selected English words speaks for itself. This percentage numbers 28,3 and along with 28,24% of words of Latin origin, out of which some have definitely accessed English via Norman-French, one can easily come to the conclusion that these two languages have been the main source of the current English vocabulary. However, every day's communication does not include so many of these words. Moreover, out of 7,476 most frequently used English words, only 3 % of them are of either Norman-French or Latin origin and the rest of them originate from Germanic languages, mostly from Anglo-Saxon. Why is it so? That is one of the two key issues of this paper.

To answer this question, one has to consult history. After the Norman conquest, it came to certain changes in the population of the British Isles. More precisely, the former Anglo-Saxon nobility were either executed or driven away. Norman noblemen became the ruling class. They spoke their own language, a dialect of Old French called Anglo-Norman or Norman-French. They did not have to deal with existential problems, so they could contemplate about various things such as the meaning of life, arts, science, justice and religion. Furthermore, they tended to express themselves in a profound or an exalted manner. On the other hand, peasants and common people had to take care of earthly problems, predominantly what to eat and how to raise their children, in one word, how to survive. They did not have time or knowledge to elaborate divine concerns nor were they in direct touch with the ruling class. Therefore, they kept on speaking their own Anglo-Saxon language and using their own vocabulary, only occasionally adopting one or two Norman-French words. Due to the fact that such people had constituted more than 90% of the total population of Britain until the Industrial Revolution, i.e. the period of time when all the language reforms had already been over, it is no wonder that every day's English vocabulary still leans on words of Anglo-Saxon origin to a great extent.

Back to the language of the Norman ruling class and the second big issue of this paper, it is hard not to notice that the major concerns of the Norman rulers involved mostly abstract issues, the things that cannot be touched, the things that required discussion and oral elaboration. Obviously, they needed particular words to express themselves and to describe and explain these issues. Their favourite vocabulary naturally had to include abstract nouns. Since numerous abstract things had been unknown to an average Old English speaker, the Normans needed to introduce them into English. Such words are *medicine, art, science and literature* (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009). Furthermore, there are some Norman-French words that pushed out their Anglo-Saxon semantic equivalents and some that were used to build English-French or French-English compounds, but the most interesting ones are those that were acquired by the English language and have existed simultaneously with their Anglo-Saxon pairs until the present day to form semantic doublets. These doublets mostly refer to abstract nouns and are the topic of this paper offering a diachronic overview thereof based on semantics and morphology.

Researching the historical development of these doublets on both a morphological and semantic basis, the authors have revealed some really remarkable facts and drawn certain conclusions. First of all, most doublets, regardless of their secondary line of origin, can be traced back to the Proto-Indo-European language. Secondly, almost all Anglo-Saxon pairs entered the English language prior to their Norman-French equivalents, with *happiness* being the only exception to the rule. Thirdly, although English involves some words that have been coined by combining an Anglo-Saxon stem and a Norman-French suffix and vice versa such as *wizard* and *cheerful* (Stockwell and Minkova, 2009), the analyzed doublets either have no affixation or their affixation originates from the same language as their stem. Then, all the doublets have modified their meaning at least a bit since they were adopted into English. Another important aspect of the analysis is that the Anglo-Saxon pairs have had significantly more inflections than their Norman-French equivalents, albeit all the suffixes, irrespective of their origin, have also gone through certain metamorphosis. Finally, the morphological formation of all the nouns analyzed in this paper was completed in the 17th. As far as the

semantic development is concerned, the basic meanings of the analyzed nouns were determined if not sooner than in the Early Modern English period, but like in all the other language, semantic shaping is an everlasting process.

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