The influence of Dutch on English

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The Influence of Dutch on English

Završni rad

Mentor prof. dr. sc. Mario Brdar

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Summary:

The role of the Dutch language in the shaping and influencing of both the modern British and American English language cannot be denied. From as far as a thousand years ago, the contact through trade, war, industry, science and art between the Netherlands and England, and the later contact and influence of Dutch settlers and colonies on the American continent, are not only an important part of history, but an important part of linguistics as well, helping to understand how the modern English language has been shaped throughout the centuries and why that is so.

Although many words and terms adopted from Dutch into English are not used anymore and have become archaic, there are still significant terms that have adapted, survived and are still in use today. For many of those word and terms, the general populace, whose mother tongue is English, is not even aware that they are the remnants of the historical Dutch influence on their country and their language. Even though only 1% of English words today can be attributed to the Dutch, which may not seem like much, it is still very significant and without it, the English language would sound quite different from what it is today.

Keywords: Dutch, English, etymology, history of language, linguistic influence

Introduction

The influence of one language on another is not a new phenomenon and dates back to the beginning of spoken and written languages in humans. As language evolves and develops over time, it also gets influenced by other surrounding and widely spoken languages, as well as different cultures. According to Sapir, the "[…] simplest kind of influence that one language may exert on another is the 'borrowing' of words" (Sapir). With time, borrowed words may often root themselves deep into the languages that borrowed them, adapting accordingly and becoming a new word, a permanent part of that language. While some may argue that this is polluting languages, one cannot deny the significance of it and the fact that, on quite the contrary account, it made many languages much richer than before.

"It is a little disappointing to learn that the general cultural influence of English has so far been all but negligible" (Sapir). However, the general cultural influence on English has been increasingly larger and stronger throughout the centuries. From the times of the old Germanic tribes and the rule of the Roman Empire, throughout the wars and meddles of the Middle Ages, all the way to the Age of Discovery and the vast majority of English colonies throughout the world, all of these are factors that greatly contributed to different cultures and languages influencing English. Even today in the modern and post-modern era, despite the psychological resistances to borrowing, new words are constantly being created, most of which are the result of direct or indirect cultural influences. If nothing else, the results and consequences of the borrowing and linguistic influence over the past centuries can today clearly be seen in the modern English language.

Although many may not think so, among the vast number of different languages and cultures, from old Latin, to German, French, even Arabic and Hebrew, the Dutch language, too, has played a large role in influencing and shaping the English language as we know it today. In fact, Dutch has had a critical role in the development of English, and if not for this role, the English language as we know it today would have been something completely different. It is estimated that about 1% of English words today are of Dutch origin, which, while it may not seem like much, still plays a significant role in history, one that should not be overlooked, but often is.

To learn just how Dutch managed to play such an important role in the development of English and just how it managed to influence the language in so many different areas, one has to go back in time and delve deep into the their history together.

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1. The settlement of Low Dutch in England

The first true historical influences of Dutch on English started roughly around a thousand years ago from today in England. It started with the slow settling of Low Dutch, mostly Flemish, in the middle of the Middle English period. Having quite a lot of contact with the Dutch, it is not surprising that certain words and terms simply started bleeding over into English. While not overly large, it still made a significant impact in all kinds of different areas where English simply started borrowing and adapting Dutch words, from trading, sea faring and agriculture, to industry, science and art. It wouldn't stop there though, as the Dutch continued on to settle their own colonies on the North American continent, further doing their part in shaping today's American English variant. From then on, Dutch simply continued influencing the English language throughout modern history and has left a small, yet significant imprint on modern English.

"In the Middle English period the Low Dutch people which had the most intercourse with English was naturally enough the Flemish" (Llewellyn, 1). The vast majority of the Flemings coming over with William I were mostly soldiers who did not return to the continent after the completion of the Conquest and some were set up as military colonies, a policy which continued under William II. William I also at one point replaced the higher native English clergy and put foreigners in their places. Later on, whole families came over, along with soldiers and traders.

"The immigration of Flemings went on steadily after the Conquest and in such numbers that Henry I did not know what to do with them" (Llewellyn, 1). First they had been settled on the Tweed, then later transferred to Wales. It is also worth noting the immigration of the Flemish into Scotland. Instead of a single, large wave of Flemish immigrants, there was rather a constant stream of traders and artisans from Flanders. With many crowds of foreign entertainers appearing at festivities, it shows at least one way of how Low Dutch words settled into English slang.

The marriage between Edward III and Philippa, the daughter of William II, the Count of Holland, Zeeland and Hainault, brought upon an even closer connection between England and the Low Countries. The marriage was favorable to English interests, having the Dutch as both friendly allies and commercial partners. "In the sparring preliminary to the Hundred Years War, England was in the closest diplomatic relations with many of the Low Dutch states and especially with Flanders" (Llewellyn, 3). The Flemings remained close allies of the English and Flanders itself could never really afford to be on bad terms with England for longer periods.

Interesting of note is that later, during the Wars of the Roses, many English people took refuge in the Low Countries.

During the time of the Reformation, Europe was steadily divided into two sides. A large part of the industrial population of Germany and the Low Countries was trying to find a country that would not only offer them special advantages to their particular callings, but also one that would secure them an asylum where they could live according to their own convictions. This so called religious immigration begun rather early and "Froude states that there were 15,000 Flemings in London as early as 1527" (Llewellyn, 4). The reception of these Flemish refugees was generally on friendly terms.

Borrowed from the various Low Dutch dialects were the proper names of Low Dutch countries, nations and districts. They could have come in through trade, travel, war or politics, but it is impossible to know for sure. According to Llewellyn, "Very interesting are the names of Northern, Baltic, and South German countries and peoples which came into English through the medium of Low Dutch" (Llewellyn, 6).

Interesting is the word *Dutch* itself, which changed meaning in English throughout time, today directly denoting the name of the people living in the Netherlands and their language, while in the Dutch language, the word *duitsch* is generally used to denote the language of Germany proper. The terms *Fleming* and *Holland* also have their origins in the Dutch language, coming from Dutch *Vlâming* and *Holtlant*, respectively. Words like *Sweden*, *Norse* and similar are Baltic, Northern and South German names which have passed into English through Low Dutch, coming from the Dutch words *Zweden*, *noorsch* and their derivations.

Other interesting terms include the names of rulers, officials and dignitaries which most probably came into English by way of politics or travel and trade, one such example being the word *boroughmaster*, denoting a Dutch or Flemish administrator, a *burgomaster*, which is an imitation of the Flemish *burgemeester*. Others include words introduced by vagrants, beggars and strolling minstrels from the Low Countries. These include *booze*, derived from *bousen*, meaning to drink; *loiter*, derived from *leuteren*; and even *monkey*, which probably comes from the Dutch *monnekijn*, a colloquial word for monkey. Close to this are also several words of cant and slang in gaming and dicing.

1.1. War, trade, sea and agriculture

When it comes to the influence of the Dutch language through war, there are three things to consider. Low Dutch mercenaries served either in English armies or England itself, the English armies campaigned in the Low Countries and Englishmen often served as mercenaries in Low Dutch states' armies. Even the army of William the Conqueror was not purely Norman, but included many various nationalities, among which the Flemings were well represented. "Oman assumes that the mailed, mercenary infantry armed with the pike, which the conqueror employed at Hastings, were largely Flemish" (Llewellyn, 16). After the Conquest, the immigration of soldiers did not cease and Flemish mercenaries continued on to be part of many wars waged on these lands.

A large number of terms for arms and armor was borrowed from the Dutch language. These include terms like *splint*, from *splinte*, for certain portions of medieval armor; the word *blunderbuss*, from *donderbus*, denoting a short gun with a large bore; and *knapsack*, from *knapzak*, a bag or case made out of leather. One noteworthy warfare term is *Reise*, which is actually a direct borrowing from Germanic, meaning either to travel or go on a military expedition, depending on the context of the word used. Other well-known warfare terms include *onslaught*, from the Dutch *aanslag*, a vigorous and destructive attack; *plunder*, from German *plündern* and Dutch *plunderen*, meaning to pillage or sack; and a word famously being shown as used by pirates, *booty*, which is derived from the Dutch *buyte* and has its roots in French *butin*, also denoting a form of plunder. The words *wagon* and *quartermaster* are among the lot as well, derived from *wagen* and *kwartiermeester*, respectively. Lastly, the word *tattoo* also comes from Dutch, namely the word *tap-toe*, the original meaning being a signal made by a drum for the soldiers to repair to quarters, far from today's modern meaning of the word.

Trading has existed between England and the Low Dutch lands from very early times as their greatest ports lay directly opposite of each other. Low Dutch merchants trading in England in the 11th and 12thcenturies, came only from Liége, Westphalia and the Lower Rhine districts. In the 13th century England still failed to produce a mercantile class and as such, the English traders lacked capital and organization to compete with the Flemish and other traders. A large share of English trade was in the hands of Flemish merchants and the trade of Flemish cities was more closely connected with the English and their wool production than with any other country. The Flemish merchants engaged in the English trade were also organized among themselves, in a company known as the "Flemish Hanse of London". According to Llewellyn, "The 13th century witnesses the growing importance of the Low German traders in Flanders, England, and

Norway" (Llewellyn, 36). For many decades and even centuries, the trade between England and the Netherlands has largely been in Dutch hands and carried on in Dutch vessels. As such, it comes as no surprise that a lot of the English language was influenced by Dutch through trade.

The most noteworthy example here is the very term *trade*, which itself is derived from Lower German *trade*, its first meaning being the course or track of a ship. Other notable examples are words like *pack*, derived from *packe* and *pakke*; *marten*, from *martren*; *train* from *traan*, which is today known as train oil; and *deal*, from *dele*, which first used to denote a slice sawn from a log of timber.

Since the beginning of the Middle English period, the sea intercourse between English and Low Dutch has been continuous and thus, many nautical terms have been borrowed from Low Dutch into English. Three things are to be considered when talking about this intercourse, the meeting of the two people and languages through aforementioned trade, their contact through fishing and whale fisheries and of course, the naval contact in numerous naval wars and fights with one another. Although there were few naval battles in the Middle Ages between English and Low Dutch, "[…] conflicts at sea were numerous enough, but consisted almost entirely of isolated but persistent acts of piracy and privateering" (Llewellyn, 65). There was also a certain amount of this intercourse in shipbuilding and thus, some nautical terms entered through this channel as well. According to Llewellyn, "During the 15th century endeavors to improve ship-building were being made in many countries, and it is at this time that the large herring-busses were built by the Dutch and that they first appeared in English waters" (Llewellyn, 69).

Some examples of this nautical influence can be seen in the names of some ships. Examples include *pink*, a sailing-vessel, derived from *pincke* and *pinke*; *lighter*, a boat, derived from *lichter*; and *yacht*, a light fast-sailing ship, derived from *jaght(e)*. Some common ship parts like *deck* or *bow* are also derived from Dutch, from the words *dec* and *boeg*, respectively, and even the word *pump* stems from *pumpe* and *pompe*. There are, of course, many more nautical and ship-related terms that came from Dutch into English through either sea-faring or fishermen, but there are too many to mention here.

Lastly, there is the influence through agriculture. Although there is no direct evidence for any significant influence of Low Dutch on agriculture during the Middle English period, many terms have nevertheless been borrowed. Many of the Flemings who settled in England during the period are assumed to have eventually settled on land, including the soldiers and mercenaries returning to farming after disbandment or losing their occupation as soldiers.

Some examples include the words *hack*, for a type of hoe, derived from *hacke*; the term *sight* for a sieve or strainer, probably from Low German *sichte*; the word *finkle*, derived from *venekel* and *veenkel*, meaning fennel; and perhaps most notably the term *gherkin*, derived from *gurkkijn* and *agurkkijn*, a young, green cucumber usually used for pickling. Nevertheless, the influence of Dutch on English in the area of agriculture remains rather small and insignificant.

1.2. Goods production and industry

"It is curious that most modern writers on economics, such as Ashley and Cunningham, have assumed that the English cloth trade practically started with the introduction of Flemish weavers by Edward III" (Llewellyn, 115). This, however, is not really the case, and it is also evident by the fact that if it were so, there would be many more Low Dutch words in the trade today. A number of Flemish weavers settled in towns around the new Norman castles after the Conquest. The influence of Low Dutch is apparent only in minor branches of the weaving trade, as Henry VIII used Dutch tapestry weavers that settled in London.

Some examples words and terms from this trade include *nappy*, derived from the Dutch *noppig*; *walk*, which was derived from *walken*; and *brake*, which comes from *braeke* or *breken*, among a few others.

The brewing of malt liquor was universally practiced in Old English times, however, a new variety was introduced from Flanders during the 14th century. Hops was used in the brewing of this new beer and to differentiate the English and Flemish variant, the terms *beer* and *ale* were used to denote the new liquor and the old-fashioned one, respectively. This new beer brewing was introduced into Sussex ports by Low Countrymen and of the beer brewers we hear of in the 15th century, almost all have Low Dutch names.

A couple of brewing terms were introduced from Low Dutch into English. Most important to note is the word *brewery*, which stems from the Dutch *brouwerije*, and was translated by Hexham as such, later leading to this being the term people favored over the earlier *brewhouse*. Of course, since hop based beer was introduced by the Dutch, the term *hop* also stems from the Dutch term *hoppe*.

Quite a number of words that are technical terms of handicrafts and minor manufacturers come from Low Dutch. These technical terms have often been introduced with the start of every fresh industry that was either started or improved by Low Dutch workers. Men from the Low

Countries enjoyed a high reputation as builders during the 13th century, and were often brought to England to work.

"Most of the building and construction terms from Low Dutch which appear in Middle English are specifically of carpentry" (Llewellyn, 132). Some examples include the words *peg*, a pin or bolt made of wood, derived from *pegge*; the word *cramp*, a grappling iron, from Dutch *krampe*; and *bush*, a metal lining for an axle-hole of a wheel, stemming from *bus*.

The Low Dutch people also had their influence in a large number of different industries. They were quite influential in various branches of metal working, specifically, the Germans and Dutch were particular experts in producing guns. The town of Dinant was known for its copper and brass working and several coppersmiths immigrated to England. Godfrey Box of Liége is credited with introducing wire-drawing and the improvement in the manufacture of knives in the 16th century is credited to the settlement of Flemish cutlers. There is also evidence of glass-making in England in the medieval period. Furthermore, the Dutch were pioneers in a number of refining industries, such as for example the production of salt. Along those, a number of other industries were either started or improved by the Low Dutch people, and their influence can even be seen in pottery and the making of earthenware.

While in all these industries, only few words were borrowed into English in each of the various professions, there still are several terms introduced by the Low Dutch. Examples include words like *scour*, which comes from Middle Dutch *schūren*; the word *potash*, meaning a crude form of potassium carbonate, which stems from the Dutch *potasch*; and *drill*, derived from *dril* or *drille*, among several other terms.

1.3. Science, literature and art

"It is extremely difficult to delimit the influence of Low Dutch upon the literary vocabulary" (Llewellyn, 143). Anyone from England who could either read a book in Low Dutch or studied in the Low Countries was naturally liable to it. The influence stems from the greatly increased desire for knowledge of foreign languages due to foreign trade in the 15th century. In the Renaissance, Low Country scholars taught at English universities. During the Elizabethan period, there were troops of traveling English actors visiting the Low Dutch and Low German towns. Intellectual life began to revive in the Netherlands and art, letters and science turned

Holland into a focus of intellectual development. During this period, there were almost as many foreigners in Low Dutch schools as there were natives.

During the 16th century, Low Dutch scholars laid the foundations of modern botany and a lot of their works were translated and adapted to English, and as such, many terms were taken directly from Dutch and simply adapted. Examples include *buckwheat*, derived from *boekweit*; and *wintergreen*, derived from the same word in Dutch, *wintergreen*, albeit pronounced differently.

The 16th and 17th century saw English scholars being influenced in medicine and surgery by the practice of the Dutch. Many books on medicine were also translated and some medical terms adapted to English, although not many. There was also the Dutch and Low German influence in the various branches of natural history and science.

The Low Dutch people, with their Flemish and Dutch Schools of painting, had also great influence on the fine arts in England, which is reflected in the English vocabulary of art. Some examples include terms like *masterpiece*; derived from *meesterstuk*, similar to the German *Meisterstück*, which is a literal, direct translation of the word; the term *easel*, meaning a wooden frame used to support a painting, taken from the Dutch *ezel*; the verb *sketch*, which stems from the Dutch verb *schetsen*; and *landscape*, from the Dutch word *landschap*.

What remains is a large number of non-classified borrowings from Low Dutch into English, but they are simply too numerous to mention here.

2. The 17th century – Dutch colonies in North America

According to van der Sijs, "The Dutch language landed in North America in September 1609, when the English captain Henry Hudson sailed *De Halve Maen* up the river that was later to receive his name" (van der Sijs, 20). The Dutchmen had already come in contact with groups of what they called the "wild" people during this expedition. This was the stereotypical name that the Dutch used for people they encountered in the far-away countries. They traded beads, knives, axes, dried currants and beans for furs with them. As the fur trade with Russia collapsed due to overhunting of beavers, the Dutch settlers were eager to find new suppliers of furs. They also "[…] cast a greedy eye on the abundant American timberlands" (van der Sijs, 20). At first, they sailed to New Netherland and back with their products and they set up trading posts and factories along the rivers for the fur trade with the Native Americans. The Dutch traders founded the West Indian Company in 1621, which had also been given the monopoly of trade with North and

South America by the Dutch government. The Dutch settlers carried on a busy trade with the Native Americans and until recently, not much has been known about their early contacts. The West Indian Company told the Dutch settlers that they should treat the Native Americans both fairly and honestly, and not to meddle in their internal affairs. Fort Amsterdam soon became the center of the new town called New Amsterdam, which had rapidly started developing into a busy seaport. However, the neighboring colony of New England was growing and developing much faster, which displeased the population of New Amsterdam.

After the Dutch conflict with the Native Americans in 1626, they made peace with the Mohawk tribe. Regardless, new conflicts constantly arose due to either lack of understanding or suspicion. This unfortunately led to a war with the Wappinger and Wappani Indians. Later, the Dutch also confronted the Esopus tribe of the Unami Delaware who lived neighboring the Dutch settlement of Wiltwyck, which was situated halfway between New Amsterdam and Fort Orange. However, the Dutch had more to fear from the other European powers in North America, rather than the indigenous population. "This became apparent in 1664, when the English sailed into New Amsterdam, and director-general Peter Stuyvesant had to surrender the province to them" (van der Sijs, 26). This was one of the causes of the Second English-Dutch War and later, during the peace negotiations, it was agreed that each could keep the American colonies they had taken from each other. It was Suriname for New Amsterdam, which was a profitable exchange for the Dutch. The period of this Dutch supremacy did not last long, only some 40 years, during which the American East Coast was a province of the Netherlands and Dutch was its official language. The short rule still left its mark on the Amerindian languages spoken in the area of New Netherlands and spawned several loanwords in their respective languages.

2.1. The Dutch language on the North American East Coast

The area of New Netherland comprised the present-day American states of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The small colony of New Netherland had people from all parts of the world along with their mother languages from the start and beside Dutch, one could hear High and Low German, French, English, various Scandinavian languages, etc. The Dutch, along with the Dutch language, formed the largest minority in the colony, and the majority in New Amsterdam. These settlers spoke several Dutch dialects, as there was no uniform standard language at the time. During the 17th century a standard written language was developed, but the spoken variant continued to show many differences throughout the territories.

The Dutch language spoken on the American East Coast even diverged from European Dutch, much in the same way that American and British English came to be different. Hence, the overseas variant of Dutch came to be called *Laag Duits*, or *Low Dutch*. Even though there were substantial differences between the European Dutch dialects, whenever speakers of different dialects met, they adapted their speech for better communication. Although the Dutch were not the majority in the Dutch colony, the language was still predominant. It is also visible in the fact that in "[…] the later vestiges of Dutch on the American East Coast, no influence from other languages such as German (High or Low) or French could be detected" (van der Sijs, 26). Along the Low Dutch spoken language, there was another variety of Dutch known in the colony, namely the *Nederduits* of the *Nederduits* Reformed Church, a congregation which most Dutchmen belonged to. This fact, that the Dutch language and the Church remained closely linked for more than a century, helped support the preservation of Dutch in the US for quite a long time.

After the annexation of New Netherland by the English colony New England in 1664, hardly any new Dutch settlers came to the East Coast. Many Dutch people went to new territories over from Manhattan and Long Island due to increasing pressure from the English. With them, new Dutch speakers kept arriving. Other colonists often learned Dutch and married into Dutch families in areas where the Dutch had the upper hand. Although the number of speakers of the Low Dutch language was at first on the increase, in official circles it came to be more and more crowded out by English. However, even though it became the general colloquial language, the US still to this day has no official language. In 1730, a unique linguistic guide appeared, written by Francis Harrison, who was a schoolteacher in Somerset County, New Jersey, under the title *The English and Low-Dutch School-Master / De Engelsche en Nederduytsche School-Meester*.

The number of Dutch speakers on the American East Coast was at its highest around the last quarter of the 18th century, "[…] according to Bachman's calculations: he estimates that in the states of New York and New Jersey, about 100,000 people spoke Dutch in 1790" (van der Sijs, 33). The Dutch influenced the American process of becoming independent even greater than was described, as The American Declaration of Independence in 1776 was inspired, among other things, by the Dutch "*Plakkaat van Verlatinghe*", in which the Dutch no longer acknowledged the Spanish king as their sovereign in 1581. Interesting to note is also that "[…] George Washington, installed as first president of the US in 1789, would have liked to be addressed officially as "High Mightiness," the American translation of the Dutch title, *Hoogmogendheid*" (van der Sijs, 35). As Congress did not agree, however, the form of address that was chosen was

"Mister President". With all these social changes, a lot of speakers exchanged Dutch with English in the course of the 19th century. With the compulsory education law being introduced in 1910, it proved to be a fatal blow to the rural Dutch vestiges.

After the descendants giving up Dutch in the early parts of the 19th century, Low Dutch only lived on in two separate regions: Bergen and Passaic County in New Jersey on one side, and around Albany, along the upper reaches of the Hudson river and the lower reaches of the Mohawk in the state of New York, on the other side. "Before the twentieth century, nothing was published in or about Low Dutch, except for a number of interesting remarks about the language that were recorded by Dutch travelers or immigrants in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (van der Sijs, 36). In the description of Jersey Dutch, there is also mention of a language called *nêxer däuts*, or "Negro Dutch", which was the type of Dutch used by a small colony of black people living on the mountain back of Suffern in New York.

After the 17th century, as many speakers of Low Dutch began to speak English as well, thus becoming bilingual, "In their English they retained many Dutch words, some of which were adopted by English speakers, and eventually these became part of the American English vocabulary" (van der Sijs, 48). Some suspect that the Dutch influence was not restricted to just loanwords, but all kinds of characteristics in the language, along with specific meanings distinguishing American from British English that can be traced back to Dutch. Apart from loanwords, many Dutch family names of colonists were also preserved. It is estimated that in the early 20th century, "[…] about two million Americans were descended from the original Dutch colonists" (van der Sijs, 49). The colonists formed the New York aristocracy for a long time and they maintained all kinds of Dutch customs even after giving up the Dutch language itself.

2.2. Dutch place names from the 17th century

There are quite a lot of names of places, streets and settlements that are of Dutch origin and their names retain their Dutch roots to this day. Some streets in New York derive their names from Dutch, for example *Bridge Street*, from the Dutch name *Brugstraat*; the famous *Broadway*, derived from the Dutch *Breede Weg*; and even *Wall Street*, which comes from the original name *Walstraat*, which is the location where the Dutch built a wall to protect them from Englishmen and Native Americans. Even some settlements that were originally Dutch, which have later been swallowed up by New York and became its districts, retain their Dutch names. Examples include *The Bronx* and *Yonkers*. Others have been named after some towns or villages back in Holland,

like *Brooklyn*, which was named after *Breukelen*; *Flushing*, named after *Vlissingen*; and *Harlem*, which got its name after the Dutch *Haarlem*. Even *Rhode Island*, which was in the 16th century compared to the Greek island of Rhodos, still actually got its name from the Dutch, which named it *Roodt Eylandt*, meaning "Red Island", and the name stuck. Outside of the area of what is today New York, there still remain several additional places from the 17th century that have preserved their Dutch names and roots.

2.3. The printing press

In England, printing was first introduced in the 15th century by William Caxton from Flanders. Additionally, two authors should be mentioned, Joseph Moxon and David Wardenaar. They wrote the first two printer's manuals in English and Dutch, namely the *Mechanick exercises on the whole of art printing* and *Beschrijving der boekdrukkunst*. According to Janssen, "In addition to being the oldest printer's manuals for their respective language areas, […] they are the only two printer's manuals to have been published in scholarly editions" (Jannsen, 154).

William Caxton used such a large number of Flemish words in his writings that they are simply too numerous to mention here. With his great influence as the first English printer, he managed to maintain some of these words in the English vocabulary, although the majority found in his writings did not catch on. Apprenticed to a draper named Large, he left England for Bruges after his master's death, to a large colony of English merchants. He continued on living in the Low Countries for the next 30 years, setting up his business in Bruges and even later entering the livery of the Mercers' Company in London.

Despite his pressing business in his official years, Caxton still found the time to work on his translations. Being greatly in favor of the Duchess of Burgundy from her first arrival in the Low Countries, his first translation was of the *Recueil des Histoires de Troye*, and he withdrew himself more and more to the service of the Duchess. He became acquainted with the printing press at Cologne, while visiting the city on official business, although there is doubt where exactly Caxton learned the art of printing itself. "In 1476 Caxton left Bruges to set up the first printing-press in England, and on the 18th of November, 1477, printed at Westminster *The Dictes or Sayenges of the Philosophres*, the first book printed in England" (Llewellyn, 152). From then on, he was fully employed in translating and printing.

Caxton must have been perfectly bilingual, having lived for thirty years in the Netherlands. He seems to have thought both in English and Flemish, as when he needed a word, it would often be a Flemish word that came to his mind instead of an English variant. Hence, it comes to no surprise that during his translations from French to English, the occasional Flemish word would find itself in the English text. The most frequent number of Flemish words appear in a translation made out of the Flemish. "These words seemed so natural to Caxton that he simply transferred them to his English page, the corresponding English word never having entered his head" (Llewellyn, 152).

A few examples of the Flemish words he used are *butter*; which had an altogether different meaning, used in the sense of 'one who cheats at cards', stemming from the Dutch and Flemish *botter*; the term *boil*, first coined by him to denote an inflamed tumor, from the Dutch *bûle* and *buul*, whose meaning remained the same to this day; and the word *meerkat*, denoting the animal, a term which was transferred directly from the Dutch word *meerkat*, albeit pronounced differently. Caxton, of course, used many other words which find themselves in the English language today, either in different form or with different meaning, but they are too numerous to list them all here.

3. Modern times – Dutch in the modern US culture

Today, there are very few speakers of either American Dutch, Flemish or Frisian, with most of them being elderly and their numbers diminishing. Most Dutch speakers in the US today reside in California, Pennsylvania, Florida, New York and Ohio. It seems that despite the diminishing amount of speakers, the Dutch culture has not completely dissolved in the American melting pot. "It looks as if the more the Dutch language loses ground, the more emphatically Dutch or Flemish ethnicity is emphasized, albeit in a slightly folkloristic fashion" (van der Sijs, 107). In the original Dutch enclaves such as Pella and Holland, some people still use Dutch words or phrases with the goal of strengthening the feeling of unity during family reunions, funerals and similar special gatherings. There are also many festivities still keeping up some Dutch traditions. "Dutch and Belgian immigrants can become members of a vast number of societies that promote contact and mutual friendship between the Netherlands, Belgium, and the US" (van der Sijs, 108). There are also a variety of local societies in the US. With all this, one can see that Dutch is still very much alive and kicking in modern America.

3.1. Dutch place names from the 19th and 20th century

Many new place names that were put on the map of America by the Dutch have been preserved and remain to this day. Most of these places have been given their names by groups of Dutch Protestants, as they named newly founded places after the town or province they hailed from. Some of these disappeared with time, like the towns of Hellendoorn and Staphorst in Michigan, and not all of the names were founded by immigrants, either. Only a few Catholic place names exists that refer to Dutch place names, such as New Netherland in Minnesota and Hollandtown in Wisconsin, along with Wilhelmina in Missouri. Some places have also been named after towns in Belgium, as is the case with Antwerp in Michigan and Ohio, Brussels in Illinois and Wisconsin, Charleroy in Pennsylvania, and Ghent in Minnesota. Responsible for the names of Belgium, Bonduel, Luxemburg, Namur, Rosiere and Walhain, all of which are in Wisconsin, are Belgian families from Luxembourg and the Walloon provinces.

The New York towns Barneveld, Batavia, Boonville, Cazenovia, DeRuyter, Leyden and Licklaen all owe their names and existence to the Holland Land Company, which bought those lands at the end of the 18th century. The construction of railroads was also partly financed by the Dutch, and several stops were named by the Dutch, with names such as Amsterdam in Missouri, De Queen and Vandervoort in Arkansas, De Ridder in Louisiana, Hospers and Zwolle in Iowa, Nederland in Texas, and Vanoss in Oklahoma. The town of Nederland in Colorado owes its name to a Dutch mining company, while Enka in North Carolina owes its name to a cotton producing firm. Some places were named after either famous Dutchmen or important historical events, although most of these were not given by the Dutch or the Flemish immigrants.

3.2. Dutch in modern American English

It seems that the largest contribution that the Dutch language has made to American English is in the area of foodstuffs, which is rather surprising, since the Dutch aren't really renowned for their culinary achievements. These include words for sweets such as *cookie*, *cruller*, *olykoek*, *pannicake* and *waffle*, some of which are still used today; and some names for cold meat or meat dishes, such as *apples and speck*, *headcheese*, and *meatworst*. Even the term *noodles* and *brie* actually come from Dutch, derived from *noedels* and *brij*, respectively. The by far best-known word still used today is *coleslaw*, taken from the Dutch word *koolsalade*or *koolsla*, which is nowadays ironically regarded as a typical American product. A well-known term for liquor that stems from Dutch is *brandy*, coming from the Dutch *brandewijn*, meaning "an alcoholic liquor".

As the Dutch colonists were faced with new flora and fauna for which they did not yet have names, they tried using some words from their native tongue, sometimes making up whole words and compounds that did not even exist in the Dutch language. Some of these names ended up in American English later. Such is the case with around 20 indigenous animals and plants. Examples include *abele tree, Easter Flower* and *sap bush*. Fish names like *sea bass*, *corporal* or *spearing* also come from Dutch. The term *groundhog*, being a direct translation, literally meaning "earth pig", also stems from the Dutch word *aardvarken*, along with several other species. One term to note is the interestingly named *Antwerp*, which is a variety of raspberry, very obviously named after the Belgian city of *Antwerpen*.

Several words from the household and household implements were also adopted from Dutch into American English, with examples including terms like *bake-oven*, *bake-pan* and *bed-pan*. Names of tools like *buck, lute*, *sawbuck* and *skein* also come from Dutch and are still in use today. Another word from this category that is still in use today is *bed-spread*.

Other categories include terms for official positions and politics, like *burgher*, meaning *citizen*, and the aforementioned *burgomaster*. The name used for the city administration's seat, *stadt-house*, also comes from Dutch. The today widely used word *boss*, has its roots in Dutch too, and was preferred over the earlier English term *master*, for socially critical reasons. Then there are words for the landscape, examples including terms relating to water, like *canal*, *fly*, *kill*, *binnacle* and *binnewater*. Terms like *bush* or *cripple* for bushy areas, *clove* for a ravine and *hook* for a sharp bend or point of land are of Dutch origin as well. Furthermore, several terms for things in and around the house are Dutch, including *best room*, *caboose*, *clothes room* and the most well-known word, *stoop*.

The terms *beer-hall* and *beer-cellar* seem to have their roots in Dutch, although they are also attributable to German immigrants at least in part. Words like *bakery*, *brewery*, *bookbindery* and *printery* were adopted from Dutch also. Famously still used today is the name of the US currency, the *dollar*, which stems from the Dutch *daler*, adopted way back in the 17th century. "The only significant word that Dutch children's language donated to American English is *Santa Claus* – a word that is indispensable to both children and adults, Santa being the personification of the most important feast of the year" (van der Sijs, 242). It stems from the Dutch term *Sante klaas*, which is a dialectal variant of *Sinterklaas*, which itself is a corruption of *Sint Nicolaas*, or St. Nicholas in Dutch.

There is of course a large number of other words that have been adopted from Dutch into the modern American English language, half of which are not used anymore, although altogether they are too numerous to all be mentioned here.

4. Conclusion

The influence of the Dutch and, indeed, many other languages on the English language was simply unavoidable. The English language has always been a so-called "sponge" for other languages, and given the rich European history and the many different contacts that England had with the other cultures, peoples and languages of the European mainland, it is no wonder that it was so greatly influenced. Many would agree that this has indeed made both the English culture and the English language richer.

Even though the Dutch words and terms that have been introduced into the English language are, for the greater part, of a rather simple nature, being common words for daily things like foodstuffs, tools, animals and similar, their significance is still important. The Dutch did not intend to spread Dutch culture or propagate Dutch art or science. This influence happened naturally, over time, through trade and later on, during the time of the colonies, the main motivation for the Dutch was once again not propaganda or spreading of their culture, but the improvement of their own social standing, as was the goal of people from many other nations during that time, which directly led to the melting pot that the US is today.

Even though roughly only 1% of the English words used today are of Dutch origin, it is nonetheless an important and integral part in the development of the modern English language, without which it would have been vastly different from what it is today. Thus, the English language has been forever changed. Of course, the Dutch language, just as much as English and many others, has not been left untouched by this wide variety of contacts and influences over the centuries and Dutch, too, has adopted some words and terms from other languages, including English, but this is documented, referenced and further examined in a variety of other works not mentioned here.

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