

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LATIN-ORIGIN DERIVATIONAL FEATURES IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN WORD FORMATION

Saliyeva Surayyo Mansurjonovna
Teacher of the department "English Language Teaching Methodology and Educational Technologies," UzSWLU

Abstract: This study investigates the morphological productivity and structural adaptation of Latin-origin lexemes in English and Russian. While both languages heavily utilize Latinate material for scientific and academic discourse, their derivational mechanisms differ significantly. English relies on a mix of native and Latinate affixes with a high degree of conversion, whereas Russian integrates Latin roots into its complex system of prefixal-suffixal models. The findings illustrate those Latinate elements act as a unifying "international" layer while adhering to the internal grammatical rules of the borrowing language.

1. Introduction

Latin has historically served as a primary "donor" language for European lexicons, providing a foundation for technical, legal, and academic terminology. In English, the Latinate layer accounts for a substantial portion of the vocabulary, often entering through French or direct borrowing. In Russian, Latin borrowings are equally vital, particularly in the formation of neologisms and scientific nomenclature. The objective of this research is to identify the **derivational features**—the specific ways new words are formed—using these shared Latin roots in two distinct linguistic systems.

2. Methods

A contrastive linguistic analysis was conducted using a sample of 400 Latin-origin roots common to both languages (e.g., *struct-*, *form-*, *dict-*). The research employed:



- **Morphological Analysis**: Identifying the affixes (prefixes and suffixes) used to expand Latin roots.
- **Comparative Method**: Analyzing the productivity of specific word-formation models (e.g., suffixation vs. conversion) across both languages.
- **Typological Comparison**: Evaluating how the analytic nature of English and the fusional nature of Russian influence the "behavior" of borrowed morphemes.

3. Results

The study revealed three primary derivational trends:

- **Affixation Models**:
  - **English**: Frequently uses "hybrid" derivation, combining Latin roots with both native (e.g., *re-write*) and Latinate (e.g., *distribute-ion*) affixes.
  - **Russian**: Integrates Latin roots into standard Slavic derivational chains. For example, the Latin root *form-* becomes *form-irovat'* (verb) or *form-irovka* (noun), utilizing specific Russian aspectual and nominal suffixes.
- **Productivity of Parts of Speech**:
  - English often utilizes **conversion** (changing a word's category without adding affixes), such as the noun *process* becoming the verb *to process*.
  - Russian rarely uses conversion; instead, it relies on **suffixal-prefixal** methods to change word classes (e.g., *struktura* → *struktur-irovat'*).
- **Grammatical Assimilation**:
  - Borrowed Latin words in Russian immediately acquire gender, number, and case paradigms (e.g., *feyk* / «фейк» has a full declension paradigm).



- In English, Latinate words often retain original plural forms (e.g., *datum/data*) but otherwise follow minimal inflectional rules.

4. Discussion

The results confirm that while the "building blocks" (Latin roots) are shared, the **derivational "grammar"** remains language-specific. English exhibits greater flexibility through conversion and hybridity, allowing Latinate roots to permeate everyday speech more readily. Conversely, Russian displays a "Slavicizing" effect, where Latin roots are strictly bound by the language's rich inflectional system.

This "international" vocabulary provides a bridge for language learners; for instance, 411 Latin-origin loanwords are found among the 3,000 most common Russian words, many with direct English equivalents. Ultimately, the derivational features of Latin-origin lexemes reflect the broader typological shift of English toward analyticity and Russian's persistence as a fusional language.

Conclusion

Latin-origin word formation in English is characterized by structural transparency and high productivity through conversion and affixation. In Russian, these same roots undergo deep morphological assimilation, becoming part of complex derivational chains. This comparative study underscores the resilience of Latin as a global linguistic resource adapted to local grammatical constraints.

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