The Computer and Internet Terms: A Gold Mine for English Dictionaries

Riyad F. Hussein
Department of English/Translation, University of Petra, Jordan

Ahmad S. Haider
Department of English Language and Translation, Applied Science Private University, Jordan

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Abstract

This article investigates how the internet and computer-based terminology has enriched the English lexical stock through the use of different word formation processes. It also aims to find out the incorporation rate of online-related vocabulary in four dictionaries; namely Collins Online Dictionary, Cambridge Online English Dictionary, Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary, and Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary. The digital terms were extracted mainly from NetLingo categories: acronyms, online jargon, online business terms, online marketing, net hardware, net software, net technology, technical terms, and text messaging. To achieve the aims of the study, hundreds of online terms were analyzed and classified in terms of the different word formation processes such as derivation. The results show that both Greek and Latin and the internet have immensely enriched the English lexicon and that the incorporation of internet-related expressions varied considerably among the dictionaries.

Keywords: digital terms; word formation processes; borrowing, Greek and Latin; English dictionaries.

1. Background and Review of Literature

There have traditionally been two known procedures to enrich and elaborate the English vocabulary: through direct or indirect borrowings from other languages and through the internal word formation processes. The process of borrowing neologisms and lexical items is a phenomenon that is hardly peculiar to any given language, but can be found in nearly all languages, even those that manifest puristic attitudes towards opening to other languages in their elaboration of the lexical stock, such as French and Arabic.

Due to giant strides made in diverse fields of knowledge, speech communities have had difficulty catching up with the cultural and technical progress of other societies, and regularly translate into the native language; hence the need for lexical borrowing. The historical development of English plainly shows the multitude of languages from which it has borrowed, such as Latin, Greek, and Norman French. Borrowings from Greek into English were necessarily indirect because there was no direct contact between the two languages, as is the case today. These borrowings came either through Latin texts or various vernaculars, or from Ancient Greek texts; not the living language. English often received Greek words indirectly from French, which in turn borrowed the Greek terms from Latin. It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss or describe the changes that took place on these words before being totally assimilated into the structure of the English language.
There is no doubt that Latin, Greek, and French have all influenced the English language, and more particularly the English vocabulary stock, over different historical periods. The immense Greek contribution to English vocabulary can be easily shown in the large number of scientific, medical, and technical borrowings that have been created by compounding Greek stems and affixes. Likewise, the role of Latin, although not as significant in contributing to the creation of new words in English, is not to be overlooked. Ayers (1986) maintains that:

Since the need has arisen for new words to describe the discoveries of science and to name the innovations wrought by technology, Latin and Greek have come into the dictionary as an avalanche. Lexicographers cannot keep up with the flurry of new words formed from these languages, and indeed some words come into being and fall out of use before they are recorded in any dictionary (Ayers 1986, 13).

In the aftermath of the Norman Conquest (11th century), French became the language of the nobility and aristocracy in England, and English was relegated to a subordinate position of being the language of the lower-class farmers, peasants, and the underprivileged. But by the fourteenth century, when English regained its position as a dominant language, people started to use it regularly (Baugh and Cable 1993).

The Normans had contributed roughly 10,000 words to English, of which 75% remain in use today. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries created the need for new words to describe inventions and new discoveries. Many words were thus borrowed from Latin, while others were coined from Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Latin word elements freely combine with elements from all other languages, including native Anglo-Saxon words (Hughes 2000).

The influence of the Norman Conquest on England was evident in many aspects: political, social, and linguistic. Due to this contact, English lexicon was developed extensively, and this influence is too obvious. Hughes (2000) argues:

The Norman Conquest led to an enormous enrichment of the English vocabulary. This was because the French loan-words differed greatly in reference and in focus from the Anglo-Saxon stock dealing with everyday objects and experience (Hughes 2000, 12)

A computerized survey of about 80,000 words in the old Shorter Oxford Dictionary estimated that the percentage of words borrowed from Latin was 28.24% and from Greek, 5.32%. A survey by Williams of 10,000 words taken from several thousand business letters indicated that the percentage of words borrowed from French was 41% and from Latin, 15%. The discrepancy in the percentage of Latin words in these two statistics is attributed to the register being used, and to the fact that Latin elements can sometimes be taken as French elements (Williams 1986). In line with this, Hoffer (2005) states:

Latin, as the language of learning in Europe for many centuries, had an impact during the Renaissance. From the 14th century, Latin, and to a lesser degree, its sister classical language, Greek, have been a continuous source of loanwords. The most obvious places to see Latin borrowings used in English are the terminologies
used in biology, botany, and chemistry. The taxonomy and the available compound words are from Latin. Most of the world's scientific community uses Latin as the universal language (or at least terminology) of science (Hoffer 2005, 55).

The English openness and receptivity to borrowing from other languages is most obvious in the domain of lexicon. An examination of English at present shows that English has borrowed freely and without reservation from almost all the languages with which it had contact, whether Germanic, Romance, Semitic, or Dravidian. There is hardly any language, ancient or modern, from which English did not borrow, such as Arabic, French, Gaelic, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Maori, Persian, Polish, Sanskrit, Swahili, Turkish, and Yiddish. Examining any etymological English dictionary will certainly show the origin of borrowed words and the historical development of their meanings over time.

The following narrative, Hughes (2000) affirms, contains twenty-five words, or 27%, which come from exotic or alien sources. This shows the ability of English to assimilate foreign lexical elements.

When the blizzard started, we put on our parkas and balaclavas, had some whisky, and started to manoeuvre the yacht through the mammoth ice floes. We eventually made landfall, but our euphoria at being on terra firma was short-lived. As we were trekking across the tundra looking for a place to bivouac, a horde of bandits confronted us demanding cash. They ransacked our rucksacks. One of the thugs went berserk and we were scared that they might all run amok when they found nothing with which to traffick but bananas, chocolate and the alcohol (Hughes 2000, 364).

The development of English vocabulary was not restricted to borrowing from classical languages, as it has utilized the internal word formation processes peculiar to it. These processes had formerly been used to enrich the lexicon inventory of biology, botany, chemistry, physics, and astronomy, and more recently, the internet.

Researchers in text linguistics and other affiliated disciplines are undoubtedly in agreement as to the emergence of a new language variety: Internet English, or cyberspeak (Segerstad 2002, Davis and Brewer 1997, Lingwood and Hussein 2012, Crystal 2008a, 2011, 2008b, 2006, Baron 2008) among others. This variety came about as a result of the accelerating rates of technological achievements in the second half of the twentieth century onwards, and the widespread use of the computer; its applications all of which gave rise to a new medium, which is netspeak. (Crystal 2006). Netspeak, Netlish, or Weblish, as others call it, is used in seven broad situations: electronic mail, e-mail, chatgroups, virtual worlds, world wide web (WWW), instant messaging, and blogging (Crystal 2006, 10).

Although the language usage and style vary considerably in these situations, there are still some commonalities to warrant naming it Netspeak or Internet English. Baron (2008, 15) predicts that “the kind of language appearing in e-mail, instant messaging, and SMS will tend to become more homogeneous: short, informal, and full of space-saving devices such as abbreviations and truncated syntax.” Posteguillo (2002, 22) calls the internet “a constant generator of new terminology.” According to him, “The
development of new terms is nothing special because new inventions require new items, but the creation of new terms in the internet seems to be different.”

Before discussing the word formation processes on the internet, it is imperative to state what we mean by it. The internet can be defined as computer networks that enable people to receive and send messages. It was developed in the 1960s in the USA. People from all over the world and from all walks of life quickly started to use it for a variety of reasons, such as emailing, blogging, instant messaging, and discussion groups. Crystal (2006, 3) asserts:

Functional information, such as electronic shopping, business data, advertisements, and bulletins, can be found alongside creative works, such as poems and scripts, with the availability of movies, TV programmes, and other kinds of entertainment steadily growing. Some commentators have likened the internet to an amalgam of television, telephone, and conventional publishing and the term cyber space has been coined to capture the notion of a world of information present or possible in digital form.

It is undeniable that the computer and internet have radically changed communication worldwide and revolutionized the way people communicate with one another. This has had an impact on writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and ways of expression. Whereas some view the impact of the computer and internet as being negative, others view it as positive and advantageous, especially for teenagers, who use the language expressively. Those who adhere to the former position maintain that the explosion of the electronic world has resulted in misuse of the aspects of language and deterioration of writing skill due to the overuse of acronyms, abbreviations, and informal English and slang in formal settings. Researchers such as Crystal (2011) believe the impact of the world wide web on language remains minimal, and adds that English has not become a different language as a result of the internet. Crystal (2011, 2) maintains that “the main effect of the Internet on language has been to increase the expressive richness of language, providing the language with a new set of communicative dimensions that haven’t existed in the past.” Jansen (2007) agrees with Crystal and adds that the new technology has not fundamentally changed existing language but added immensely to the vocabulary.

So Internet English, as some like to call it, is a source of creativity and innovation in the English language that professionals in computer technology, programmers, technicians, and lay people have contributed to. They are still contributing, largely through constantly dealing with this technology and in the process, help create and shape new language forms and styles.

The use of English in so many situations by technologically oriented people’s intent on developing this technology and its ramifications in the West, and by millions of people elsewhere using it either for entertainment, writing personal or business letters, blogging, or simply browsing the internet, helped to create new language forms and enrich different existing language aspects of the language. Rúa (2007) maintains:

There are expert users (adepts and specialists) sharing computer-related interests or jobs, for instance programmers, technicians, people in e-business, designers and
regular chatters. These users develop their own jargon, their main motive being exclusivity, since by means of the jargon they strengthen their bonds and exclude outsiders (Rúa 2007, 138).

However, innovation and creativity are most evident in the area of lexicon, where thousands of new words, multiword units, and expressions have entered the language via the handling of the computer technology, its applications, and the internet. Subsequent to using the language in these domains and activities, the lexical stock has been enriched considerably. Thousands of words entered the English language and have been incorporated such as lock, stock, and barrel through use of the language internal word formation processes common in the English language.

2. Objectives and Methodology

The main objectives of this study are to investigate how the computer and internet technology have enriched and expanded the English lexical stock through the use of different word formation processes and to find out the extent of incorporating computer-specific lexicon in principal English dictionaries.

The data for this study were mainly extracted from NetLingo (Jansen 2007), which is an online dictionary of more than 3,000 terms, launched in 1995 and updated monthly. The NetLingo dictionary contains simple explanations and comprehensive coverage, including chat words and smileys. The words were primarily extracted from the following fields or categories: acronyms (ROM), online jargon (double geeking), online business terms (cookies), online marketing (retailment), net hardware (tablet), net software (dongle), net technology (router), net programming (Java Free Code), technical terms (compiler), and text messaging shorthand (HAND). Then the data were categorized as to the type of word formation process used, such as coinage, compounding, blending, acronyms, clipping, conversion, derivation, backformation, and multiple processes.

As to the incorporation of computer-related words, four standard dictionaries were examined, namely Cambridge English/English Dictionary Online, Collins Online Dictionary, Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary Online, and the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (paper edition) 2015, to find out the rate of incorporating internet-related words in these dictionaries. For this purpose, 38 internet-related vocabulary items were randomly selected from the data and were distributed as follows: four words from the category coinage: Siliconia, Google, Facebook, and YouTube; eight words from the category compounding: double geeking, camel case, silver surfer, flame wars, cyber, online, meatloaf, and bookmark; five words from the category blending: emoticon, netizen, splog, cybrarian, and advertorial; four words from the category backformation: to webify, to webcast, to deselect, and to defrag; five words from the category clipping: simus, broadcasting, xian, tech, and ezine; four words from the category conversion: to skype, to twitter, to google, and to yahoo; and seven words from the category derivation: domainism, digitizer, hypermedia, gamification, retweet, compiler, and router. (See Table 1.)
3. The internet and word formation processes

Electronic communication is viewed as a fertile ground for new vocabulary through its use of productive word formation processes that already exist in the language, so an analysis of these processes is in order. We studied the word formation process of coinage, compounding, blending, acronyms, clipping, conversion, derivation, backformation, multiple processes, and their role in enriching the English lexicon.

**Coinage**, which is not very common in English, can be defined as the word formation process in which a new word is created either deliberately or accidentally without using the other word formation processes and often from trade names or commercial products. Following is a list of words that show common coinages found in everyday English: aspirin, heroin, Band-Aid, Frisbee, Google, kerosene, Kleenex, muggle, nylon, psychedelic, quark, Xerox, Dettol, white-wipes, Hoover, Teflon, jeans, Sandwich volt, Watt, Pampers, and Teflon. Coinages are also referred to simply as neologisms, meaning new words. After their first introduction, they become everyday words in the language.

Some of the words related to the computer and internet that were introduced in the language are Siliconia (nicknames for cities and areas with a heavy concentration of high-tech firms); Yahoo (an American multinational Internet corporation); Twitter (an online social networking and micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read tweets); Google (an American corporation specializing in Internet-related services and products); YouTube (a video-sharing website whose content has been uploaded by individuals); Microsoft (an American corporation that develops, manufactures, licenses, supports, and sells software and electronics); Facebook (a website that connects people with friends and others who live around the world); and Napster (an application that makes it possible for individuals to access one another’s computer files on their hard drives).

**Compounding** is joining or combining two or more separate words to produce a new lexical word that functions as a single unit of meaning. Through knowing the meaning of each separate word, one can easily predict the meaning when the two words are put together. Thus, **towing** and **truck** are joined to produce **tow truck**; **cotton** and **candy** are used to produce **cotton candy**. Compounding is very common, and is used across most languages to enrich the vocabulary inventory of and thus enable speakers to better express themselves. There are hundreds of English compound nouns such as **workbook**, **textbook**, **weekend**, **lovebird**, **contact lenses**, **paycheck**, **war zone**, **friendly fire**, **night rate**, **chairman**, **chairperson**, **day care**, and **healthcare**. In addition, there are compound adjectives such as **bad-looking**, **hard-working**, **funny-looking**, **easy-going**, **far-reaching**, **mouth-watering**, and **record-breaking**.

Compounding is used overwhelmingly in Internet English. Most compounds consist of two nouns, as shown in the word **digital**, which has generated at least twenty-seven compounds such as **digital cash**, **digital audio**, **digital music**, **digital divide**, **digital kudzu**, **digital life**, **digital style**, and **digital signature**. The same is true of the word **cyber**, which has generated at least thirty compounds, some of which are **cyber-Angels**, **cyber-sitters**, **cybercafé**, **cyberattack**, **cyber fraud**, **cyber safety**, **cybersex**, **cyber shooting**, **cyberslang**, **cyberwar**, and **cyberterrorism**. The word **online** has also generated compounds, such as
online ad, online auction, online crime, online dating, online porn, and online survey. From the form dot com, many compounds have been coined, such as dot-commers (people who are employed at a dot-com company), dot-comrade (an online acquaintance with whom one corresponds on the internet), dot-commuter (someone who commutes from a suburban neighborhood to the downtown area) and dot-commie (a nickname for anyone who believes that everything on the Web should be accessible free of charge).

**Blending** is the formation of a new word by joining the initial part of one word with the end part of another word. This process is so common in online English that at least fifty or sixty new English words have been created in different online categories, such as online jargon, online business, online marketing, and net technology. Following are some of these words. *Emoticon* (a sequence of typed characters that create a rough picture of something, such as a facial expression) is derived from *emotion* and *icon*. *Advertorial* is an advertisement that resembles an editorial. *Netizen* (a citizen of the internet) is a blend of *net* and *citizen*. *Netiquette* are the unofficial rules that govern online interaction and behavior.

**Acronyms** are new words formed in English by taking the first letters of a number of words and combining them to produce a new word. In some acronyms, the letters are pronounced separately, as in TB (tuberculosis), or ICU (intensive care unit). The typical pattern, however, is that acronyms are pronounced as new single words, as in FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), and NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration).

Hundreds of new word creations and innovations have entered Internet English via acronyms, which are mostly used in chatting, emailing, instant messaging, and computer programming. Following are some of these acronyms. BRB (be right back), LOL (laughing out loud or lots of love), POS (parents over shoulder), VM (voice mail), and XOXO (hugs and kisses).

In computer-related abbreviations and acronyms, namely net hardware, net software, net technology, and net programming, there are hundreds of innovations that have entered the English language, such as BASIC (Beginners all-purpose symbolic instruction code), BIT (Binary Digit), CD (compact disk), DOS (disk operating system), HTML (hypertext markup language), and ISP (internet service provider).

**Clipping** is another word formation process in which a word is shortened or reduced. This process generally occurs when a multisyllabic word is reduced to shorter or to a one-syllable word. According to Sun (2010), clipping can be classified into at least three types; back clipping, as in disco from discotheque; front clipping, as in copter from helicopter, and front and back clipping, as in flu from influenza. In the data, there were some instances of front clipping as in net from internet; roadcasting “a streaming network that allows motorists to broadcast in-car, digital music libraries to other vehicles”, and Xtian "Christian, online jargon, also known as message shorthand". As to back clippings, there were only five or six examples, net "taken from network": subs "subscribers", ESC "from escape": sub "clipped from substitute": sig file "signature file": screen res (resolution); tech "clipped from technical"; and finally see "Online jargon, which means wait a second ".
Conversion is the shift in the grammatical function of a word from one category to another without changing form. So in conversion, a word form is changed from one part of speech to another. Most commonly, nouns are changed into verbs, as in impact, chair, bottle, and butter. Not very many words underwent conversion in Internet English. The company name Google, for example, began to be used as a verb meaning “to search via Google.” Likewise, the company name Facebook is used as a verb, as in, “he Facebooked them on their wedding anniversary.” Skype is used in the same way.

Texting is the act of typing and sending a brief, electronic message, also used as a verb. Although the words above can better fit under the subheading multiple processes, it is not inappropriate to list them here as well, to show how they underwent conversion.

Derivation is the process of creating a new word out of an old word, usually by adding a prefix, as in happy/unhappy, or a suffix, as in care/careless. Derivation is the most common word formation process by which hundreds or thousands of new words are created in English through the use of other prefixes, such as im-, un-, in-, dis-, post-, and ante-, which appear in words such as impossible, unrealistic, incorrect, disappear, and postgraduate and the use of suffixes, such as -er, -ism, -ize, and -tion in the words wheeler, determinism, synthesize, and proliferation.

Hundreds of new words or old words with new senses have entered English through the use of internet-related technology. Following are some of these words: Digitizer (a person who loves to convert ink on paper into a digital form), domainism (internet prejudice), blogger (one who blogs), gamer (a person who plays any one of many electronic games and interactive TV games), and influencers (individuals who are active on social media sites and have influence over others).

Other words were formerly used in the language, but with the introduction of the computer and the internet, their meanings have extended and gained additional new senses, for instance, a floater (an online ad format that is transparent and appears over a web page), and router (an electronic device that connects computers to the internet). With the use of the prefix hyper-, many internet-related words were introduced in English, such as hyper-texts (a system for writing and displaying texts that can be linked in multiple ways to related documents), hyperlink (the text or graphics on a Web site that can be clicked on with a mouse to take you to another Web page), and hypermedia (the multimedia links on a Web page that let you download graphics).

Backformation is the process by which a word undergoes a special type of reduction to form a word of another part of speech, as in some nouns that are shortened to form verbs, such as in the verb televise, which is taken from the noun television; babysit from babysitter, and defrag from defragmentation, which means to optimize the hard drive, clean it up, with a program to make it run smoothly. Other words that exhibit backformation are morph or morphing, taken from metamorphosis, which means to turn one thing into another. To webify is created from the noun webification, which means to convert information from its original format into content that can be displayed on the Web. And finally, configure, which is derived from configuration which means to change software or hardware actions by changing their settings.
Multiple Processes. Unlike word formation in isolation, in multiple word formation processes, more than one process is involved in the creation of new words. Clipping and compounding constitute the most common types of multiple processes, as evident in the words malware, auto-parser, autoresponder, and ejournal. In the last two units, the words automatic and electronic are clipped and combined to the words responder and journal, respectively, to create the compounds autoresponder and e-journal.

There are at least 27 expressions in which e- is attached to other words, such as ewar, e-lesson, e-commerce, e-mail or email, e-text, e-business, and e-document. The compound e-zine, however, exhibits double clippedings of the words electronic and magazine, and compounding of both clipped forms to produce the word e-zine. Likewise, ad-, which is clipped from the word advertisement, is attached to other words to form compounds, such as ad-blocking, ad banner, ad click, ad exchange, ad space, ad network, ad overlay, ad request, and ad view.

Again, the word netsplit (a loss of contact between two IRC servers) exhibits clipping of the word internet and compounding with split. The word netsite (the name used by Netscape Navigator to refer to a WWW address) also exhibits clipping of the word internet and compounding with the word site.

Furthermore, the clipped form net from the word internet is attached to numerous words to form about 35 compounds, such as net head, net lag, net police, net news, NetLingo, Netscape, netbook, net radio, netsplit, and network.

Two very well-known computer technology corporations, namely Facebook and Google, exhibit multiple word formation processes that are coinage and conversion. These are when they began to be used as verbs: to Facebook, and to Google. People thus can Facebook one another and google a book. Similarly, the word Skype (the Internet company that enables people to make phone calls over the Internet) can be used as a noun and as a verb. The word dilberted (to be exploited and oppressed by one’s boss) is derived from the experiences of the Dilbert cartoon, and also shows multiple processes of coinage and derivation.

4. Extent of internet-related terms incorporated in English dictionaries

The results showed that internet-related vocabulary incorporation in the English dictionaries ranged from 71% in Collins Online Dictionary to 52.6% in Cambridge Online English Dictionary and Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary. The percentage was calculated by dividing the number of words or entries entered or incorporated in the dictionary by the total number of the word sample, which is 38. So 27 words (71%) were incorporated in Collins Online Dictionary and 25 words (65.7%) in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary and 20 words (52.6%) were incorporated in each of Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary and Cambridge Online English Dictionary. (See Table 1.) With regard to the internet word incorporation, the dictionaries were ranked as follows: 1) Collins Online Dictionary, 71%; 2) Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 65.7%; and third for 3) Cambridge English Online Dictionary and Merriam Webster’s Online Dictionary, 52.6% each.
### Table 1: Percentage of internet-related terms incorporated in different English dictionaries

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Vocab item</th>
<th>Cambridge</th>
<th>Collins Dict.</th>
<th>Merriam Webster's</th>
<th>Oxford Advanced</th>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>To Skype</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>To tweet</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>To google</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>To Yahoo</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Domainism</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Digitizer</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Hypermedia</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gamification</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Retweet</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Compiler</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Router</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Blogger</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>52.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>71%</strong></td>
<td><strong>52.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>65.7%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results also showed that 15 words (39%) of the internet words were entered in the four dictionaries under investigation and these words are: Cyber, online, bookmark, emoticon, netizen.
advertisorial, to webcast, tech, to google, digitizer, hypermedia, retweet, compiler, router, and blogger. Their incorporation in all four dictionaries did not come as a surprise because of their frequent use by emailers, bloggers, chatters in My space and Facebook, Hashtag and other social media sites. So words like cyber: cyber-Angels, cyber-sitters, cybercafé, cyberattack, cyberfraud, cyber-safety, cybersex, cyber-shooting, cyberslang, cyberwar, and cyberterrorism, are constantly used not only in social media, but also in the World Wide Web.

The same applies to the form digitizer and its derivation, digital, which is used in a number of compounds such as digital cash, digital audio, digital music, digital divide, digital kudzu, digital lifestyle, and digital signature. Bookmark is a very popular word among those who constantly use the computer. It can be defined as a saved shortcut that directs the computer browser to a specific webpage. It stores the title, URL, and the corresponding page. Although the word originally meant a strip of leather, card, or other material, used to mark one’s place in a book, in the internet culture its meaning has expanded to mean record of the address of a website. Emoticons, as Seiter (2015) reports, “are very popular; we react to them like we would to real human face and they are acceptable even in business settings; in addition they soften the blow of a critique. We get the chance to express our positive feelings and tone when using emoticons whether in chatting or in emailing.”

Online and the compounds online ad, online crime, online dating, online newsletter, online porn, online shopping, online survey, online banking, and online auction are very common and used by both native and nonnative English speakers. Also the words netizen, retweet, hypermedia, compile, router, and webcast are very popular in the culture of the internet and have thus been incorporated into the four dictionaries.

In contrast, the results showed that only seven words or terms were incorporated in the three dictionaries, and these are Facebook, YouTube, silver surfer, to deselect, cybrarian, to defrag, and e-zine. Despite the small number of words incorporated in these dictionaries, this can perhaps be viewed as a fairly positive indication, as it can point to their potential incorporation in all dictionaries in future updates. What makes this projection valid is the increased use of these terms on social networks sites and by online users, technicians, and programmers.

Finally, the data showed that computer-specific meanings of nine expressions (22%) were entirely missing from all dictionaries: siliconia, double geeking, camel case, meatloaf, sinus, xtian, to Yahoo, domainism, and gamification. However, with recent updates of dictionaries, such as the Oxford English and American English dictionaries, it remains to be seen whether the new meanings of these words will be assimilated in English and American dictionaries or not. But judging from our past knowledge about the new words, which took so long to be recorded and assimilated into the English language, it is not unrealistic to expect system-derived and user-derived words to be incorporated in future editions. Those interested in Oxford dictionary updates can always access OxfordDictionaries.com, which is a free dictionary and language reference site. The site is updated regularly with new words and senses, and special features on language change.
5. Summary and Conclusion

Traditionally, the English vocabulary has expanded due to borrowings from the classical languages Greek and Latin, and other European and non-European languages with which English had contact across the different historical periods, and due to the use of the internal word formation processes described earlier. While the English language vocabulary expansion was linked to Greek and Latin, and to a lesser extent French, to enrich the English vocabulary in the spheres of drugs, environment, business, health and fitness, lifestyle and leisure, the law, the arts, science and technology, and the computer and internet, the internal word formation processes have been primarily used to expand and enrich the computer and internet-related terms. As such, hundreds of word entries have been incorporated and assimilated into the NetLingo dictionary, and scores of words were incorporated in general purpose English and American dictionaries to varying degrees.

Online terminology has considerably enriched the English vocabulary via two sources: the creation of new words, and the process of semantic expansion on preexisting words to refer to new senses of meaning. The first process is evident in the creation of words such as YouTube, tradigital (pertaining to the handing down of beliefs and customs from generation to generation), moblog (the short form of the phrase mobile log), Smut miner (someone who endlessly downloads porno pictures from the internet), sploggers (spurious bloggers), netiquette (the unofficial rules that govern online interaction and behavior), netizen (a citizen of the internet), emoticon (a sequence of typed characters that create a rough picture of something, such as a facial expression), crapplet (a badly written or totally useless Java applet), sysadmin (a person responsible for running and maintaining a computer system), vishing (derived from voice and phishing).

The second is related to a process of semantic expansion. According to Cruse (1986, 71), “There are many previously existing lexical items whose ‘sense spectra’ are enriched with new senses to refer to realities developed to meet the communication needs.”

The compound meatloaf, for instance, is defined in Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as a finely chopped meat, onions, that are mixed together like a loaf of bread and then baked. But in cyberspace its meaning has expanded to mean unsolicited personal e-mail. The word yahoo basically means a rude person who has little education, but was extended to mean a name of a computer corporation. To deselect, in British English, means to refuse to select an existing MP for reelection, and has been expanded to mean change of mind after clicking a checkbox to select an item by selecting another item by clicking the box again. Cookie, which is a plain cake of many varieties, was expanded to mean small files that are stored on a user’s computer and hold a modest amount of data specific to a particular client and website. Finally, catfish, a bottom-feeder, has developed in meaning to refer to a person who sets up a false social networking profile for deceptive purposes.

Posteguillo (2002, 22) indicated that the “internet is a constant generator of new terminology.” It is not unrealistic to say that it will continue to generate more and more terms and that these terms or additions will find their way to specialized dictionaries and later to general purpose dictionaries. In 2014, for instance, just over 150 words and definitions were added to Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary,
available now in print and online at Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. Some of these words are hashtag, selfie, and tweep, which reflect the influence of technology on social networking and refer to the way we communicate and share as individuals. Crowdfunding, big data, and gamification illustrate how technology is being used to understand behavior. Other new additions include freegan, fracking, and Yooper; the last is a nickname used for a native or resident of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
References


