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GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Trabajo de Fin de Grado

African Loanwords in the History of English:
A Diachronic Study Based on the *OED*

Eva María Serrano de la Vega

Fco. Javier Ruano García

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Abstract

This BA thesis focuses on the lexical impact of non-natives varieties of English used in Africa on the English language. My aim is to analyse African loanwords in the history of English looking at the evidence provided by the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*. Although at first the editors of the dictionary were not very determined to include words of African origin and finally decided to omit them, in the second and third editions they changed their policy towards their inclusion in the dictionary, showing the importance that these words have on the English language not only nowadays, but also in the past. The analysis of the corpus retrieved from the third edition of the *OED* helps us to understand the lexical contact English had, and still has, with African languages such as Swahili and Yoruba, when this contact was more prominent and how this has affected the English language as a whole.

Key words: African languages, Africa, loanwords, *OED*, diachronic analysis.

Resumen

Este Trabajo de Fin de Grado se centra en el impacto léxico que las variedades no nativas del inglés que se usa en África tienen en el inglés. Mi objetivo es analizar los préstamos léxicos africanos durante la historia del inglés teniendo en cuenta el testimonio que proporciona el *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*. Aunque al principio los editores del diccionario no estaban muy decididos en incluir palabras de origen africano y finalmente decidieron omitirlas, en la segunda y tercera edición cambiaron su política a favor de su inclusión en el diccionario, mostrando la importancia que estas palabras tienen en el inglés no solo hoy en día, sino también en el pasado. El análisis del corpus recuperado de la tercera edición del *OED* nos ayuda a entender el contacto léxico que el inglés tenía, y todavía tiene, con idiomas africanos como el suajili y el yoruba, cuándo este contacto era más notorio y cómo esto ha afectado al inglés en como un todo.

Palabras clave: lenguas africanas, África, préstamos lingüísticos, *OED*, análisis diacrónico.

List of Abbreviations

OED1 = *Oxford English Dictionary*. First Edition. Eds. James A. H. Murray et al. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1933. Oxford: Oxford UP. Print.

OED2 = *Oxford English Dictionary*. Second Edition. Eds. John A. Simpson and Edmund C. Weiner. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989. Print

OED3 = *Oxford English Dictionary*. Third Edition. Eds. John A. Simpson. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Web.

1. Introduction

The English language has expanded and developed crossing borders between countries and, as a result, the native tongues have been affected in different ways, to the extent that English has acquired characteristics that were not originally intrinsic to it. One of the reasons for this expansion is colonialism, which contributed to the maturation of varieties of English, quite different from standard British English, that are known today as non-native Englishes, new Englishes, or Third World Englishes, as Kachru named them (qtd. in Moag 233). The languages spoken in the colonised areas of Africa, Asia and South America, where English is not the first language, also enriched English, and they continue to do so. This dissertation focuses on the African varieties, which have influenced English, especially through loanwords since the time the British arrived in West Africa from the late fifteenth century (Fennel 205). My focus of analysis is, therefore, on the non-native kinds of English, which are “transplanted varieties of English that are acquired primarily as second languages” (Kachru 5), and the effect they have had on the native ones, especially since this topic has been controversial for many years, being many times obviated. In Serjeantson’s canonical *A History of Foreign Words in English*, for example, no attention is paid to the lexical input provided by African varieties. It has not been until very recently that scholars such as Edmund Weiner have dealt with this issue in detail. The reason behind this scholarly neglect is the traditional belief that they are “deficient models of language acquisition” (Kachru 59), especially due to the “accent bar” (Kachru 67). The fact that the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* did not include in its first editions any word from new Englishes, particularly from the African languages, did not help towards the recognition of these non-native varieties (by native speakers). In the past it was due to the slave trade that English was in contact with African languages, primarily in West Africa; however, nowadays it is the economic interests that help to connect these languages.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the words of African origin that are included in the *OED3*, as well as to examine this dictionary as a source of information about these particular loanwords in terms of etymology, distribution, chronology and semantics. My purpose is to revise previous research on this subject, although it is rather scarce, and cast some additional light to the field, which seems to be needed even though recent research is gradually filling the gaps. In order to do this, I shall make a brief overview of the *OED* policy concerning the inclusion of words from African languages. Secondly, I will undertake a diachronic analysis of the African words retrieved from the *OED3*, paying special attention to their origin, geographic distribution, etc. Finally, I will provide a brief discussion of my findings.

2. The *Oxford English Dictionary* as a Source of African Words in the History of English

The *OED* is nowadays a suitable source of information regarding words from African languages. However, this has not always been this way. In the first edition of 1933 almost no words related to Africa were included, not even the word *African*. In the actual edition of the *OED*, there are almost a thousand of them, although they are not always of African origin. As James Murray (1837-1915), the editor of the first edition of the dictionary, asserted, the exclusion of *African* was due to the fact that other geographical labels such as *Algerian*, *Austrian*, or *Bulgarian* had also been cast aside (qtd. in Weiner 253). In contrast, there was absolutely no doubt on including the word *American* in the *OED*1 whatsoever, which made the absence of *African* more noticeable, making it “symbolic of a tendency to underestimate the role of Africa in the English language at that time” (Weiner 254).

Even though African words were not included in the first edition of the *OED*, Murray considered them part of the English language, but the pressure he had to go through would not let him introduce them at first. He repeatedly highlighted the importance of this kind of words in the English language and the necessity of having them in the *OED*, so he started to include them and continued doing so despite the opinions of detractors of non-native English words, such as Charles Fennel (1843-1916) who defended the “purity” of the language (Ogilvie 53-55). Such was the interest of Murray in World-Englishes and words of non-British origin that he even proposed the expansion of the meaning of *Englishman* to “include all speakers of English around the world” (Ogilvie 60). After Murray died in 1915, Henry Bradley (1845-1923) occupied the position of editor of the *OED* until 1923. Bradley had previously been the president of the Philological Society during seven years and, like Murray, he believed that words of non-English origin needed to be in the dictionary; he disagreed with his predecessor on considering them English words, though. He stood up for loanwords of non-native varieties of English, even when British people did not know them (Ogilvie 39).

In the second edition of 1989, *African* was included alongside some words of African origin. Their definitions were very brief and not concise, though. In addition, the explanation of their origin was vague, normally referring just to the cardinal points of the continent instead of a concrete country or region (e.g. East Africa); also the languages of origin were not named, but referred to as Negro languages (Weiner 255). The concern about the inclusion of these words in the *OED* is still visible in its latest edition. John Simpson, chief editor from 1993 to 2013, utters that the expansion of the English language has created different varieties, which means that while in the past British English was the dominant form, nowadays it is “one (or indeed several) of these varieties” (qtd. in Salazar 97).

The *OED* or any other work on the study of words from Africa are not as effective in their treatment as are the dictionaries of the regions themselves. In Britain there is a lack of data regarding African words, not only because of the language barrier regarding the meaning of the terms, but also because “many of these [words] ... are used only in speaking of the people to whose tongues they belong” (Ogilvie 40). That is the reason why Edmund Weiner, co-editor of the second edition of the *OED*, encouraged the work undertaken by researchers that are familiar with the language of the word origins, as well as the use of sources such as dictionaries that cover the non-native varieties of English spoken around the world. Nowadays, the editors of the third edition of the *OED* have much more information than in previous editions. The literary and non-literary evidence is larger and easier to collect thanks to technology and online databases of texts from every country (Salazar 97). A study of African loanwords in the history of English seems, therefore, feasible.

3. Diachronic Analysis of African Loanwords in the *Oxford English Dictionary*

The data used in this dissertation has been extracted from the *OED3* by scrupulously restricting the query to the label *African* in the etymological section of the dictionary entries. By doing so, a large number of hits have been retrieved, but not all of them representative of a word of African origin. It is worth noting that most of the words retrieved were from South Africa, which have been dismissed due to the fact that English is actually the official language in the country, and the context in which the languages interact is thus very different from any other of the African countries. One of the problems with the words from non-British varieties of English is the labels they are ascribed in the *OED*. There is no homogeneity as to the labels that the editors have ascribed to each word. For this reason and in order to improve and complete the information retrieved, I have conducted a second query, searching the abbreviation *afr.*, as this is more common than the expanded label *African*. I have obtained a substantial number of additional case studies. The sample consists of seventy-eight items in total.

3.1. Etymological Coverage

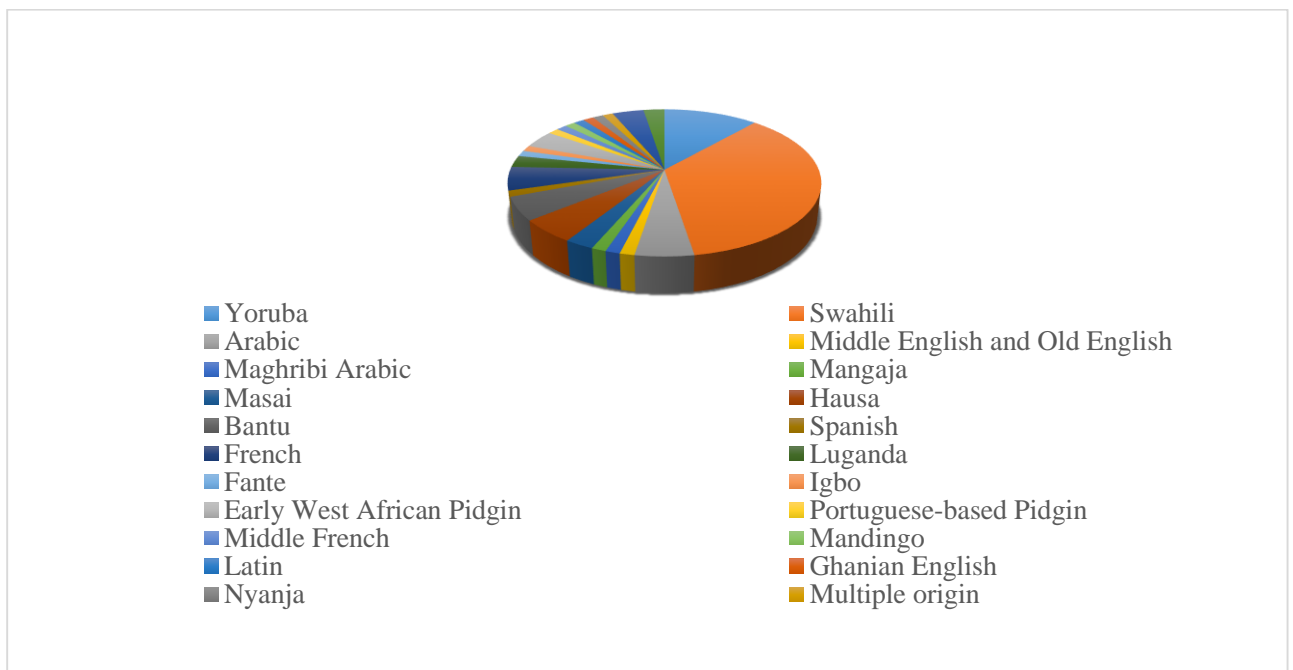


Figure 1. Source language of the African words in the *OED3*

First of all, in Figure 1 we can see that in the sample there are words from different origins. It is worth noting that there are ten words in the sample of French, Portuguese, Latin and Spanish origin, which I have considered for scrutiny because of the fact that they are used in varieties of English in African countries, and therefore they belong to this lexicon. These words are: *bush deer* ‘gazelle’, that is a compound of the terms *bush*, from Middle English *busk*, and *deer*, from Old English *deor*; *manilla* ‘a metal armlet or bracelet’, that comes from Spanish; *marigot* ‘a side channel of a river’; *mehari* ‘a dromedary, used for riding and racing’; *pagne* ‘a length of cloth’, and *toubab* ‘a white person’, all of them taken from French. To these we can add the verb *pregnant* ‘to make pregnant’, from Middle French; *piccaninny* ‘a small black African child’ borrowed from Portuguese-based Pidgin; the adjective *schooling* ‘that attends school’, taken from Latin; and the adverb *again*, used in West Africa with the meaning ‘indicating a change of state or possibility: now’. This last word’s etymology is more complex than the previous terms mentioned. In fact, the *OED3* classifies its origin as a “cognate with or formed similarly to Old Frisian *a-jēn*, Old Dutch *angegin*, *angegen*, *anegeginne*, Old Saxon *angegin*, Old High German *angegini* <the Germanic base of ON- *prefix* + a Germanic base either identical to or related to that of GAIN *adj.*” Among the rest of the terms of analysis, there are some whose etymology is not given. These words are the noun *chop* ‘colloq. food’ (s. v. n⁶, 1); the verb *chop* ‘colloq. to eat’ (s. v. v⁶, 1); and *garri* ‘the nutritious starch or flour obtained from the roots of the Manioc.’ These three terms are located geographically in West Africa, according to the *OED3*, but their origin is not indicated, probably because it is not certain or because it is unknown. In addition, I have found two words of uncertain origin. They are *miraa* ‘the leaves and twigs of the shrub khat, *Catha edulis*, which contain a stimulant drug’, localised to East Africa; and *pap* ‘porridge made from maize meal.’ This last term is ascribed to West Africa. Although the words are assigned to a certain region, it is difficult to determine their language source. As opposed to the Western Countries where languages are clearly limited

within the borders of a nation, languages in Africa cross different boundaries, making it harder for linguists to restrict the origin of the vocabulary.

The rest of the sample is composed of sixty-four terms that have their origin in fifteen different languages spoken in Africa. It is worth underlining that, among them, we can find Bantu, which represents “a group of some 500 languages ... spoken in a very large area, including most of Africa from southern Cameroon eastward to Kenya and southward to the southernmost tip of the continent” (Bendor-Samuel), and not a specific language. The words supplied by this language family are: *macute* ‘in the Guinea Coast and Angola: a monetary unit used in trade between Europeans and local peoples, and thought to be developed from a native currency based on pieces of cloth’ (s. v. n, 1), *macute* ‘a denomination of silver and bronze coinage issued by the Portuguese from 1762 in Portuguese Guinea (Guinea-Bissau) and Angola’ (s. v. n, 2), *macute* ‘A denomination popularly given to a silver coin (one-tenth of a dollar) issued between 1791 and 1805 by the British for its Guinea Coast colony of Sierra Leone’ (s. v. n, 3),¹ *Mokisso* ‘an idol.’

Among the Bantu languages is Swahili, which has provided twenty-eight words in total. Swahili is one of the official languages of Kenya and Tanzania (the other official language in these countries is English) and it is spoken by a large number of people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and the Comoros Islands. It is also spoken by a fewer number of people in Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Northern Zambia and Mozambique. It is due to its geographical coverage that we have obtained a larger number of words. These words represent the important amount of 34.6% of the sample:

¹ Although the term *macute* is repeated three times, they are considered different concepts because it has three different senses and also three different written attestations.

Americani, boma (s. v. n, 1), *boma* (s. v. n, 2), *boma* (s. v. n, 3), *duka, Jua Kali, khanga, kiboko, kikoi, kitenge, matatu, mbari, mbuga, mganga, mvule, Mzee, mzungu* (s. v. n, 1), *mzungu* (s. v. adj, 1), *mdugu, ngoma* (s. v. n, 1), *ngoma* (s. v. n, 2), *shamba, shenzi, simi, tembe, toto, waragi*.²

As regards Yoruba language, also known as èdè Yorúbá, it is spoken by almost 20 million people, most of them in Nigeria, as well as in Benin, Togo, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. It is the second one as regards the number of words retrieved; the difference with Swahili is quite noticeable, though: I have obtained nine words. They are the following: *accra* ‘a ball-shaped fritter or sautéed patty of seasoned mashed beans;’ *agidi* ‘a gelatinous starchy food made by boiling a paste of (fermented) maize meal or flour;’ *alhaji* ‘a person who has undertaken the hajj;’ *egusi* ‘the seeds of the water-melon, esp. ground or crushed and used for food;’ *molue* ‘a privately-owned commercial bus seating forty-four passengers;’ *Oba* ‘a king of the former West African kingdom of Benin, which flourished from the 14th to the 17th centuries, and is now part of Nigeria;’ *oga* ‘a chief, employer, or superior;’ *ogbanje* ‘a child believed by the Igbo people to die repeatedly and be continually reincarnated and born to the same parents;’ and *ogi* ‘a kind of maize meal.’

Arabic and Hausa are the next languages according to the number of terms obtained, with five and four words, respectively. Arabic is the official language of twenty-two countries called the Arab League. In this region that spreads out from Southwest Asia to Northwest Africa live two hundred million people. Although the language is not used in Africa alone, I decided to include it as it is spoken in Algeria, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia. The words included in this group are: *Askari* ‘(a name for) an African soldier;’ *chermoula* ‘a sauce or marinade for fish or meat, typically containing olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, coriander, and other herbs and spices;’ *fonduk*

² For further information about these words see the attached glossary. Because of space restrictions I have not been able to include all the definitions of the words provided in this section.

‘A hotel, an inn;’ *mashrabiyya* ‘a balcony enclosed with latticework on the outer wall of a building;’ and *zawiya* ‘a Muslim religious community or its mosque, usually containing the shrine of a holy person.’

As for Hausa, it is the most spoken language of northern Nigeria and Niger. It is also spoken in Sudan. It is the first language of twenty-four million people and the lingua franca of Muslims in West Africa. The words are: *kakaki* ‘a long metal trumpet used on ceremonial occasions;’ *lappa* ‘a woman's shawl or skirt;’ *mallam* ‘a learned man; a scribe, teacher, or healer;’ and *wahala* ‘trouble, affliction, calamity; also, inconvenience, fuss, bother, palaver.’

The other fourteen words are from very different languages. Mangaja has given *dambo* ‘a grassy clearing;’ Masai provides *morán* ‘a member of a warrior group consisting of the younger unmarried males in a community’ and *ilmorán* ‘pl of morán;’ Luganda *matoke* ‘the flesh of bananas or plantains, mashed and used as food’ and *saza* ‘an administrative area; a county;’ from Fante comes *Osagyefo* ‘freq. with the, a name for Kwame Nkrumah (1909–72), first prime minister of the Gold Coast (1952–7) and of Ghana (1957–60), and first president of the Republic of Ghana (1960–6);’ from Igbo, *osu* ‘a person belonging to a class of cult slaves in traditional religion, and therefore treated as an outcast; an untouchable;’ from Early West African Pidgin, *palaver* ‘a dispute, quarrel, or misunderstanding; a matter for arbitration’ (s. v. n, 1a), *palaver* ‘trouble, difficulty; bother’ (s. v. n, 1b), and *palaver* ‘with possessive adjective: the business or concern of the person specified’ (s. v. n, 1c); from Mandingo, *saphie* ‘a charm;’ from Ghanaian English, *tro-tro* ‘a converted lorry or van used as a public conveyance; a minibus;’ and Nyanja provides the word *ulendo* ‘a trek, a safari.’

In order to make the source of the words of the sample visually clearer I have grouped them according to their geographical origin in Figure 2: North, West, East and Central Africa. Being Swahili the most significant language of the sample it seems reasonable that East Africa features prominently with 42% of the terms. The other relevant area is West Africa, with 44%

of the total; different languages are grouped within this area. North and Central African languages are less outstanding leading to a considerably smaller part; 8% and 6% of the sample, respectively.

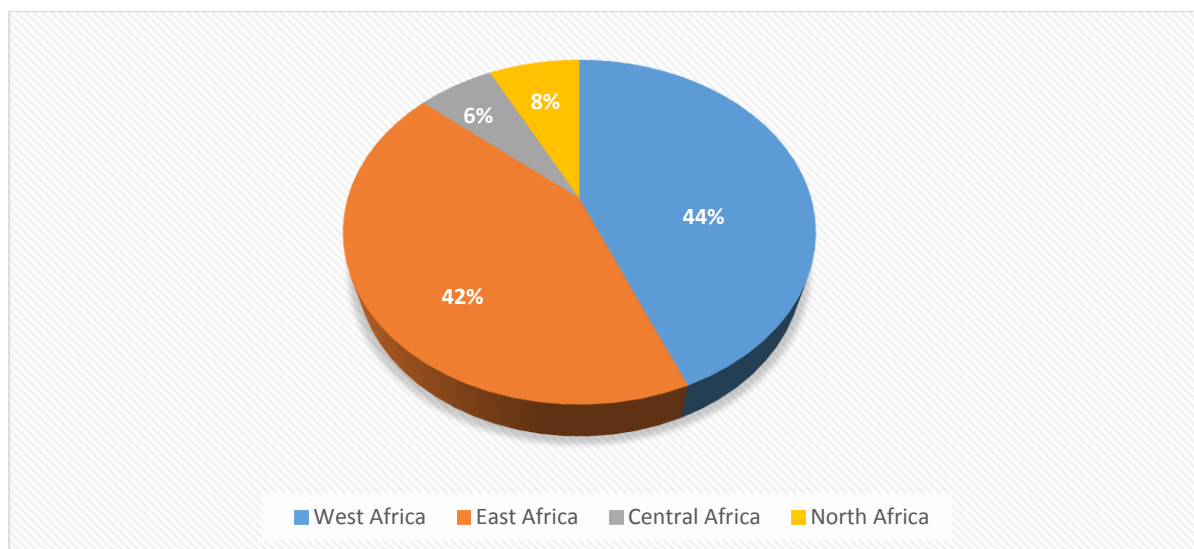


Figure 2. Distribution of the words' origin by geographical region in the *OED3*

3.2. Chronological Coverage

In terms of chronological coverage, Figure 3 shows that it is very irregular. As previously explained, the importance and status these words were given in the first edition of the *OED* and in subsequent research was rather negligible, and it has been only recently that they have been considered part of the English language. This point is clearly reflected in the fact that almost 50% of the words of the sample have their first textual evidence in the twentieth century and just one of them, the term *manilla*³, is from the sixteenth century (1587), which is the earliest date found in the sample. From the seventeenth century there are three items: *Mokisso* (1634), *pregnant* (1660) and *pagne* (1698). The increase of loanwords introduced in English from the eighteenth century and especially during the nineteenth century is quite

³ For further information about these words see the attached glossary. Because of space restrictions I have not been able to include all the definitions of the words provided in this section.

noticeable. From the 1700s the *OED* added eight new words, such as *mehari* (1738) and *marigot* (1759), whereas in the next century there were twenty-eight new terms included in the dictionary, with just one of them, *chop* (s. v. n⁶, 1), dated earlier than 1833. The rest of the terms are documented later than this; among them are *zawiya* (1836), *agidi* (1853), *shamba* (1878), *tembe* (1887), and *Mzee* (1898). This coincides with the colonization of Africa, a moment when foreign words were adopted in English in far greater numbers. The flow continued in the twentieth century, which is shown by the thirty-seven new words included in the *OED*, such as *toubab* (1911), *kakaki* (1932) and *miraa* (1945) from the first half of the century, and others as *matoke* (1959), *tro-tro* (1973) or *Jua Kali* (1986) from the second half. In spite of this big influence of African words and their presence in the English language they were not sufficiently treated in the first edition of the *OED*. The editor decided they were not important enough to be included in the dictionary.

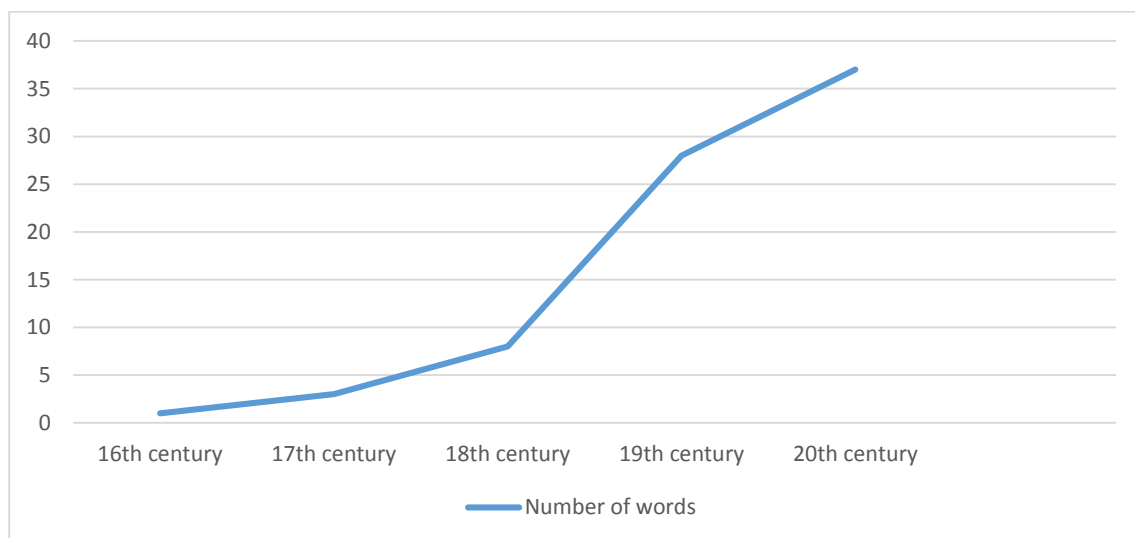


Figure 3. Number of African items introduced in the *OED3* according to date

3.3. Semantic Coverage

In terms of semantic fields, I have classified the seventy-eight words in nine groups: clothing, food, religion, army, nature, service sector, metal, people and others.

3.3.1. Clothing

This group contains seven words: two refer to fabric (*khanga* and *kitenge*) and five to pieces of clothing: *Americani* and ‘*Merikani*⁴, *kikoi*, *lappa* and *pagne*.

3.3.2. Food

In this semantic field I have arranged eleven words. One of them is about a drink, *waragi*, one about the action of eating, *chop* (s. v. v⁶, 1), and the rest are about food: *accra*, *agidi*, *chermoula*, *chop* (s. v. n⁶, 1), *egusi*, *matoke*, *ogi*, and *pap*.

3.3.3. Religion

Here I have found five terms: *Alhaji*; *Mohisso*; *ogbanje*; *osu*; and *zawiya*. As African religion and rituals are very different from the western ones, these terms need to be borrowed in order to fill the lexical existing gaps.

3.3.4. Army

This group contains four words, three of them referring to soldiers: *Askari*, *ilmoran* and *moran*. The other one refers to a fortification. This is *boma* (s. v. n, 1). Even though this is not one of the semantic groups with more words, it is however one of the most important in terms of meaning, because the contact between Great Britain, and consequently the English language, and Africa was primarily through brute strength as the British Empire wanted to make theirs the African land.

3.3.5. Nature

There are eight items in this category. Two of them are related to the animal world. They are *bush deer* and *mehari*. The other six are about the natural environment as well as trees and plants. They are *dambo*, *marigot*, *mbuga*, *miraa*, *mvule* and *shamba*. These words are really significant too; when British people arrived in Africa they discovered new things in nature they did not have in Great Britain, so they needed to adopt the African names.

⁴ *Americani* and ‘*Merikani* have the same meaning but different spelling

3.3.6. Service sector

In this group we have to make a distinction between the means of transport, the buildings of services and the people that carry out these services. As to the first category, I have found *matatu*, *molue*, *tro-tro*. *Boma* (s. v. n, 2), *boma* (s. v. n, 3), *duka*, and *fonduk* are examples of buildings of services. Concerning jobs, I have found *Jua Kali*, *mallam* and *mganga*.

3.3.7. Metal

This category comprises six names that denote objects made of metal or metallic. However there is one, *macute* (s. v. n, 1) that refers to a 'monetary unit'. It is not specifically made of metal because is not something tangible, but the object it refers to is, so I have decided to include it in this group. Another exception is *saphie*, which means 'charm'. Since it is a jewel it is probable that it is made of metal. The rest of the words are *macute* (s. v. n, 2) and *macute* (s. v. n, 3); *manilla* and *kakaki*.

3.3.8. People

Here I have found a collective noun, *mbari*; three words to identify white people or Europeans, *mzungu* (s. v. n, 1), *mzungu* (s. v. adj, 2) and *toubab*; two proper names, *Oba* and *Osagyefo*; and five names referring to kids (*piccaninny* and *toto*), elder people (*Mzee*), friends (*ndugu*), and barbarians (*shenzi*).

3.3.9. Others

In this group I have included the words that did not fit into any of the previous groups. They are from truly divergent semantic fields such as tools (*kiboko*, *simi*), music (*ngoma* (s. v. n, 1), *ngoma* (s. v. n, 2)) or architecture (*masharabiyya*, *tembe*), among others. In this group are twelve items, not many enough and not similar enough to group them together.

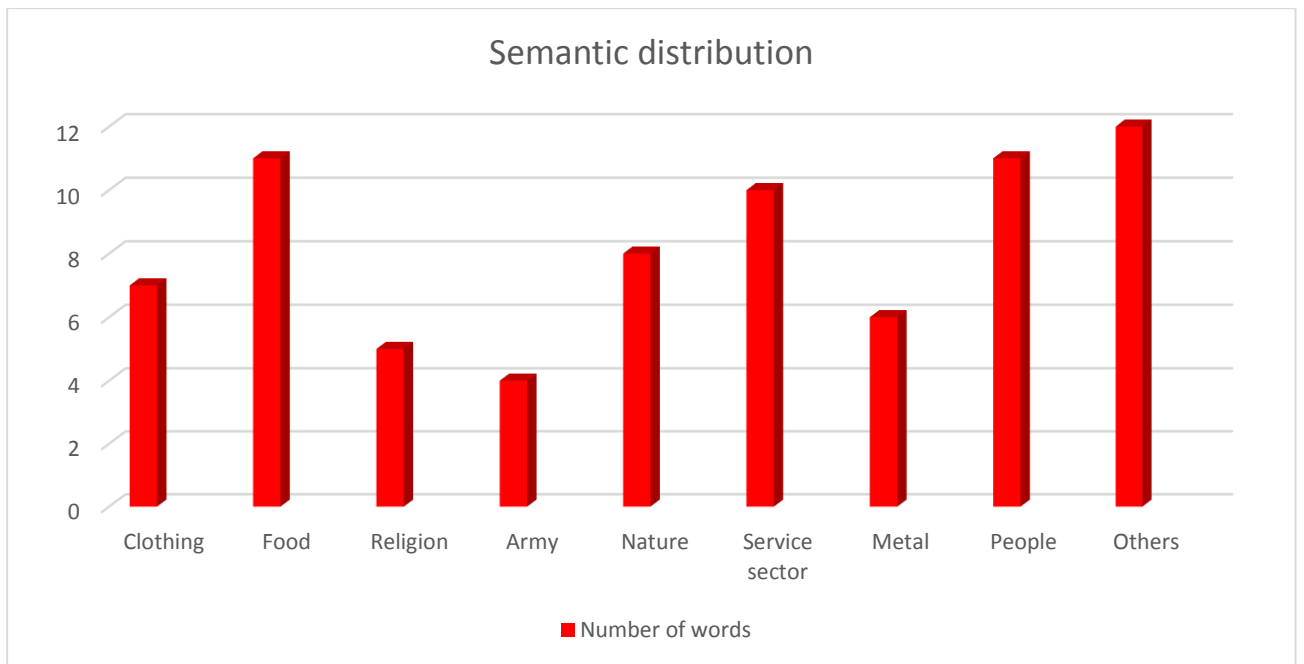


Figure 4. Semantic distribution of African loanwords in the *OED3*

4. Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have undertaken a study of African loanwords in English in an attempt to vindicate their importance both in the history of English and nowadays. In fact, this has been a rather unknown topic until very recently, which has created many gaps. The *OED* policy towards the inclusion of African words has developed throughout its three editions and chief editors, from being reluctant to collect them at first, to gradually being more democratic to the admission of terms used beyond the western varieties of English. Analysing first this attitude in relation to the topic by different linguists and later on carrying out a thorough scrutiny, I have found some substantial facts. The first one is the notable increase in the inclusion of words in the *OED* dating from the eighteenth century onwards, and especially in the nineteenth century, due to the colonisation of Africa by the British Empire. Another fact is that the amount of words that Swahili provides to the English language is appreciably larger than any of the other languages, with more than 34% of the sample. This is because this language is widely spoken in many countries of East Africa. The third fact is related to the semantic coverage. Among the words of the sample it is blatantly obvious that the greater percentage affects the semantic field of food, specifically 14.1%, only exceeded by the category of others, which includes several semantic fields that did not fit in the rest of the groups. The reason for this could possibly be the fact that British experienced a discovery of new recipes and food that did not exist in Great Britain before the colonization.

In conclusion, these facts I have found during my analysis have not been properly acknowledged in traditional books about loanwords and English language history manuals, mainly because of the indifference regarding non-native varieties of English. Nowadays, the *OED3* has changed its policy towards this topic and, therefore, it has become an essential source of information for future works in relation to this subject.

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- OED3* = *Oxford English Dictionary*. Third Edition. Eds. John A. Simpson. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000. Web.
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6. Appendix. Glossary

Below are all the definitions of the words included in the sample. They have been taken from *OED3*. I have classified them according to the area of Africa they are from: West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and North Africa. This way, the words can be easily found when necessary.

- **West African**

Accra (1852) n. ‘a ball-shaped fritter or sautéed patty of seasoned mashed beans, esp. black-eyed peas.’

again (1837) adv. ‘indicating a change of state or possibility: now; any more. Freq. in negative contexts.’

agidi (1853) n. ‘a gelatinous starchy food made by boiling a paste of (fermented) maize meal or flour.’

alhaji (1729) n. ‘in Nigeria: (A title of) a person who has undertaken the hajj.’

bush deer (1897) n. compound of bush (Middle English *busk*) and deer (Old English *deor*). ‘A gazelle.’

chop (s. v. n⁶, 1) (1805) n. ‘colloq. food.’

Chop (s. v. v⁶, 1) (1833) v. ‘colloq. to eat.’

egusi (1925) n. ‘in Nigeria and neighbouring countries: the seeds of the water-melon, esp. ground or crushed and used for food.’

garri (1926) n. ‘the nutritious starch or flour obtained from the roots of the Manioc by grating them, and pressing out the juice; the bread made from this.’

kakaki (1932) n. ‘a long metal trumpet used on ceremonial occasions.’

lappa (1954) n. ‘a woman's shawl or skirt.’

macute (s. v. n, 1) n. ‘in the Guinea Coast and Angola: a monetary unit used in trade between Europeans and local peoples, and thought to be developed from a native currency based on pieces of cloth.’

macute (s. v. n, 2) n. ‘a denomination of silver and bronze coinage issued by the Portuguese from 1762 in Portuguese Guinea (Guinea-Bissau) and Angola, one macute being equal to about 1.4 grams of silver.’

macute (s. v. n, 3) n. ‘a denomination popularly given to a silver coin (one-tenth of a dollar) issued between 1791 and 1805 by the British for its Guinea Coast colony of Sierra Leone.’

mallam (1855) n. ‘in Nigeria and other parts of Africa: a learned man; a scribe, teacher, or healer.’

manilla (1587) n. ‘a metal armband or bracelet (traditionally used as a medium of exchange); spec. a copper, bronze, or brass open ring with enlarged finials, usually in the form of an armband or bracelet, made (esp. in Nigeria) for use as money (now hist.)’

marigot (1759) n. ‘a side channel of a river.’

molue (1976) n. ‘in Nigeria: a privately-owned commercial bus seating forty-four passengers.’

Oba (1852) n. ‘originally: (the title of) a king of the former West African kingdom of Benin, which flourished from the 14th to the 17th centuries, and is now part of Nigeria. Now also (in weakened sense): (the title of) a local chief in Nigeria.’

oga (1917) n. ‘in Nigeria: a chief, employer, or superior; (freq. as a form of address) sir, master.’

ogbanje (1952) n. ‘in Nigeria: a child believed by the Igbo people to die repeatedly and be continually reincarnated and born to the same parents. Also: a reincarnated child or spirit.’

ogi (1957) n. ‘in Nigeria: a kind of maize meal; (also) a porridge made from this.’

Osagyefo (1960) n. ‘freq. with the. A name for: Kwame Nkrumah (1909–72), first prime minister of the Gold Coast (1952–7) and of Ghana (1957–60), and first president of the Republic of Ghana (1960–6).’

osu (1938) n. ‘a person belonging to a class of cult slaves in traditional religion, and therefore treated as an outcast; an untouchable.’

pagne (1698) n. ‘a length of cloth, esp. one worn draped around the waist or forming a tunic (now chiefly by women). Also: the material from which this is made.’

palaver (s. v. n, 1a) (1707) n. ‘a dispute, quarrel, or misunderstanding; a matter for arbitration.’

palaver (s. v. n, 1b) (1899) n. ‘trouble, difficulty; bother, ‘hassle’.’

palaver (s. v. n, 1c) (1899) n. ‘with possessive adjective: the business or concern of the person specified.’

pap (1858) n. ‘porridge, esp. porridge made from maize meal.’

piccaninny (1855) n. ‘in Nigeria: a small black African child; a young black African boy.’

pregnant (1660) v. ‘to make pregnant; to impregnate.’

schooling (1836) adj. ‘that attends school; school-going.’

toubab (1911) n. ‘a white (or Westernized) person, a European; such people considered collect.’

tro-tro (1973) n. ‘in Ghana: a converted lorry or van used as a public conveyance; a minibus.’

wahala (1973) n. ‘in Nigeria: trouble, affliction, calamity; also, inconvenience, fuss, bother, palaver.’

- **East African**

Americani (1881) n. ‘a kind of (inferior, typically unbleached) cotton cloth, originally as exported by American traders to East Africa.’

Askari (1889) n. ‘(a name for) an African soldier.’

boma (s. v. n, 1) (1878) n. ‘an enclosure or stockade used for herding beasts and for defensive purposes.’

boma (s. v. n, 2) (1920) n. ‘a police post.’

boma (s. v. n, 3) (1967) n. ‘a district commissioner's or magistrates' office; an administrative centre associated with such an office.’

duka (1924) n. ‘in Kenya: a shop, store.’

ilmoran (1885) n. ‘pl of moran, among the Masai people of East Africa: a member of a warrior group consisting of the younger unmarried males in a community.’

Jua Kali (1986) n. ‘in Kenya: informal work of a kind typically performed outdoors, such as repairs, toolmaking, artisanship, etc.; (also) a person who performs such work.’

khanga (1967) n. ‘a fabric printed in various colours and designs with borders, used esp. for women's clothing.’

kiboko (1921) n. ‘a strong, heavy whip made of hippopotamus hide.’

kikoi (1942) n. ‘a striped cloth of distinctive design with an end fringe, worn round the waist.’

kitenge (1969) n. ‘a fabric, usu. of cotton and printed in various colours and designs with distinctive borders, used esp. for women's clothing.’

matatu (1971) n. ‘in Kenya: an unlicensed taxi or minibus.’

matoke (1959) n. ‘in Uganda: the flesh of bananas or plantains, mashed and used as food; bananas or plantains collectively.’

mbari (1938) n. ‘an extended family unit.’

mbuga (1930) n. ‘a seasonal swamp or wetland area.’

Merikani (1860) n. ‘a kind of (inferior, typically unbleached) cotton cloth, originally as exported by American traders to East Africa.’

mganga (1859) n. ‘a doctor whose traditional functions include exorcism, prophecy, and the removal of spells.’

miraa (1945) n. ‘the leaves and twigs of the shrub khat, *Catha edulis*, which contain a stimulant drug; (also) the shrub itself.’

moran (1914) n. ‘a member of a warrior group consisting of the younger unmarried males in a community.’

mvule (1858) n. ‘the iroko tree, *Milicia* (or *Chlorophora*) *excelsa* (also mvule tree); the hardwood timber of this tree, used esp. in cabinetmaking, building, and shipbuilding.’

Mzee (1898) n. ‘an old person; an elder. Also used as a title of respect prefixed to a name.’

mzungu (s. v. n, 1) (1844) n. ‘a European, a white person.’

mzungu (s. v. adj, 1) (1862) adj. ‘designating a white person. Also: of or belonging to white people.’

ndugu (1973) n. ‘in Tanzania: comrade’

ngoma (s. v. n, 1) (1859) n. ‘any of various kinds of drum.’

ngoma (s. v. n, 2) (1905) n. ‘a dance to the music of a drum; a social gathering where dancing takes place; a night of dancing.’

saza (1950) n. ‘in Uganda: an administrative area; a county.’

shamba (1878)n. ‘a cultivated plot of ground. Also, a farm or plantation.’

shenzi (1910) n. ‘an uncivilized African; a barbarian, a person outside one's cultural group.’

simi (1955) n. ‘a large knife; a short two-edged sword.’

tembe (1887) n. ‘a rectangular house with mud walls and a flat roof.’

toto (1916) n. ‘a child; a baby; a young animal; a young servant.’

waragi (1916) n. ‘in Uganda: a potent alcoholic drink made from bananas or cassava.’

- **Central African**

dambo (1907) n. ‘a grassy clearing.’

kiboko (1921) n. ‘a strong, heavy whip made of hippopotamus hide.’

Mokisso (1634) n. ‘an idol.’

toubab (1911) n. ‘a white (or Westernized) person, a European; such people considered collect.’

ulendo (1921) n. ‘a trek, a safari.’

- **North African**

chermoula (1974) n. ‘in North African cookery: a sauce or marinade for fish or meat, typically containing olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, coriander, and other herbs and spices; (also) a fish or meat dish served with this.’

fonduk (1704) n. ‘a hotel, an inn.’

masharabiyya (1884) n. ‘a balcony enclosed with latticework on the outer wall of a building. Also: latticework characteristic of such a balcony. Freq. attrib. designating structures or objects made of such latticework.’

mehari (1738) n. ‘In North Africa and the Middle East: a dromedary, used for riding and racing.’

saphie (1799) n. ‘a charm.’

zawiya (1836) n. ‘a Muslim religious community or its mosque, usually containing the shrine of a holy person.’