Polish-English cognates and doublets: Morphosemantic evolution of selected Proto-Indo-European roots into related lexemes in Polish and English

WERONIKA KAMOLA-UBERMAN

Received 11.06.2020, received in revised form 3.07.2021, accepted 12.07.2021.

Abstract

The following article will attempt to visualise the relationship between Polish and English by presenting selected examples of cognates and doublets (so called ‘etymological twins’, or related words found in one language) in both languages, following their etymology and the semantic and morphological changes to which they were subject. The evolution of the Proto-Indo-European roots *lendh- ‘loin’, *sh₂el- ‘salt’ *ph₃i- ‘drink’ *seh₁- ‘to impress, insert; to sow, plant’ will be investigated, as well as the morphological and semantic changes the words descending from these roots have undergone, such as the use of metaphor, metonymy, specialisation or generalisation. Doublets and cognates in Polish and English will be presented and described.

Keywords

Proto-Indo-European, etymology, doublet, cognate
Polsko-angielskie wyrazy pokrewne i dublety.
Ewolucja morfosemantyczna wybranych rdzeni praindoeuropejskich w pokrewne leksemy w języku polskim i angielskim

Abstrakt

W niniejszym artykule unacznę pokrewieństwo między językiem polskim i angielskim przedstawiając wybrane przykłady słów pokrewnych występujących w obu językach, prześledzę ich etymologię oraz zmiany semantyczne i morfologiczne jakim podległy. Zbadam ewolucję rdzeni praindoeuropejskich *lendh- ‘ledźwie, *sh₂el- ‘sól *ph₃i- ‘pić, poić *seh₁- ‘wciskać; sadzić, siać’, a także zmiany morfologiczne i semantyczne, jakim podległy słowa wywodzące się z tych rdzeni, takie jak użycie metafor, metonimii, specjalizacji czy uogólnienia. Zaprezentuję i opiszę dublety i słowa pokrewnie (ang. cognates) w języku polskim i angielskim.

Słowa kluczowe

praindoeuropejski, etymologia, dublet, wyraz pokrewny

1. Theoretical background

1.1. Introduction

All Indo-European languages have undergone significant changes since the first Proto-Indo-Europeans stepped out of their cradles. The proto-language divided into families, dialects, and finally, separate languages to take the forms we know today, and these forms – if we consider living languages – are neither final nor unchanging.

The research on words descending from a common root provides an insight into the evolution of languages and confirms that Polish and English are sister languages descending from the common Proto-Indo-European source and often following similar semantic patterns.
This paper will attempt to visualise the relationship between Polish and English by presenting selected examples of cognates and doublets (so called ‘etymological twins’, or related words found in one language) in both languages, following their etymology and the semantic and morphological changes to which they were subject. The evolution of selected Proto-Indo-European roots will be investigated, as well as the morphological and semantic changes the words descending from these roots have undergone, such as the use of metaphor, metonymy, specialisation or generalisation. Doublets and cognates in Polish and English will be presented and described.

1.2. Historical-comparative linguistics and lexical semantics

In order to understand the angle of this article’s research, let us consider the definition of comparative-historical linguistics, as it is through this tool that the matter shall be addressed. Historical (also: diachronic) and comparative linguistics is the scientific study of language change over time. All living languages evolve – “divergence or death is the normal fate of languages” (Ringe, 2009). There are several principles which this field of study follows, such as describing changes languages undergo, the reconstruction of languages no longer used, and the ancestral languages of today’s tongues, as well as descriptions of how the languages relate to each other and how they can be grouped into language families. Furthermore, comparative-historical linguistics studies words’ etymology, i.e. the history of words, and can trace the origin of related words in different languages to the common ancestral proto-word in a reconstructed proto-language, as well as account for the history of the semantic changes that related words underwent (Radford et al. 1999).

Another angle of research used in the present article is lexical semantics. As Geeraerts (2017) states: “Lexical semantics is the study of word meaning. Descriptively speaking, the main topics studied within lexical semantics involve either the inter-
nal semantic structure of words, or the semantic relations that occur within the vocabulary.” The former topic is the focus of the attention of historical semantics, which has been written about by Sieradzka-Baziur (2017): “Historical semantics in linguistics is the direction of research on the meaning of linguistic units in the diachronic approach” (translation: W.K.-U.). The present article focuses on contrasting Polish-English cognates from a diachronic perspective. As explained by Rychło (2019: 16), including a diachronic perspective in contrastive linguistics will not result in the same discipline as historical and comparative linguistics, “because historical and comparative linguistics does not aim at explaining similarities and differences between the modern languages, but instead compares [...] languages with a view to reconstructing the common ancestor or the changes which occurred in the languages under comparison”.

It is a study which helps us understand language, its use now and in the past, as well as the provenance of words and expressions in daily used, which are much more comprehensible indeed if we know their origin, e.g. *bibuta* (Pol. ‘blotting paper’), is a derivative of Lat. *bibere* ‘to drink’ (*bibulus* ‘thirsty, absorbent’), and ultimately means ‘drinking (paper)’, as this kind of paper was used for dr inking in ink stains. Expressions and words such as *to eat humble pie*, *symposium*, and the correlation between *salt*, *halogen* and *rosót* (Pol. ‘broth’) will be discussed in further sections.

**1.3. Cognates**

How can one be certain that an ancestral mother tongue in fact existed? Linguists investigate basic words, which might have been used by pre-modern societies to name objects in the world surrounding them and the activities that they performed. Such words are still used today throughout the Indo-European community. The Swadesh lists can be utilised for this purpose. These lists are compilations of basic concepts, first collected by Morris Swadesh in 1950 (originally comprising 215 words
[Swadesh 1950: 161]), which can be used for lexicostatistics or historical-comparative linguistics. Such words from different languages are compared, and if they demonstrate morphological and phonetic similarities (apart from obvious semantic ones), then a conclusion can be drawn that such words have descended from a common ancestral source. Examples of such related words are presented in Table 1. Numerals are also worth comparing for such a purpose (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIE</th>
<th>*ph₂ter-</th>
<th>*meh₂ter-</th>
<th>*swésor-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mod. English</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>fœder</td>
<td>mōdor</td>
<td>sweostor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Vater</td>
<td>Mutter</td>
<td>Schwester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>pater</td>
<td>māter</td>
<td>soror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>patēr</td>
<td>mētēr</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>pitṛ</td>
<td>mātṛ</td>
<td>svasṛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>père</td>
<td>mère</td>
<td>sœur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>padre</td>
<td>madre</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>mat’</td>
<td>sestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>(stryj ‘uncle’)</td>
<td>matka</td>
<td>siostra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIE</th>
<th>*widhewa</th>
<th>*nokwt-</th>
<th>*h₂stēr-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mod. English</td>
<td>widow</td>
<td>night</td>
<td>star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>widewe</td>
<td>næht</td>
<td>steorra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Witwe</td>
<td>Nacht</td>
<td>Stern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>vidua</td>
<td>nox</td>
<td>stella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>nýx</td>
<td>ástron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>vidhavā</td>
<td>niś</td>
<td>str</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>veuve</td>
<td>nuit</td>
<td>étoile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>viuda</td>
<td>noche</td>
<td>estrella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>vdova</td>
<td>noch’</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>wdowa</td>
<td>noc</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIE</td>
<td>*bhreh₂-ter-</td>
<td>*dhugh₂-ter-</td>
<td>*suH-nú-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod. English</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>brōþor</td>
<td>dōhtor</td>
<td>sunu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Bruder</td>
<td>Tochter</td>
<td>Sohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>frāter</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>fratér</td>
<td>thygātēr</td>
<td>hyiós</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>bhrātṛ</td>
<td>duhitṛ</td>
<td>sūnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>frère</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>brat</td>
<td>doch’</td>
<td>sin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>brat</td>
<td>córka</td>
<td>syn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIE</th>
<th>*snigwh-</th>
<th>*sēh₂u₁/n-</th>
<th>*meh₁n-s-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mod. English</td>
<td>snow</td>
<td>sun</td>
<td>moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>snāw</td>
<td>sunne</td>
<td>mōna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Schnee</td>
<td>Sonne</td>
<td>Mond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>nix</td>
<td>sōl</td>
<td>mensis ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>nifas ‘flake’</td>
<td>hélios</td>
<td>mén ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>snīh ‘sticky’</td>
<td>sūnu</td>
<td>màs ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>neige</td>
<td>soleil</td>
<td>mois ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>nieve</td>
<td>sol</td>
<td>mes ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>sneg</td>
<td>solntse</td>
<td>mesyats ‘month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>śnieg</td>
<td>słońce</td>
<td>miesiąc ‘month’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**

Similarities between Indo-European numerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIE</th>
<th>*Hoi(H)nos</th>
<th>*dwoh₁</th>
<th>*treyes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mod. English</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>ān</td>
<td>tpe gén, tpa</td>
<td>Prēo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>eins</td>
<td>zwei</td>
<td>drei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>unus</td>
<td>duo</td>
<td>tres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>heîs</td>
<td>dýo</td>
<td>treîs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>eka</td>
<td>dvi</td>
<td>tri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>un</td>
<td>deux</td>
<td>trois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>uno</td>
<td>dos</td>
<td>tres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>odin</td>
<td>dva</td>
<td>tri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>jeden</td>
<td>dwa</td>
<td>trzy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The numerals presented in Table 2 do not display such vocabulary gaps as the words presented in Table 1. Probably that is because numerals were brought to Europe (and parts of India) by the Proto-Indo-Europeans and were not borrowed from the aboriginal Europeans. According to Kortland (2010: 18),

The wide attestation of the Indo-European numerals must be attributed to the development of trade which accompanied the increased mobility of the Indo-Europeans at the time of their expansions. Numerals do not belong to the basic vocabulary of a Neolithic culture, as is clear from their absence in Proto-Uralic and the spread of Chinese numerals throughout East Asia.

The last column in Table 2 visualises the evolution of the word *hundred* in Indo-European languages. It is on the basis of these differences that the *centum* and *satem* languages have been distinguished (named after the words for *hundred* in Latin and Avestan, respectively). The *centum* languages, being the peripheral dialects of Proto-Indo-European, were the first to separate from the PIE language family. English, being a *centum* language itself, underwent the characteristic phonetic change from the soft PIE *ék* to the English *h*, as in the word *hundred*. Polish, on the other hand, underwent the sound change typical of the central dialects of PIE, which were the last to separate; the *ék* changed into an *s*, which can be observed in the Polish *sto* (Milewski 1969: 176).
1.4. Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Indo-Europeans

The similarities between the words presented in Table 1 and Table 2 in the previous section are too considerable for them to be a coincidence. Linguists conclude that most Indo-European languages are related and come from Proto-Indo-European, the reconstructed mother tongue of most languages spoken in Europe and India. PIE is estimated to have been spoken as a single language from 4500 BC to 2500 BC during the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age and the first impetus for the Proto-Indo-Europeans to disperse was the domestication of the horse (Mallory, Adams 1997). The Kurgan hypothesis (Fortson 2004), first formulated by Marija Gimbutas, argues that Proto-Indo-Europeans may be identified with the archaeological culture of the Kurgans, which is the Russian word for a burial mound – kurgan – in which the Kurgans buried their dead. This people may have lived between the Black and Caspian Seas approximately six thousand years ago.

Their culture bears many similarities to what we know of the Proto-Indo-European culture, which has been reconstructed on the basis of language study. By comparing similar words in Indo-European languages which we have records of, we can deduce where and how they lived, what they ate, what tools they used and what the place they inhabited looked like.

Based on the above, conclusions can be drawn about the territories they initially inhabited. Language study enables scientists to learn about non-material aspects of culture, which would be impossible should we rely solely on archaeology.

According to Brinton and Arnovick (2006), there are a number of facts that we can assess about the Proto-Indo-Europeans based on the study of language, the most interesting of which are:

- they worshipped gods, engaged in rituals and had priests and seers,
- their society was patriarchal,
they cultivated a variety of crops and kept a number of domesticated animals,
they made use of diverse skills and comparatively advanced tools,
they used a variety of different means of transportation, such as rowed or poled vessels, as well as walking, and horse riding, which were important in their migrations,
they measured the year in agricultural terms as well as according to the lunar month,
they oriented themselves in terms of natural phenomena: east was associated with the dawn and west with the dusk,
they counted using the decimal system and may also have had a counting system based on twelve,
their society was based on reciprocity with great importance attached to exchange, compensation, restitution, hospitality, oath-making and gift-giving,
oral poetry was very important and made use of a special, very rich vocabulary,
they knew snow, cloudy skies and thunder (although the words for rain differ),
they knew boggy terrain and uncultivated land or forest and they encountered lakes,
they knew different kinds of trees and animals characteristic of the temperate climate of eastern and central Europe.

Language studies enable us not only to reconstruct the proto-languages, but also to investigate how languages forming one language family are related to one another and to track their evolution.

Linguists have adopted the image of a genealogical tree to envisage language evolution, and have borrowed biological terms (such as mother-language, sister languages, ancestors and descendants) and, naturally, the very idea of evolution, to describe the changes languages undergo.
1.5. Cognates, doublets and borrowings

How can one be certain that the cognates presented in Tab.1 are not, in fact, borrowings? Indeed, there are many similar words in Indo-European languages (and outside of them) which bear close resemblances, such as the English *computer*, the Polish *komputer*, the Russian компьютёр [komp’yuter], the Hindi कंप्यूटर [kampyootar]. However, such loanwords have not undergone the phonetic changes, which words native to a language (or ones which have been in use in a language for a considerable length of time) are susceptible to. What is more, the word *computer* is a relatively new one, invented to name a relatively recently developed device, and thus the resemblances of the words in different languages are due to their having been borrowed, and not the words’ common ancient ancestry. What is interesting is that there seems to be a well-known, although little studied, rule about lexical borrowing which claims that a language borrows what it lacks in its culture and environment (Deroy 1956: 57, after Quentel 2018:34).

A convincing definition of cognate was provided by Trask (2000: 62, after Rychło 2019: 17), who stated that a cognate is “one of two or more words or morphemes which are directly descended from a single ancestral form in the single common ancestor of the languages in which the words or morphemes are found, with no borrowing”.

The following examples of cognates found in Indo-European languages illustrate word evolution, together with language-specific phonetic changes, proving the words’ common ancient ancestry.

(A) PIE *h₁d-ont-* ‘tooth’, Latin dentis ‘tooth’, Polish dzięsło ‘gum’, English tooth. In this example, Grimm’s Law can be observed in the case of English, which states that the PIE *d became the Germanic t, and the PIE *t became the Germanic th. In the case of Polish, we observe palatalisation of the PIE *d into Polish dzi. Such phonetic changes have been described by linguists in detail and cognates can be identified on their basis.
Moreover, borrowings and the approximate time of their appearance in a language can be identified based on the level of their phonetic evolution comparable to the time periods of given phonetic changes in a language. A word borrowed into a language before a specific phonetic change will undergo that change, whereas a word borrowed after the occurrence of that change will not bear the traits of that alteration.

(B) Thus, another example of related words are the ones descended from the PIE *ǵrh₂-no- ‘grain’: the English kernel, the Polish ziarło, the Latin grānum. The Latin word has been borrowed into Polish and English, forming words such as grain, granulka/granule, granit/granite, or granat/ grenade, pomegranate. The semantic evolution is based on the concept of ‘consisting of grains, breaking up into grains, small pieces’. Interestingly, the Polish granat translates to as many as four distinct English words: pomegranate; grenade; navy blue; garnet, and meant ‘consisting of many grains’; originally it referred to the fruit and subsequently to the weapon; with the colour in reference to the fruit – first it named a purple, scarlet shade, and the semantic shift occurred later – the gem in reference to the fruit’s grains and colour. In the Latin borrowings, we do not observe the sound changes typical of Polish and English, and which the words native to these languages (kernel, ziarło) have undergone.

When a cognate is borrowed into a language, a doublet may come into existence, e.g. Polish ziarło ‘grain’ and granulka ‘granule’. Cognates, however, are not the only possible source of doublets. In spite of the fact that the term doublet is widely used by numerous linguists, views diverge on what a doublet is and what it is not. Bloomer provides a valuable insight on the matter in his article Types of Linguistic Doublets (1998), in which he compares and contrasts linguists’ view on the matter. Thus, a general consensus among most linguists states that doublets must occur in one given language, there can be more than two in number (e.g. triplets), they can represent various word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) and, depending on their
source, they can be base forms, derivations or compounds. Additionally, there must be a phonological and semantic difference between the lexemes constituting the doublet, though stipulations on the nature of the semantic divergence vary. Doublets can come into existence by means of lexeme differentiation in one language or they can be transmitted by borrowing and they must descend from a common source.

A “common source” is understood in two distinct manners: (1) the words must go back to a single etymon (in a diachronic sense), and (a) the doublet participants either go back to an etymon with or without the same inflexion (e.g. Fr. août ‘August’ ≈ Fr. auguste ‘venerable, majestic’, both from the Lat. augustus ‘sacred, majestic, venerable’), or (b) one doublet participant goes back to an etymon with or without inflexion, and the other to the same etymon with a different inflexion (e.g. spoil, from the Lat. spoliare ‘rob’, and spoliate, from the Lat. spoliatus ‘robbed, ruined, wasted’). (2) The common source is understood in a synchronic manner, where, even though only one of the doublet participants may have existed in the language at an earlier stage, both can be traced back to a common base morpheme which explains their structure as derivations or inflected word forms (e.g. Ger. gesandt ‘sent’ [obsole] ≈ gesendet ‘sent’, both from senden ‘send’ or Pol. przygotować ‘prepare’ ≈ ugotować ‘cook’, originally ‘prepare’, both from gotować ‘cook, prepare, ready’). Yet another approach (3) is that the doublet participants need not derive from the same source, even though, similarly to the previous example, only one of the words had existed in the language at an earlier stage (e.g. kingly ≈ royal). Thus, if all of the above criteria are agreed on to form doublets, type (1) would be etymological doublets ([1a] pure etymological doublets, [1b] mixed etymological doublets), type (2) morphological doublets (in this category three subtypes can be distinguished: [2a] inflexional doublets, [2b] morphosyntactic doublets, [2c] derivational doublets), type (3) lexical doublets. Furthermore, “most of the subtypes can be separated further according to whether the
difference in meaning between forms at the current synchronic state is denotational or connotational” (Bloomer, 1998: 2).

Another classification of doublets can be made by segregating them according to the route through which they entered a language. Thus, doublets can be categorised with regard to (1) the route through which the words forming a doublet entered the language, and (2) based on the language from which one of the words forming a doublet has been borrowed (Kamola-Uberman, 2018).

The route criterion determines several types of doublets:

(a) native-native provenance; a word in one language split into two or more separate lexemes, e.g. *shadow, shade, shed, all from the Old English *sceadu ‘shadow, shade’, or the Polish *pochwa ‘sheath, case; vagina’ and *poszwa ‘pillowcase, cover’, both of which expressed the same meaning of ‘that which covers, a cover’ in the 16th century, and were used interchangeably (for examples of usage see Buttler 1978: 49);

(b) native-borrowed provenance, where one word is native and the other is borrowed from a different language, e.g., native Germanic *word, and *verb, a borrowing from Latin, both ultimately from the PIE *werh₁- ‘to speak’. In Polish, an example of such a doublet is the previously mentioned *ziarno ‘grain’ and *granulka ‘granule’, both ultimately from the PIE *grh₂-no- ‘grain’;

(c) borrowed-borrowed provenance, which can be observed mainly in English, which boasts a long history of borrowings from Latin and French, especially from Norman French in the earlier period and Central French in the later period, e.g. *flame (French) and *conflagration (Latin), both ultimately from the PIE *bhleg- ‘to shine, flash, burn’; *canal (Norman French) and *channel (Central French), both ultimately from the Latin *canalis ‘groove, channel, waterpipe’. There are also words borrowed from Spanish and French which form doublets in both English and Polish: *sauce/ sos (from French) and *salsa (from Spanish), all ultimately from the PIE *sh₂el- ‘salt’.

As regards the criterion of the source language, in the case of English, the main languages from which it borrowed are Latin,
French, and the Scandinavian languages, but it also borrows heavily from Greek, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Dutch and German. According to surveys conducted by Finkenstaedt, Wolff, Neuhaus, and Herget (1973), Williams (1986), the makeup of English vocabulary can be presented as follows: Latin (including words used exclusively in scientific, medical or legal context) 29 %, French 29 %, Germanic 26 %, Greek 6 %, other 10 %. According to Skeat (1892), English consists of 178 Anglo-Saxon root words and 280 root words descended from other languages, the majority of which were borrowed from Latin or Greek (after Javed, Xiao, Nazli 2012).

In the case of Polish, we can mention Czech, Latin, German, Italian, French, Russian, Turkish and English as the main sources of loanwords (Walczak 1995). Bańko, in an entry to the PWN Language Counselling Centre from 2011, estimates the number of Polish loanwords based on etymological information in the PWN Grand Dictionary of Foreign Words as follows: French 5,889, Latin 5,806, Greek 4,096, English 3,593, German 2,978, and Italian 1,250. He enumerates only the languages which have been mentioned at least 1,000 times.

Mostly, however, doublets are formed not only by pairs of words, but it is also possible to find whole families of related words in a given language. Comparing these families of related words in two or more languages allows for an insight into the words’ evolution and how the human mind finds correlations and parallels between concepts, and thus names certain phenomena in certain ways.

2. Examples of borrowings, cognates and doublets in Polish and English deriving from a common Proto-Indo-European source

2.1. PIE *lendh- ‘loin’

The English loin and its Polish counterpart, lędźwie, both ultimately originate from the PIE *lendh- ‘loin’, although in the case
of English the lexeme is a borrowing, so they cannot be considered cognates.

In Polish, it is an originally Slavic lexeme found in other Slavic languages, e.g. the Czech *ledví (arch.) ‘thigh, groin, (horse) entrails’; the Russian (arch.) ljádvieja ‘thigh’; the Serbo-Croatian ledviđa ‘loins’; the Old Church Slavonic ledviđe ‘loins’. All derive from the Proto-Slavic *lędvьje ‘loins, kidneys’ which is a collective noun deriving from the Proto-Slavic *lędvo ‘loin, kidney’. Derivatives in Polish include the archaic lędźwica or lędźwina ‘inner upper thigh; bird rump; kidney’ and polędwica ‘fillet, tenderloin’. In two of the mentioned cases we observe the suffix -ica, which denotes the concept of ‘pertaining to; made of’, similarly as in miednica ‘pelvis; basin’, originally ‘made of copper (miedź)’ or mietlica ‘a type of grass; Agrostis’, originally ‘similar to a broom (miotła)’; and in the case of the third lexeme a suffix -ina is visible, similarly as in other words naming meat, e.g. sarnina ‘deer meat’ (sarna ‘deer’).

In the case of English, the native lexeme was the Old English lendenu ‘loins’ deriving from the Proto-Germanic *landwin- (source also of German Lende ‘loin’, Lenden ‘loins’; the Old High German lentīn ‘kidneys, loins’, the Old Saxon lendin, the Middle Dutch lendine, the Dutch lende, the Old Norse lend ‘loin’, and related words, such as the Old Norse lunder ‘ham, buttock’, the Old High German lunda ‘tallow’).

Loin, in Middle English loyne, is a borrowing from loigne, logne, variants of the Old French longe ‘loin’, which derives from the Medieval Latin *lumbea, from *lumbea caro ‘meat of the loin’, a feminine form of *lumbeus, an adjective used as a noun, from the Latin lumbus ‘loin’, from the PIE *londh-wo. Related words in English include lumbar ‘pertaining to or situated near the loins’, which was formed by the addition of the suffix -ar, similarly as in alveolar ‘pertaining to the sockets of the teeth’; lumbago ‘weakness of loins and lower back’ (which is also present in Polish); loin-cloth ‘cloth worn about the loins’; probably lam-bada ‘sensual Brazilian dance using pronounced movement of the hips’; sirloin, a variant spelling of surloin, from the French
surlonge, literally ‘upper part of the loin’, from sur ‘over, above’ + longe ‘loin’, from the Old French loigne; numbles ‘edible viscera of animals, entrails of a deer’, which entered English through the French nomble ‘loin of veal, fillet of beef, haunch of venison’, from the Old French numbles, nombles (plural) ‘ditto’, dissimilated from *lombles, plural of *lomble, from the Latin lumbulus, diminutive of lumbus ‘loin’.

Numbles descended from the Middle English umbles ‘offal’, with loss of n- through the process of metanalysis, i.e. a reinterpretation or a transfer of morphemic boundaries, in this case resulting in a reinterpretation of the boundary between the word and an article preceding it, similarly as in the case of other English words, such as an adder, earlier a nadder, an apron, earlier a napron. Umble pie ‘pie made from umbles’ was considered low-class food, and through the similarity in pronunciation with humble (the h was silent), the proverb to eat humble pie ‘make a humble apology and accept humiliation’ was created.

Thus, the Polish lędźwie and the French lombes ‘loins’ and longe ‘loin, tether, thong’, as well as the Old English lendenu ‘loins’ can be considered cognates. Lędźwica and polędwica are an example of a doublet (derivational doublet of native-native origin), as are loin and numbles (mixed etymological doublet of borrowed-borrowed origin).

All of the above lexemes semantically adhere to the concept of loin, denoting meat, organs or edible animal parts from that bodily region, medical conditions connected with that bodily region, the movement of that bodily region, or clothing worn about that region, thus presenting metonymy.

2.2. PIE *sh₂el- ‘salt’

The Proto-Indo-European *sh₂el- ‘salt’ proves to be a rich source of related words in Polish and English. The word descended into the Latin sāl ‘salt’, and the form salsus ‘salted’ (from the past participle of Old Latin sallere ‘to salt’) became the basis for
a number of words which have been borrowed into Polish and English.

The first example is the Spanish salsa ‘type of sauce’, originally ‘something salted, seasoned’ from the Vulgar Latin *salsa ‘condiment’. The word was borrowed into Polish and English around the 19th century. Later it was used to name the genre of music through the use of metaphor, as it was a mixture of Latin jazz and rock, similarly to the salsa sauce consisting of various chopped, mixed ingredients.

In French, the word took the form sausse, which in English and Polish became the loanwords sauce and sos. As in the case of salsa, it referred to ‘something salted, tasty spice, condiment’. The written records of the word date back to the mid-14th century in English and to the 18th century in Polish. The adjective saucy ‘resembling sauce’, which later evolved to mean ‘impertinent, cheeky’ (with an alteration sassy, back-formed into sass ‘impudence’) was formed by using a metaphor ‘piquancy in words or actions’.

Sausage, in Middle English sausige, was borrowed from the Old North French saussiche (corresponding to the Modern French saucisse), from the Vulgar Latin *salsicia ‘sausage’, from salsicus ‘seasoned with salt’, from the Latin salsus ‘salted’.

The Polish salceson ‘headcheese, brawn’ has its source most probably in the Italian salsiccione ‘sausage’, as it was imported to Poland from Italy around the 15th – 17th century.

Salami is yet another sausage name that was borrowed by both Polish and English circa the 19th century. It derives from the Italian salami, plural of salame ‘spiced pork sausage’, from the Vulgar Latin *salamen, from *salare ‘to salt’.

The Latin *salare is a rich source of derivatives in both Polish and English, e.g. salad, which is a borrowing from the Old French salade (circa 14th century), from the Vulgar Latin *salata, literally ‘salted’, which in turn is an abbreviation of herba salata ‘salted vegetables’, as vegetables seasoned with brine were a popular Roman dish. Other examples of borrowings include the Polish salata ‘lettuce’ (originally: ‘a dish comprised
of vegetables cut into pieces’, and, lettuce being the most common ingredient of salads, it acquired the name itself, and *salatka ‘salad’; the ́[w] points to an early loan; *salaterka ‘salad-bowl’ is a borrowing from the French salatière.

Salary is another example of a Latin derivative; initially, it probably meant ‘salt money, a soldier’s allowance for the purchase of salt’ or ‘annual income from the sale of salt’. It entered English through the Anglo-French salarie, from the Old French *salaire ‘wages, pay, reward’, from the Latin *salarium ‘an allowance, a stipend, a pension’, which is the noun use of a neuter of adjective the salarius ‘of or pertaining to salt; yearly revenue from the sale of salt’, as a noun, ‘a dealer in salt fish’.

Saltpetre (saltpeter), in Middle English salpetre was borrowed from the Old French salpetre, which derived from the Medieval Latin sāl petrae, literally ‘salt of the rock’ – named so because of its resemblance to salt settled on rocks and being found as an incrustation, from the Latin sāl ‘salt’ + petra ‘rock, stone’. The a iteration of the first element is from the folk-etymological association with the native Germanic salt (which is a cognate to the Latin sāl). The Polish counterpart saletra ‘saltpetre’, attested since the 17th century, is a borrowing from the Medieval Latin saletrum.

In Greek, the PIE root took the form hals ‘salt’, and borrowings can be found both in Polish and in English: halogen (halogens are the chemical elements fluorine (F), chlorine (Cl), bromine (Br), iodine (I) and astat (At) which form salts in their reaction with metals; the halogen lamp contains inert gas with a small amount of one of the halogens); isohaline/izohalina – an isoline on the map connecting points with the same degree of salinity. Halite/halit, i.e. salt rock, a mineral whose main component is sodium chloride.

In Germanic languages, the PIE root descended into the Proto-Germanic *saltom (which is also the source of Old Saxon, Old Norse, Old Frisian, and Gothic salt, Dutch zout, German Salz), into the Old English sealt ‘salt’ and finally the Modern English salt. Silt, originally ‘sediment deposited by seawater’, is
also of Germanic provenance, probably from a Scandinavian source (in Norwegian and Danish related word *sylt* ‘salt marsh’ exists), or from the Middle Low German or Middle Dutch *silde*, *sulte* ‘salt marsh, brine’, from the Proto-Germanic *sultja-* (source also of Old English *sealt*, Old High German *sulza* ‘salt-water’, German *Sülze* ‘brine’). *Souse* ‘to pickle, steep in vinegar’ has been borrowed from the Old French adjective *sous* ‘preserved in salt and vinegar’, but is ultimately from a Germanic source, probably from the Frankish *sultja* or some other Germanic source, from the Proto-Germanic *salta-* ‘salt’.

In Slavic languages, there are also a number of derivatives, as the PIE root descended into the Proto-Slavic *solb-* ‘salt’ (cognates in other Slavic languages include Czech *sul*, Russian *sol’, and Old Church Slavonic *solb* ‘salt’). The adjective *słony* ‘salty’ was a basis for *słonina* ‘bacon, lard, pork fat’, literally ‘something salted’, with the suffix -*ina*, similarly as in other names for meat, e.g. *wieprzowina* ‘pork’ (*wieprz* ‘hog’) or *cielecina* ‘veal’ (*ciele* ‘calf’). *Solić* ‘to salt’, from the Proto-Slavic *soliti* ‘to salt, season with salt, make salty’ is a source of *solnica* > *solniczka* (a diminutive) ‘salt shaker’ is also a derivative with the suffix -*ica*, often denoting tools or containers, as in *donica* ‘flower pot’, from the Proto-Slavic *dojbnica* ‘a container used for milking’ (from *doić* ‘to milk’), as well as *solanka* ‘brine’, with the suffix -*anka*, similar as in *grzanka* ‘toast’ (from *grzać* ‘to heat’) or *leżanka* ‘couch, chaise longue’ (from *leżeć* ‘to lie down’).

The traces of the PIE root are also found in *rosół* ‘broth’, in Old Polish ‘brine’ formed from the Proto-Slavic *orzsolb* ‘brine, salty water used for preserving food’, from the Proto-Slavic *orzsoliti* ‘season with salt, preserve with salt’, from the Proto-Slavic *soliti* ‘to salt’). The prefix *roz-* is common in most Slavic languages and derives from the Proto-Slavic *orz(ь)-* ‘separately, from, of’, from the PIE *er-* ‘to separate’ (-*z* probably added under the influence of the Proto-Slavic forms of contemporary *bez* ‘without’, *przez* ‘through’, *wz-*).

Interestingly enough, the Polish words *słód* ‘malt’, *słodki* ‘sweet’, *słodycz* ‘sweetness; sweets’ are also ultimately derived
from the PIE *\(sh_2el\). The Proto-Slavic *soldькъ ‘tasty, palatable; sweet; pleasant, nice’ had a suffix *-ькъ layered on the primary adjective †soldь ‘ditto’, which derives from the PIE *sh_2el-dū-, most probably ‘seasoned with salt, salty’ > ‘tasty, palatable’ > ‘sweet’, the derivative of which is also noted in the Lithuanian saldus ‘sweet’, and Latvian salds ‘sweet’.

A great number of lexemes derived from the PIE root *sh_2el- namely salted dishes: sos, salsa, sauce, sausage, salceson, salami, słonina, rosół, which does not seem unusual, as salt has been a widely used preservative, as well as seasoning. Examples of cognates include salt, sól, sál; sółki, saldus, salds.

Examples of etymological doublets include słony and słodki (mixed etymological doublets of native-native origin); salata and sałatka (derivational doublets of borrowed-borrowed origin); sos and salsa (pure etymological doublet of borrowed-borrowed origin); sauce and salsa (pure etymological doublet of borrowed-borrowed origin); rosół and solanka (mixed etymological doublets of native-native origin), halit and sól, halit and salt (mixed etymological doublets of native-borrowed origin), salceson and salami, sausage and salami (mixed etymological doublets of borrowed-borrowed origin).

2.3. PIE *seh₁- ‘to impress, insert; to sow, plant’

The PIE root *seh₁- descended into Latin as semen ‘seed of plants, animals, or men; race, inborn characteristic; posterity, progeny, offspring’, figuratively ‘origin, essence, principle, cause’ (from the PIE *sēh₁mn ᵃ ‘seed’) and is a source of numerous English words, such as semen, disseminate ‘to scatter or sow for propagation’, from the Latin disseminatus, the past participle of disseminare ‘to spread abroad, disseminate’, from dis- ‘in every direction’ + seminare ‘to plant, propagate’ (in Middle English dissemen ‘to scatter’ was present); inseminate, with an earlier meaning ‘to cast as seed’, which derived from inseminatus, the past participle of the Latin inseminare ‘to sow, implant’, from in- ‘in’+ semen ‘seed’; and in Polish, a borrowing inse-minacja
'artificial insemination’ exists, which can be considered a lexical doublet of the originally Slavic zapłodnienie ‘insemination’, although with a specialised meaning pointing to ‘artificial (and not natural)’.

Other Latin borrowings which exist both in English and Polish are *semi narium* ‘a teaching method based on the active participation of students; a teacher or priest school’, *seminar* ‘a class at university in which a topic is discussed by a teacher and a small group of students’, and *seminary* ‘a training college for priests or rabbis’. The latter, attested in English since the mid-15th century, is a borrowing of the Latin *seminarium* ‘plant nursery, seed plot’, figuratively, ‘breeding ground’, from *semi narius* ‘of seed’, from *semen* ‘seed’. *Seminary* and the Polish *seminarium* started to be used in the sense of ‘a school training priests’, later the word was applied to name any school, in Poland especially *seminarium duchowne* ‘priest school’, *seminarium nauczycielskie* ‘teacher school’. *Seminarium/ seminar* ‘special group-study class for advanced students’ was borrowed via the German *Seminar* ‘group of students working with a professor’. Metaphorically the professor ‘sows knowledge onto the seed plots of the students’ minds’.

This Latin lexeme descended into French, which in turn again proved a source of loanwords in both Polish and English. The English adjective *seme* ‘covered with a small, constantly repeating pattern’ displays no Polish counterpart; it was borrowed from the French *semée* ‘strewn, sprinkled’, the past participle of *semer*, from the Latin *seminare* ‘to sow’, from *semen* ‘seed’. An example where both Polish and English borrowed the same lexeme is *sezon/ season* ‘a period of the year; proper time, suitable occasion’ (in English it displaced the native Middle English *sele* ‘season’, from the Old English *sæl* ‘season, time, occasion’), from the Old French *seison*, also *saison* ‘season, date; right moment, appropriate time (for sowing)’, from the Latin *satio* ‘a sowing, planting’, from the past participle stem of *serere* ‘to sow’. The meaning evolved from the ‘act of sowing’ to the ‘time of sowing’,
especially ‘spring, regarded as the chief sowing season’ and finally was extended to *season in general.

In English, the verb *to season* ‘improve the flavour of by adding spices’ is a borrowing from the Old French *assaisoner* ‘to ripen, season’, from *a- ‘to’ + root of *season*, a metonymy of the notion that fruits become more palatable as they become ripe.

In Polish, there is also a great number of originally Slavic lexemes descended from the PIE root *seh₁-*, such as *siemię* ‘seed’ (usually used in the collocation *siemię lniane* ‘flax-seed’), from the Proto-Slavic *sêmę ‘seed’, and from the PIE *séh₃m₃* ‘seed’. *Siać* ‘sow’ (often used with prefixes: *dosiać, obsiać, nasiać;* frequentative *siewać*, usually with prefixes: *obsiewać, zasiewać, wysiewać, posiewać* (all naming sowing in different manners); the last example being a source of *posiew*, used especially as a medical term *posiew krwi/moczu* ‘blood/urine culture’, metaphorically “growing bacteria on a Petri dish similarly to growing seeds in a field”, which derived from the Proto-Slavic *sêti/sêjati, sêjо ‘throw, sprinkle grain into properly prepared soil’. Other derivatives include *siew* ‘a sowing’, *siewca* ‘sower; propagator’. *Siać* ‘sift’, usually used with a prefix *przesiać*, the frequentative *przesiewać* ‘sift through’ derives from the Proto-Slavic *sêti/sêjati, sêjо ‘sift’, which is formally identical to *siać ‘sow’, but semantics and disparate cognates in Baltic languages point to a primary separateness of these two lexemes; it is a descendant of the PIE root *sếi- ‘sift’, a source of *sito* ‘sieve’ (from a proto-form *seh₁y-tom). A suffixed Proto-Slavic form *na-sếti* was a source of *nasiono* ‘seed’, *nasionie* ‘semen’, as well as a diminutive *nasionko* ‘small seed’, *nasienny*, used especially in a botanical term *okrytonasienne* ‘flowering plant, Angiospermae’ (*okryty* ‘covered’) or *nagonasienne* ‘gymnosperms’ (*nagi* ‘naked’).

In English, one can also find originally Germanic descendants of the PIE root, such as *sow*, from the Middle English *sowen*, from the Old English *sāwan* ‘to scatter seed upon the ground or plant it in the earth, disseminate’, from the Proto-Germanic *sêdiz ‘seed’, from *sēaną + *-þiz, corresponding to the Proto-Indo-European *sehtis;* ‘seed’, from the Old English
sǣd, from innovative Germanic *sēdą ‘seed’, from *sh-ᵽ-tós; and also a derivative seedling ‘a young plant, especially one raised from seed and not from a cutting’.

Semantic change includes metaphor, as in the case of seminarium/seminar ‘sowing knowledge, cultivating students’ minds as if sowing seeds and cultivating a plot’ and disseminate ‘to spread widely, especially information; to metaphorically sow information widely’. The notion of ‘throwing, spreading’ seems to be an important part of the semantics of words connected with seed, sow, etc., which is nothing out of ordinary considering that the activities are connected with cultivating crops. The specialisation to ‘seed of animals/humans’ is visible in semen/nasienie, connecting crop cultivation with breeding.

The Polish/English cognates include siemię (nasiono) and seed; siać and sow; siew and sowing; nasienie and semen.

An example of a lexical doublet is inseminacja and zapłodnienie, with a specialisation of the borrowed lexeme to ‘artificial insemination’. Etymological doublets include nasienie and nasięno (a pure etymological doublet of native-native origin); siemię and nasięno (a mixed etymological doublet of native-native origin); semen and seed (a mixed etymological doublet of native-borrowed origin).

2.4 PIE *ph₃i- ‘drink’

Another word root worth mentioning is the Proto-Indo-European *ph₃i- ‘drink’. It is the source of many Polish words descending from the Proto-Slavic *piti ‘to drink’: pić ‘to drink’, pijalnia ‘pub, a place for drinking’ (with a suffix denoting ‘a place where’, as in sypialnia ‘bedroom’ from sypiać, frequentative form of spać ‘sleep’ + alnia), piwo ‘beer’ (the original meaning is ‘a drink’, later specialized into ‘an alcoholic drink made from malt and water with the addition of hops’; the morphology is similar as in paliwo ‘fuel’ from palić ‘burn’), from which a derivative, piwnica ‘basement’ earlier: ‘a place for storing beer’ was formed; pitny ‘drinkable’ (especially used in the expressions
miód pitny ‘mead’, woda pitna ‘potable water’; pijak ‘drunkard’, 
pijany ‘drunk’.
Poć ‘to make one drink, to give to drink’ comes 
from the Proto-Slavic *pojiti ‘to make one drink’ is a causative 
verb from the Proto-Slavic *piti ‘to drink’, from which descends 
poidło, diminutive poidelko ‘drinker, drinking fountain’; pijawka 
‘leech; a (blood)-drinking animal’, from the Proto-Slavic 
*pjajvęka, from the Proto-Slavic *pjati ‘drink’, a frequentative 
verb. Pić ‘chafe, pinch; bother’ also descends from the Proto-
Slavic *piti ‘adhere firmly’ > ‘chafe, pinch’ with a metonymic 
change from ‘to drink’ > ‘to adhere, cling, stick’, probably 
through indirect contextual meanings ‘absorb liquid, moisture’, 
‘drink clinging with one’s mouth’. There are also prefixed forms: 
napórj ‘drink, soft drink’, napitek ‘drink, beverage’, upojny ‘intox-
icating, entrancing’. Pieróg ‘dumpling’, comes from theProto-
Savic *piorgę ‘food made of dough consumed during feasts’, 
from the Proto-Slavic *pirę ‘drinking, libation, feast (with drink-
ing)’. 

It seems that in Germanic languages the PIE root did not 
survive, and thus only loanwords from Latin and French based 
on it can be found in English. In Latin, we observe pōtāre ‘to 
drink’, pōtiō ‘a potion, a drinking’, also ‘poisonous draught, 
magic potion’. Through the Old French pocion ‘potion, draught, 
medicine’, poison, puison ‘a drink, especially a medical drink’, 
later ‘a (magic) potion, poisonous drink’ it entered English cre-
ating potion and poison, respectively, the former entering Eng-
lish in c. 1300, the latter in c. 1200.

The Latin bibere ‘to imbibe’ is also ultimately a descendant 
of the PIE *ph₃i- (from the Proto-Italic *pibō, from the Proto-Indo-
European *pibeti/*pipheti ‘to drink, to be drinking’) and an an-
cestor of a number of lexemes in English and Polish. In the for-
mer language we find beverage, a borrowing from the Old 
French bevrage, from the Old French boivre ‘to drink’ (in Modern 
French boire ‘to drink’); imbibe, from the Old French imbiber, 
embiber ‘to soak into’ and directly from the Latin imbibere ‘ab-
sorb, drink in, inhale’, from in- ‘into, in, on, upon’ + bibere ‘to 
drink’; imbrue, which first carried the meaning ‘to soak, steep’
and next, in the mid-15th century, ‘to stain, soil’, from the Old French *embruer* ‘to moisten’, which probably is a metathesis of *embevrer* ‘give to drink, make drunk’; *beer* (most probably it was a sixth century. West Germanic monastic borrowing of the Vulgar Latin *biber* ‘a drink, beverage’, and because of that we find a number of related words in other Germanic languages) as well as *bib* ‘a piece of cloth fastened around a child’s neck which soaks up any spilt liquids or is worn while drinking to prevent the clothes from getting stained’.

In Polish, the Latin *bibere* was a source of words such as *bibuła* ‘blotting paper, (paper) which soaks up any ink spills’ (from the Latin *bibulus* ‘drinking readily), as well as the colloquial *biba* ‘a drinking party’ from the Latin *bibō* ‘I drink’.

An interesting borrowing descended from the common PIE root is *symposium/sympozjum* which has been recorded in English since the 16th century, when it meant ‘gathering, party’, from the Latin *symposium* ‘a drinking party’, from the Greek *symposion* ‘party with drinking, a social gathering of the educated’, from *syn-* ‘together’ and *posis* ‘drinking’, from a stem of Aeolic *ponen* ‘to drink’. A symposium usually took place after dinner because the Greeks did not drink at meals. The pleasure of the meeting was intensified by intellectual and agreeable conversation, with the accompaniment of music or dancers and other entertainment.

Semantic change oscillates around the concept of drinking including: drinking people, animals, things one can drink or occasions that feature drinking, tools and containers which either metaphorically ‘drink’ or are used to store liquids for drinking. The concept of drinking alcohol is a pervasive one.

There are no Polish-English cognates, as only borrowings descended from the previously discussed root survived in English. An example of a Polish-French cognate is *pić* and *boire*.

Doublets include *napój* ‘a drink’, *napitek* ‘a drink, beverage’, *picie* ‘a drink’ and *piwo* ‘beer; originally: a drink’ (a mixed etymological quadruplet of native-native origin); *beverage, beer, potion, poison* (a mixed etymological quadruplet of borrowed-
borrowed origin), *biba* and *sympozjum* ‘a meeting of the educated, originally: a drinking party’ (a mixed etymological quadruplet of borrowed-borrowed origin). An example of a lexical doublet is *bibuła* and *krepina* ‘crepe paper’.

3. Conclusion

English and Polish vocabulary, although considerably different at first glance – English being a Germanic language and Polish a Slavic one – shares many common features, both descending from the common ancestral Proto-Indo-European language. There is a considerable number of cognates (lexemes descended from the same ancestral root, without borrowing) in Polish and English, as well as doublets in both of these languages. Both Polish and English display doublets of various origins, showing a great diversity of borrowings, in the presented examples usually from Latin and French. Oftentimes, both Polish and English borrowed the same lexeme which suggests that in both languages a need for naming a new concept arose. This illustrates that concepts and a general view of the world and how it works are shared by speakers of both languages, which is not surprising, considering the relative geographical proximity of both language regions and their participation in Western European culture (though Polish reflects influences of the Eastern European and Asian cultures as well). Some of the words’ meanings evolved in unpredictable ways, as was in the case of *słony* ‘salty’ and *słodki* ‘sweet’ – the concept of ‘tastiness’ winning with the apparent difference of the tastes themselves. Some of the associations seemed rather far-fetched at first, as in the case of *pieróg* ‘dumpling’ descending from the PIE *ph₃i*- ‘drink’, or *seminar* descending from the PIE *seh₁- ‘sow’, but proved sensible when investigated in detail.

Investigating cognates in related languages is a valid source of information about the languages, their level of relatedness and the history of the languages we use today.
References


