TEMA

41

Topic 41: Romanisation. The Influence of Latin on the English Language. Borrowings and Calques

La romanización. Influencia del latín en la lengua inglesa. Préstamos y calcos.

§

NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

Índice

1. INTRODUCTION

2. THE ROMANISATION OF BRITAIN

- 2.1. The conquest (AD 43–c. 87)
- 2.2. Frontiers, provinces and administration
- 2.3. Romanisation: towns, roads, language and religion
- 2.4. The end of Roman Britain

3. LATIN IN OLD ENGLISH

- 3.1. How many words, and in which layers
- 3.2. Continental loanwords
- 3.3. The Roman legacy in place names
- 3.4. The Christian layer

4. LATIN IN MIDDLE ENGLISH AND IN MODERN ENGLISH

- 4.1. The Norman Conquest and the Middle Ages
- 4.2. The Renaissance
- 4.3. Consequences for the English lexicon

5. BORROWINGS AND CALQUES

- 5.1. Definitions
- 5.2. Types of borrowing
- 5.3. Calques and semantic loans from Latin
- 5.4. A note for the Spanish-speaking learner

6. PEDAGOGICAL AND DIDACTIC IMPLICATIONS

7. CONCLUSION

Fuentes

1. INTRODUCTION

Rome ruled most of Britain from AD 43 until the early fifth century, a stretch of roughly three hundred and sixty-seven years, yet the language we speak today is Germanic, not Romance. This apparent paradox is the starting point of this topic. Latin did not stay in Britain with the legions; it returned to English again and again, with the first Germanic settlers, with Christian missionaries, with the Norman clerks and with the Renaissance scholars, until Latin and Latinate words came to make up a very large share of the English dictionary. English is, in that sense, a Germanic language wearing a Roman coat.

The topic has three parts, which I will take in chronological order. First, I will examine the Romanisation of Britain: the conquest, the administration, the towns and roads, the spread of Latin and of Christianity, and the withdrawal of Rome. Secondly, I will study the influence of Latin on English in its successive waves: before the migration to Britain, in the Old English period, in Middle English and in the Renaissance and modern period. Thirdly, I will define borrowings and calques, classify them and illustrate them, with a short contrastive note for the Spanish-speaking learner. Finally, I will consider the pedagogical and didactic implications for the Secondary classroom, and close with a conclusion that returns to the paradox above.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted. For the history of the language I have used Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable's A History of the English Language, Charles Barber, Joan C. Beal and Philip A. Shaw's The English Language: A Historical Introduction, Philip Durkin's Borrowed Words: A History of Loanwords in English and David Crystal's The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. For the history of Roman Britain I have checked the BBC History timeline, and for Old English vocabulary the Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. As for the legal framework, the topic fits the curriculum established by Organic Law 3/2020 (LOMLOE), which modifies Organic Law 2/2006 on Education; Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022, which set the minimum teaching for Compulsory Secondary Education and for the Baccalaureate; and the Extremaduran Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022 of 22 August, modified in 2023.