

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN “DUTCH” AND DEUTSCH”

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People all over the world tend to call those of or from the Netherlands and their language by the English name “Dutch”. This word is widened in its sense and is applied to a wide range of meaning not only to these people’s descendants, but also to various articles, species of animate beings, and even characteristics or actions, through compounds and idioms derived from it, which are popularly used in current English in positive, negative and neutral ways.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Germany call each of themselves a “Deutsche(r)”, their language “Deutsch”, and their country “Deutschland” in their native tongue. The obvious phonological and spelling similarities of the words “Dutch” and “Deutsch”, together with the fact that Germany and the Netherlands are neighbouring countries, lead many people to doubt whether there exists any relationship between these two words, and in case there is any, what and how far it is.

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Actually, the people of the Netherlands call each of themselves a "Niederlander" or a "Hollander" (though in a narrower sense, "Niederlander" means 'an inhabitant of the Netherlands regardless of race' and "Hollander" means 'one who is a Dutch descendant and settles down in that country'), their language "Nederlands" or "Hollands", and their country "Nederland" or "Holland" in their own language; corresponding to the names given by the Germans "Niederlander(in)" or "Hollander(in)", "Niederländisch" or "Holländisch", and "Niederlande" or "Holland", to an inhabitant, the language and the country respectively. At the same time, these people call a German "Deutscher", the German language "Deutsch", and Germany "Deutschland" which also correspond to those called by the Germans themselves as mentioned above. It is evidently seen that the words "Deutsch" and "Deutsch" that correspond to the English word "Dutch" are applied only to German and not to the language nor the people of the Netherlands at all.

According to the history of Europe, the earliest tribes of people who settled down in central and western Europe were mainly the Celts who came since about 1500 BC, and some Germanic or Teutonic tribes. These Celts later went across the English Channel and settled down on the British Isles around the 4th century BC. After that, some regions in this part of the Continent such as France and Belgium were conquered by the Roman Empire about 50 BC and ruled until the early 5th century AD. Then came a new wave of Germanic tribes called the Franks who began to move against the declining of the Roman Empire and invaded the whole area which is now divided into Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland. They were recorded to have gained control over the area since the 4th and 5th centuries. A Frankish kingdom was established in modern France. It reached the peak in AD 800 when its king was crowned Charles the Great or Charlemagne of the Holy Roman Empire, in which modern Austria, Belgium, Germany, Liechtenstein and Switzerland were also included. Some Frankish tribes spread across the English Channel to the British Isles in the 6th century AD, and founded a kingdom there in modern England, pushing the former Celts to the other parts of the Isles such as Scotland and Wales.

The ancient Franks spoke Germanic tongues which belonged to the same language group as many current languages such as Dutch, English, Frisian, German and Scandinavian speeches. As they were the ancestors of the Dutch in the Netherlands, the English in England (as part of Great Britain), the Flemings in northern Belgium and the Germans in Germany, these people all speak Germanic tongues which developed from those of the Franks.

Charlemagne was the founder of the First Reich (empire) from Germany's loose principalities, which broke up after his death. In the meantime, the development of the language went on. There was an Old High German (German spoken in the southern parts or more elevated parts of the country) adjective "diutisc" meaning 'popular, national' from the noun "diota" or "diot" meaning 'people, nation'. The adjectival form was used in the 9th century to translate the Latin word "vulgar" meaning 'of the people' to distinguish the vulgar tongue, i.e. the language used by the common people, from the Latin of the church and the learned of the time. This word corresponded to the Old English "þeodisc", Gothic "*þiudisks", Old Scandinavian "íhludisc", and Old Teutonic "*þeudisko-z", all of which meant 'popular, national' from the nouns "þeod", "þinda", "íhloda" and "þeuda" respectively. The reconstructed Proto-Indo-European form was "*tewta-" meaning 'tribe' from which the suffixed form "*tewt-omus" meaning 'they of the tribe' denoting a Germanic tribal name was borrowed via Celtic into Latin as "Teutoni", meaning the Teutons or Teuton which came to be the name of the Teutonic language group, now popularly called Germanic. Later this "diutisc" gradually became the denomination of the vernacular, applicable alike to any particular German dialect, and generally to German as a whole. From the name of the language, it was naturally expanded to designate the people who spoke it, and thus grew to be an ethnic or national adjective. Later in the 12th or 13th century arose the name of the country "Diutisklant", now "Deutschland", which means Germany. By that time it also incorporated Prussia, although soon afterwards it split up again into small states.

After the Frankish people had settled down in the land of modern Germany, they crossed the Rhine, pushed back the Romans, and spread their control over the adjacent region which is now the Netherlands and northern Belgium. Their Germanic speech established itself there for so many centuries until it developed into another language different from, though related to, German. According to some scholars, its oldest form can be traced back to the period around AD 400-1100, and is recognised as Old Dutch. However, all scholars agree that "Middle Dutch" is the proper English name for the language that flourished from about 1100-1500 with abundant literature, both in poetry and prose. At that time it was called, until around the end of the 15th century, "Duitsch" by the native speakers, in accordance with the "Diutisc" language of Germany, with the same meaning and by the same purpose, i.e. to distinguish the secular language from that of the church which was Latin.

In the former times, some parts of this region had been for a long time a common battlefield and alternately occupied by various powers of Europe such as Spain, Austria and France. During the days of the Spanish rule which started in 1504, the language of Brabant (now a Province in central Belgium, in which lies Brussels, the capital) and its nearby cities Antwerp and Brussels was about to develop as a standard language of the whole Dutch-speaking area in both modern Belgium and the Netherlands. Then came the revolt against Spain in 1578, by a large number of the Brabant people who fled to the north, especially Amsterdam, split themselves from the southern part (now northern Belgium), declared their independence and developed their standard language rapidly. The independence of the Netherlands was recognised by Spain in 1648, with its standard language called "Nederduitsch" and later "Nederlands", the name which had come into existence around the end of the 15th century. Meanwhile the southern region still remained under Spain and was called the Spanish Netherlands until 1713; after that it went under the Austrian power and was called the Austrian Netherlands up to 1796 before undergoing French rule (1795-1814), and, afterwards, the unification with the Netherlands (1815-30). Nevertheless, the language used in both regions (i.e. the Netherlands and northern Belgium) has virtually been the same until now (although in Belgium its popularity decreased in some periods). Long after the independence of Belgium in 1830, and after a long struggle of the speakers of this language there, it has also become an official language of that country, along with French, since 1898. In Belgium it is not called "Nederlands" as in the Netherlands, but is called in their native tongue "Vlaams", corresponding to the English "Flemish", both of which mean 'belonging to the Provinces of Flanders (provinces in northern Belgium)'. Modern linguists generally apply the term "Netherlandic" or "Netherlandish" as the common name of the language used in both areas.

In the 15th and 18th centuries the term "Dutch" was used in English in a general sense in which now "German" is used. In one sense it signified only the "High Dutch" (now more popularly called High German) which meant the language spoken by the southern Germans who inhabited the southern or more elevated parts of Germany, called in German "Hochdeutsch". In the other sense it also included the "Low Dutch" (now Low German), called in German "Niederdeutsch" or "Plattdeutsch" which meant that spoken by the people in the northern or sea coastal regions and flatter districts in the north and northwest, approximately to the north of Hanover, including the Netherlands and the Provinces of Flanders and nearby areas in Belgium. In this sense the term "Dutch" included the language and the people of the Netherlands, as part of the "Low Dutch" or Low German domain.



The country of the "Dutch" was often called "Dutchland" meaning Germany. It was divided into High Dutchland and Low Dutchland, the latter including and sometimes (but less often) definitely meaning the Netherlands. Similarly the terms "Dutchman" and "Dutchwoman" also denoted an inhabitant of Germany, the former of which came into use in the 14th century, and was applied in an expanded sense to anyone of the Teutonic race.

After the United Provinces (of the Netherlands) became an independent state in 1579, the people used "Nederduytsch" or the Low German of Holland (called "Nederlands" instead of "Nederduytsch" afterwards) as their national language. The country was called either the Netherlands or Holland (Nederland and Holland in their native tongue), the latter of which came into use in the 12th century from the name of the County of Holland existing from the 9th century, the principal and most influential of the Dutch republics after the independence. (At present Holland is divided into North Holland and South Holland as the provinces of the Netherlands, but people still prefer to use the name "Holland" to designate the whole kingdom of the Netherlands which has been established since 1814.) By this time the term "Dutch" was gradually restricted in England to the Netherlands as the particular division of the "Dutch" or Germans with whom the English came in contact in the 17th century. Similarly, the term "Dutchman" came into use in the specific sense of an inhabitant of the Netherlands at the end of 16th century, and "Dutchwoman" at the end of the 18th century, as well as the name "Dutchland" which came to mean the Netherlands in the 17th century. On the other hand, in Holland itself, the corresponding "Duitsch" (now commonly spelt "Duits"), and in Germany "Deutsch", are, in their ordinary usage, restricted to the language and dialects of the German Empire (approximately modern Germany) and the adjacent regions, except the Netherlands (including northern Belgium) and Friesland where people speak Netherlandic and Frisian respectively. Though in a wider sense, "Deutsch" also includes the above languages, and may even be used as widely as "Germanic" or "Teutonic", it is not popularly used as such. Thus, the English use of the term "Dutch" has diverged from the German and Netherlandic use since 1600.

Now, in the present century, the English term "Dutch" is, as a noun, restricted to the people and the language of the Netherlands. Moreover, since the Dutch colonists took South Africa in the 17th century and established their language there, it has come to denote the South African people of Dutch descent as well as the language there which may be more properly called "Afrikaans" or "Cape Dutch" or "South African Dutch" as being a derivative of Netherlandic Dutch. In that country, Netherlandic is called "High Dutch" as distinguished from "Cape Dutch" or "South African Dutch" or "Afrikaans". However, the

Dutch-speaking Belgians in northern Belgium are not called Dutch but Flemings 'the inhabitants of Flanders', while their language can be called in current English Dutch as well as Flemish. An interesting expression is "Pennsylvania Dutch" which still retains the meaning of 'German' but only a degraded form of High German spoken by the descendants of the German settlers in Pennsylvania.

As an adjective, "Dutch" means 'of or belonging to the people of the Netherlands',

eg

Dutch school (of painters):

'native to, coming from, Holland (the Netherlands), or introduced, invented or made by the Dutch'. Some of the following illustrations are so old that they can be traced back to the 16th or 17th century and are now considered as dated, eg

Dutch barn,	Dutch brick,	Dutch cap.
Dutch carpet,	Dutch case,	Dutch cheese,
Dutch clinker,	Dutch clock,	Dutch doll,
Dutch door,	Dutch drops,	Dutch elm disease,
Dutch foil, gilding, gilt, gold, leaf, or metal,		Dutch garden,
Dutch hoe,	Dutch interior,	Dutch lace,
Dutch liquid or oil,	Dutch mill,	Dutch oven,
Dutch pen,	Dutch pluk,	Dutch pine or rubber,
Dutch pump,	Dutch roll,	Dutch sauce,
Dutch tile,	Dutch white,	Dutch wife,

It is contained in the names of trees and plants which come from or are common in Holland,

eg

Dutch agrimony,	Dutch beech,	Dutch clover,
Dutch elm,	Dutch honeysuckle,	Dutch medlar,
Dutch mezereum,	Dutch nut,	Dutch myrtle,
Dutch rush,	Dutch violet,	Dutch willow,

Moreover, it is applied abusively to the characteristics of or attributed to the "Dutch", often with allusion to their drinking habit, their typical broad heavy figures, their flat-bottomed vessels, etc, with a shade of meaning somewhat more than 'foreign' or 'un-English', largely due to the enmity between the English and the Dutch during the period of colonialism in the 17th century, and some of these expressions are also regarded as dated, eg

Dutch act,	Dutch auction,	Dutch auctioneer,
Dutch bargain,	Dutch comfort or consolation,	
Dutch concert,	Dutch courage,	Dutch defence,
Dutch feast,	Dutch glee,	Dutch nightingale,
Dutch lunch, party, supper or treat,		Dutch palate,
Dutch reckoning,	Dutch uncle,	Dutch widow,
Dutch wife,		

It also appears in adverbial compounded forms, eg

Dutch-bellied,	Dutch-built,	Dutch-buttocked,
Dutch-cut,		

and is applied in various idioms and slangs, eg

(to) beat the Dutch,	(to) do a/the Dutch (act),	double Dutch,
(to) go Dutch, in Dutch,		

some of which originated in the United States.

The noun "Dutchman" which means 'a man from the Netherlands' has sometimes been used, since the former times, to mean a European or a foreigner (whether Germanic or not), or even a Dutch ship. It appears in some colloquial expressions like, 'I'm a Dutchman,' as well as in compounds used as the names of plants, eg

Dutchman's breeches,	Dutchman's laudanum,	Dutchman's pipe;
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and in a number of technical applications. As a slang, it can mean 'something used to conceal faulty construction'. Its abbreviation "Dutchy", "Dutcher" or "Dutchie" has also been used since the 18th century as a familiar or contemptuous name for a Dutchman or a German.

The names of the Dutch dependency and former dependencies which contained the word "Dutch", namely, Dutch Borneo, Dutch East Indies, Dutch Guiana, Dutch New Guinea, and Dutch West Indies are no longer in use and these places have acquired new names as Kalimantan, Suriname(s), Indonesia, Irian Jaya, and the Netherlands Antilles respectively.

The derivatives of the word "Dutch", eg, "Dutcher", "Dutchify", "Dutchkin" and "Dutchlike" or "Dutchly", once used in both the senses of '(Netherlandic) Dutch' and 'German', have gradually been restricted to the former, and some have gone out of use.

In modern times, the British use of the English word "Dutch" in the sense of 'German' is regarded as a historical archaism, and so are its compounds "Dutchman" and "Dutchwoman", though still retained in some parts of the United States. The word is virtually separate and different from its corresponding German and Netherlandic forms "Deutsch" and "Duits" which are until now restricted to the sense of the German language of Germany. Their similarities are mere traces and proofs of their common origin, and the usages of the former days which have already altered in course of time.

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