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Yangon University of Distance Education**

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Using the Words in Conjunction with Archaisms

Soe Soe Naing

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to know the origins of some Myanmar archaisms and to use these archaic words and phrases correctly and appropriately. In the study of the origins and development of words, they are studied under the basic rules and principles of etymology. The first phase of this paper involves the nature and means of etymology. The second phase involves the archaisms of some colloquialisms that are faded away. In defining the origins of words, the old chronicles, encyclopedias, thesauri and sources from the internet are used as references.

Keywords – word-origins, etymology, semantics, the nature of the origins of words, word - meanings, colloquialisms, archaisms

Introduction

This paper examining the origins of some Myanmar colloquialisms from the point of view of etymology systematically. Although the colloquial words and phrases are spoken in our social life every day, we seldom know the origins of some words and phrases. This research paper highlights the origins of some colloquialisms that are no longer used and they are studied by means of etymology. It is divided into three parts – the nature of etymology, using the words in conjunction with archaisms, and some Myanmar colloquial terms whose origins are hardly known. The origins of some words are presented as examples and they are quoted from some conclusive literature evidence.

1. They Nature of Etymology

Studying the lexical terms of a language from the point of view of the linguistic field, there are two kinds of field. They are the study of word-origins and the study of word-meanings. Etymology is the study of word-origins and semantics is the study of word-meanings. The former field has developed when the linguist Sir William Joan (AD 1746-1764) brought the Sanskrit language to Europe.¹ It is not later than linguistics which is popular at the present time.

1.1 The origin of etymology

The word “etymology” is derived from a Greek word *ἐτυμολογία* (*etumologiā*). The Greek word, *ἐτυμολογία* combines with another Greek word, *ἔτυμον* to form *-λογία*”. The meaning of the word, *ἔτυμον* is “true sense” and *-λογία* means “study”. Besides, The words "*ετυμο*(e'tymon, true meaning, from 'etymos' true) and *λο'γος* (Lo'gos, word)" meaning (e'tymon, true meaning, from “etymos’ true) and ----- meaning (Lo’gos, word”) are studied

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¹ <http://www.burmeseculture.org/1956/293/>

analytically and the meaning of the combination of these words is “true word”.² In other words, etymology is finding the truth of the words logically in accordance with the ancient documents, and some conclusive literature evidence. The Greek savants applied this subject to find the true meaning of the words or their origins.

2. The origins of Colloquialisms

Colloquialism is a word or phrase that we use every day in our familiar conversation in accordance with the linguistic norms. As the period, tradition and culture have changed, the forms, pronunciations, and meanings of the words in a language have also changed. This natural phenomenon is called popular etymology or folk etymology. It is called associative Etymology by some linguists as the meaning and the sound are related¹. Language is always changing and it is developing in different ways. The new words are brought into the original language when we come into contact with the neighbouring countries. The forms, pronunciations, and meanings of the words in a language have changed as time passes. Changes in a language can be divided into three kinds:

- changing the meanings of the original words without changing their forms
- changing the structures of the words without changing its original meanings
- changing the structures of the words as well as their meanings

Language is always changing and thus it is the main reason why the origins of the colloquialisms are no longer spoken.

3. Using the words in conjunction with archaisms

It is found that, in the Myanmar language, some of the colloquial words are the words which are used in conjunction with the archaic words. That is why the original meaning of our everyday expressions is becoming more and more unknown. Archaism is a very old word or phrase that is no longer used, and it is a word that was defined by successive wise men as an old-fashioned word. In other words, the archaic words are the words that they can only be found in old chronicles such as ancient poems or verses and, it is difficult to know their meaning at present. Archaisms must be found in any language in the world. The fact that the words are rarely used by people is the main reason why they become archaisms. Many people try to avoid using the words that are really difficult to pronounce and the words with the meaning which is not easily known. Gradually, these words are rarely spoken and become archaisms. But when they are combined with the colloquialisms that are easy and simple, they become the words in everyday language again. Although these words are widely used in everyday speech, their meaning is hardly known. This paper highlights the original meaning of the everyday expressions which are combined with archaisms by studying from the point of view of etymology.

၂၀၁၈

Headword – **၂၀၁၈** / nē - wī jī tə jō / (noun)

Etymological method – **၂၀** (noun) + **၁၈**(verb) + **၁၈**(verb) + **၁၈**(verb)

The term **၂၀၁၈** has been used in our everyday conversation. Although the meaning of the word, **၂၀၁၈** can easily be known, it is difficult to know the meaning of the

² <http://en-wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology>

¹ [http:// www.your dictionary. com/Popular-etymology](http://www.yourdictionary.com/Popular-etymology)

word, **၂၂၁၁** which is an old-fashioned word. As the word, **၂၂၁၁** is used together with the word **၂၂၁၁**, we think that the meaning of **၂၂၁၁** is the period of time at the end of the day after the sun has gone down. Even in the Myanmar dictionary, the word **၂၂၁၁** means that it is "the period of time at the end of the day after the sun has gone down or twilight". In giving the meaning of the word, **၂၂၁၁** is defined together with the word **၂၂၁၁**. The head word which is the combination of the two words **၂၂၁၁** and **၂၂၁၁** is not found. But the usage combining these two words, **၂၂၁၁** and **၂၂၁၁** can be seen in the **၂၂၁၁** as

၂၂၁၁ **၂၂၁၁** **၂၂၁၁** **၂၂၁၁** **၂၂၁၁** **၂၂၁၁**

Therefore, if the word **၂၂၁၁** combines with "ae0if", it can be regarded as "the time of day when the light has almost gone, but it is not yet dark ", however, when it combines with **၂၂၁၁**, it can be regarded as" the early morning or the period of time just after daybreak". The letter, "w" is just a prefix which has no meaning and it is put in the midst of the word, **၂၂၁၁** to form, **၂၂၁၁**. The venerable Sayardaw who wrote, **၂၂၁၁**, **၂၂၁၁** pointed out that in the word, **၂၂၁၁**, the word, **၂၂၁၁** is meaningless, so its meaning is "intermixing". In addition, he stated as

၂၂၁၁-၂၂၁၁ = ü &D-teurf၂၂၁၁myrjicif teuf၂၂၁၁²

which means that the word, **၂၂၁၁** is formed by putting "w" in the midst of the word, **၂၂၁၁**. Here, **၂၂၁၁** has no meaning and the whole meaning of the word is "dusk or twilight"³. The use of this word can be seen in the verse

၂၂၁၁, **၂၂၁၁**⁴
၂၂၁၁⁵

Therefore the word, **၂၂၁၁** is the combination of **၂၂၁၁** and "wa&mi". The term, "&D" is defined as "the eyesight being getting dim, or the time when the light is faint"⁶ in the "a0g[n&w-yumoelurf".

In other words, it can be regarded that the meaning of the expression, **၂၂၁၁** is " the state of being indistinct, blurred and dizzy". The word, "rbr၂၂၁၁" is formed to be used by joining together the words, "rbr၂၂၁၁" and "a0" which are synonymous. The term "wa&mi" might have changed from the word "Oa&mi", which is an archaic word and conveys the meaning of " when; at or during the time that". This term is also written as "သရော်" and the use of this word can be seen in the verse,

¹ **၂၂၁၁** [၂၂၁၁] 1962? y၂၂၁၁/
² **၂၂၁၁** (၂၂၁၁) 1985? 666/
³ -, if-/
⁴ e0a' ;၂၂၁၁ c၂၂၁၁ 23/
⁵ -, if-? 3/
⁶ **၂၂၁၁** (၂၂၁၁) 1320? 436/

၂၄၆၀၇၈၀၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀¹

In the expression, “**o&mi**”, “**o**” is a prefix which has no meaning. The word, “**a&mi**” has been converted from **၂၄၆၀၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀**, meaning "age; size, or time; moment". So the word ‘**wa&mi(o&mi)**’ means a particular length of time. On the one hand, the expressions “**aeOia&mi**” and “**na&mi**” convey the meaning of "the time of day when the sun is setting, but it is not yet dark", but on the other, the expression, “**ekubapapna&mi**” is used with the meaning of "the moment just after daybreak".

eiylq

Headword – **eiylq** /-ni b`e ɲə sha/ (adverb)

Etymological method – **eif**(pronoun) + **yl** (particle) + **i**(particle) + **q**(verb)

The word “**eif**” is a pronoun in the word “**eiylq**” and it is defined as "the word used for referring to the person who has the same age or the younger person being spoken to"² in the Myanmar dictionary. The words ‘**yl**’ and ‘**yl**’ are the same. So the expressions “**eiyl oif**” is the same as “**eiyifoif**”. It is found that the word, “**eiylq**” was written as “**eibifq**” long ago by using “**oif**” in place of ‘**yl**’. This usage is found in the poem, **၂၄၆၀၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀** as “**eibifq a`go&ebuf**”³. The word “**eibifq**” was used as “**iq eif oif**” in the olden days, and its usage can be found in the expression

“**iomu iav\$ulli qeibifq loma lomi**”⁴
 “**vjrifwifulliq eibif ajymq lww&um**”⁵

Therefore the word “**eiyl**” is a pronoun in the word “**eiylq**”. The word “**iq**” is an archaic word, meaning-

“**iq̄ eif̄ oif [hom pum̄c̄ǖ]iq̄ [hom q̄l̄j̄cifum̄ r̄1/2lox̄ubom̄ ow̄ḡul̄q̄l̄rēh̄om̄ ā\$oh [mīf̄w̄l̄ āoḡ [n̄̄ r̄om̄ , h̄umīf̄ \ /]**”⁶

which is expressed in “**aog [n̄̄ wyum̄oelurf**”. The use of the word “**iq**” is also found in “**ayg&mi Puxm̄ # lumurf**” as

၂၄၆၀၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀၁၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀

¹ **om̄ob̄? &sf̄ [n̄̄ r̄ 1284? ȳl̄f̄117/**

² **jrefmpmt z̄l̄ 1991? 196/**

³ **w̄l̄? Ō? r̄ 1895? 120/**

⁴ **r̄l̄f̄? Ō? r̄ 1289? 50/**

⁵ **"r̄ēl̄ur̄ [n̄̄ r̄ 1290? 112/**

⁶ **aush̄t̄mī p̄k̄m̄q̄&navn̄ ('lv̄q̄ -)? 1320? 316/**

⁷ **op̄q̄q̄l̄q̄&navn̄ 1266? 292/**

“iq” is the combination of “i” and “q”. “i” is the word used for addressing the man, like “armi” and “u” which are the current usage addressing a young man or man and there is no special meaning in such words. In the olden days, the people who have become useless or unnecessary in an organization were compared with “rotting wood and ringworm, an infectious skin disease”. They were called “iaqgi ay”, meaning dead wood. It is a simile and these people are as useless as rotting wood and ringworm. It is the verse

“**toubr&sf i aqgi ay? a0;apwlrifi**”

that is an example of this usage. Likewise, The meaning of “q” is “the thing that is disgusting”. The venerable Sayardaw who wrote, “**ja[@dwã, o*[urfi**” pointed out as “**q#q = puqlyzç hómol**”, meaning a person who has disgusting behavior. In other words, if the letter “r” is added to the beginning of “q”, it becomes “rq”, meaning “to treat somebody/ something without respect or unfairly”. In the place of “r”, we put “q” and then we use “iq”, meaning “the person who treats somebody/ something without respect or unfairly”. The way he has treated somebody is absolutely disgusting and thus such kind of person is completely unscrupulous. Afterwards, the meaning of the word “iq” might have become “a man who treats other people badly, especially by being dishonest or immoral; a repulsive man”, which was found in the sentence “

“**bm/iq? x! u@ll qdpyrfyrf? zrfvúács[k³**”

So if we say the word “**eiylq**” to somebody in our conversation, it is a rude expression, and its meaning is that “you are a very repulsive person or a very disgusting person”. In other words, it means that a person speaks to somebody about something without considering the feelings of other people. The word “**eiylq**” with the meaning of “saying something to somebody without respect or rudely” has become a common usage.

rqtiwef

Headword - **rqtiwef** / mə shā' - ĩ - tã / (adverb)

Etymological method - **r**(particle) + **q**(verb) + **t**(noun) + **wef**(verb)

Although the word “**rqtiwef**” has been spoken as an everyday expression in our speech by many people, some are always mispronouncing this word. This is by reason of combining with an archaism. The meaning of the word “**rq**” is known easily, but it is difficult to know the meaning of “**tiwef**”. The term “**tiwef**”, which is an archaic word, is the combination of the words “**tif**” and “**wef**”. The words “**tif**” and “**tm**” have the same meaning –“strength”. This can be seen in the following line-

¹ &|om&? &sf[n? r 1276? yllf34/

² aumov? Oq(q&mwvnt-)? 1985? 330/

³ &|om&? &sf[n? 1964 ? yllf77/

“cehuu;vsu?jrl;t i wuf ? ajrxub0g? ei fo th rx i f”¹

Therefore the word **“t i f t m”** is the combination of the two words which have the same meaning, which can be seen in the verse-

“t i f t m r a v o b r a y g r a r i n o b e r a o b r a w n a j u”²

What's more, the use of the combination of the two words **“t i f”** and **“t m”**, which are synonyms, can be found in the stone inscription of King Min Anada Thu in Line 10, which was carved in the Bagan era, as-

]t e f t m [e o f 1/2 h w”³

The word **“w e f”** is **“a w n m / 2 o i t m”**, meaning “moderately, or reasonably”. Therefore, the usage **“a w n m w e f”** is the combination of the two words which have the same meaning. In the same way, the word **“t i w e f”** is the combination of the two words **“t i f”** and **“w e f”**. The words **“t i f”** and **“t m”** are synonyms, meaning strength and the word **“w e f”** has the meaning of being reasonable. Therefore, the word **“t i w e f”** conveys the meaning of “being moderate with his physical strength”, which can be seen in the line,

“r d u l l E s h t i w e h o m p u m u l l v n f a u m i f”⁴

“v l w t h t i w e l h o m u l l t m y n m t m E s h f”⁵

The expression **“t i w e f t i r o”** has been used with the meaning of doing something as much as you can, or doing something moderately with your physical strength”. The use of the word **“t i w e f t i r o”** can be seen in the sentence-

“t i w e f t i r o q l l m q l l m v n l u e b n t s n f”⁶

“y w e m a & p i a m l u m i h t i w e f t i r o c s r f o m l u a y o n f”⁷

The use of the expression **“t i r w e f”** which conveys the meaning of “being extreme; being too much” can be seen in-

“a o a y g u k u l l l r l v q h a w g z e h o m l u m i i t i r w e f n h a v o l”⁸

] & a z & w y i t i r w e k i l y e s h f”⁹

The word **“t i f r w d”** was added to the beginning of the word **“t i r w e f”** as a prosody and a new word, **“t i f r w d t i r w e f”** was formed, which has been used in the sentence-

¹ o l v o h b ? & s f [m ? r 1276? y l l f 14/

² r l l & q & m a w n f ? r 1282? y l l f 226/

³ { a r m i ? o d ? 1958? u 10/

⁴ “ r e l v y g e d s , ? 1928? 13/

⁵ m b b m o ? o d (r i l b l q & m a w n f -) ? r 1274? 235/

⁶ r l l & q & m a w n f ? r 1282? 160/

⁷ z h p e ? o d (o z & a r d) ? 1936? 31/

⁸ y h ? o d (p a v -) ? r 1302? 11/

⁹ v l l b x j f c g i l w i ? r 1274? 54/

“t i f w d i f w e f p t s i w l f p k o n f”¹

On top of that, the word **“r q h i w e f”** has been used and it was formed by adding the word **“r q h”** at the beginning of the word **“t i w e f”**, meaning “being in excess; being superfluous”. As the different words, **“r q h i w e f”**, and **“r q h i u m”** that have the same or nearly the same meaning have been used, the pronunciation of these words can also be mixed up. As you know, the expression **“r q h i u m”** is a current usage which also has the meaning as **“r q h i w e f”**.

aoaumi haygi f v J

Headword - **aoaumi haygi f v J** / - θē - g`au p`au l`ε / (adverb)

Etymological method - **ao**(verb)+**aumi (t a u m i)**(noun)+ **aygi f v J**(noun)

The word **“aoaumi haygi f v J”** has been spoken as a common usage in our every day speech by many people. Although the meaning of the word **“aoaumi f”** is easily known, it is difficult to know the meaning of **“aygi f v J”**. Therefore, the use of this word can be seen in the sentence as **“aoaumi haygi f v J h j y . a e w , ? a o a u m i h a y g i f v J v l u & f w , f”**, with a change in meaning. The term **“aygi f v J”** is an archaic word, meaning “to lie resting on one side; to recline”. This usage can be seen in the sentence,

“y & e A t e f y k a w n f [e f a y g i f v J w p t q j y k a w n f N ”²

“e [O E h u m ? a y g i f v l u e h t m i ? c t u f a c s m u / l u f ”³

What's more, the word **“aygi f v J”** is the combining of the two synonymous words, meaning "to be short, low; to lie", which can be seen in the **“j A [e l l w e & o * [u r f ”** as

l a y g i f v J [b n u m t e u l w f y s y b n e t t o n ? a v s m i f o n f ”⁴

The word **l a y g i f v J** is the combination of the words **“aygi f”** and **“v J”**. The word **“aygi f”** conveys the meaning of “to be short, dwarf, or low”. For example, the venerable Sayardaw who wrote, **“j A [e l l w e , o * [u r f]** pointed out as-

l a y g i f - y k - y s y f = y b n ? e t t o n ? O y b n ? v h v s m i f o n ? a y g i f v b n f }⁵

which conveys the meaning of “to be short, low; to crawl; to lie or to recline”. Therefore, the word **“aygi f”** and **“v J”** is the combination of the two words which have the same meaning. The word **“aygi f v J”** has been used by combining with the word **“y s y p y f”**, for example-

“l u b u e n f r ? a y g i f v j s y p y f ? l r h i & y h a w m x j ”⁶

¹ y h ? O p (p a v -) ? r 1 2 9 1 ? 2 3 /

² r h i & q & m a w n f ? r 1 2 8 2 ? y h i f 2 3 /

³ y a ' o & m z n f ? O e h u p ? r 1 2 9 2 ? y h i f 2 6 0 /

⁴ a u m o v ? e : (q & m a w n f) ? 1 9 8 5 ? 5 1 5 /

⁵ - , i f - ? 5 1 9 /

⁶ t * h o r m ' i q e ? r 1 3 0 2 ? y h i f 3 1 /

The word “**sybyl**” has the meaning of “ horizontally or in a horizontal position”, which can be found in the verse-

“t v m s y p y l y q l z y b l & y & y h u b m u”¹

Therefore the word “**aygi f v l s y p y l**” or “**sybyl aygi f v l**” are the expressions which are formed by combining the two words “**aygi f v l**” and “**sybyl**” which have the same meaning. Similarly, the word “**ao a u m i aygi f v l**” is formed like this, which conveys the meaning of “lying as a dead body”, in other words, “ being unable to get up, stand; or being dying”.

In using the archaic words together with the simple, easy colloquialisms, they have gradually become more involved in everyday speech. In this way, the original meaning is rarely known.

Overall Analysis

The origins of some Myanmar daily words (colloquialisms) which have diminished origins have already been presented. In presenting this, it was studied by differentiating three parts such as (1) the nature of etymology, (2) the origins of colloquialism and (3) Myanmar colloquialisms which have faded origins. In observing the nature of etymology, it is found that it is a study of the origins of the words and it has been started since 18th Century.

In looking at the ways of etymology, it is found that it can be studied based on the history of words such as the changes of various meaning of words, connection with other languages and increasingly appearance or occurrence of words. The origins of colloquialism mean the study of the origins of words that are mostly used in everyday conversation. In studying the origin of colloquialism in a language, it has to investigate the ways to study in accordance with the nature and criteria of that language.

The speech sound, form and meaning of colloquialisms have been changing. Such changing is a main reason of making the origins faded and undiscovered.

Conclusion

In investigating the origins of colloquialisms, it is studied and presented logically with ancient books and literary evidence and references or quotations. In retracing the origin of a word according to literary evidence, the background history can be found. The factors such as the speech sound and form of that word changed from which time and that word was adopted from which language can be known due to etymology. Colloquialisms are increasingly developing in conformity with ages. In observing the origins of such increasing words, it is difficult to know who started to use a word and in which book that word was started to write. Likewise, it is hardest to know all about a language. Therefore, this research is carried out about the origins of colloquialisms by using the evidence which may be earliest within the reach of hand. By making record like this, it will be supportive for speaking and learning Myanmar language.

¹ & | o n & ? & \$ f [m ? r 1270? y l f 232/

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aumov? ဦး (q&mawmf-)/(1985)/ ဗြဟ္မနိရုတ္တိနယသင်္ဂဟဇာတ် မြန်မာစကားလုံးပြောင်းထုံးကျမ်း။ &eLek? pmayaygi fuf/

austat mi phkm q&mawmf ('' kvd -)/(1320)/ ဝေါဟာရတ္ထ ပကာသနီကျမ်း။ &eLek? v, wv@h f/

pmayAtrmf(1956)/ မြန်မာစကားလုံးကျမ်း? တွဲ-၃/ &eLek? jrefrmEh i Hbmonjyepmaytoif/

zhpel? ဦး/(1936)/ မြန်မာစကားနက်ကျမ်း/ &eLek? wlpomyEgywLuf

jrefrmpmt zH/(1991)/ မြန်မာအဘိဓာန်။ &eLek? zlvwLpbyEgywLuf

wH? ဦး/(1895)/ ရာမရကန်? &eLek? jynBdr@h f/

"r@BmB မဟာ/(1290)/ သာသနာလင်္ကာရစာတမ်း? &eLek? [HbmDwB

rHf? ဦး/ (1289)/ ရေစကြိုခုံတော်ဖြတ်ထုံး? &eLek? [HbmDwB

oB/OB? &Sf [m/(1276)/ ပါရာယနဝတ္ထု? &eLek? o&d /

q&mawmf? rH&G/(1282)/ ကုသပျို့? &eLek? [HbmDwB

jyXnefpmr tyfxlvb0a&aumf wB မေ့နိတိပါဠိနိဿယ? &eLek? [HbmDwB

Hbbmo? ဦး/(1274)/ မဟာနေကဇာတ်တော်ကြီးဝတ္ထု? &eLek? [HbmDwB

q&mawmf ခုံရွေး/(1282)/ ကုသပျို့? &eLek? [HbmDwB

zhpel? ဦး/(1936)/ မြန်မာစကားနက်ကျမ်း/ &eLek? wlpomyEgywLuf

yh? ဦး (pav-)/(1302)/ ပဒုမပြဇာတ်? &eLek? [HbmDwB

vHfx yfacgi wif(1274)/ ဝိဇယကရိနန်းတွင်းဇာတ်တော်ကြီး? &eLek? MthvDm;rm/

yh? ဦး (pav-)/(1291)/ ဦးပုညမေတ္တာစာ? &eLek? u0tsur&f

&|om&? ရှင်မဟာ/(1962)/ ဘူရိဒတ်ဇာတ်ပေါင်းပျို့/ &eLek? [HbmDwB

oB/OB? ရှင်မဟာ/(1284)/ ဆုတောင်းခန်းပျို့/ &eLek? [HbmDwB

{armi? ဦး (ygarmu@)/(1958)/ ပုဂံကျောက်စာလက်ရွေးစင်/ &eLek? ynmeE/

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