

Greek Lessons 24 and 25

The goals of Greek Lessons 24 and 25 are much the same as in the previous four. We'll review Latin forms yet one more time, this time peering into the dark abyss of hybrids — yes, hybrids happen! it's a sad fact of life! — and in the audio presentation accompanying this video we'll address the last of the scientific and technical terminology you have to memorize in this class, indeed the very last *things* you have to learn here. That's right! After watching this video and listening to its accompanying audio presentation, you're done! That's it for the whole class! Nothing more to memorize ... well, except the things you've been assigned to learn but haven't memorized yet. Ahem!

You know how this goes, so let's get right to it. But remember the words here are all unusual in some way. And we're going to be mixing in Greek forms here too, so fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

1. The organ of the Argentine ultraists . . . roundly rejected Madrid's claim to chieftainship.

[Remember PER? Pause, etymologize and restart the presentation? Oh good! Then do it! PER! I'll see you on the other side.]

Well, something's wrong with this word, huh? There's something missing. *Ultra-* is a prefix, meaning "beyond, exceedingly," and *-ist* is a suffix meaning "one engaged in." Which means there's not a ... base!! Oy, that's not good. So, apparently some words can be born without a base. Worse yet, *ultra-* comes from Latin and *-ist* comes from Greek. So this is a hybrid, too. A baseless hybrid? [Aren't they all?] And what part of speech is this word? Well, from the fact it's plural, you can see it's a noun. So, what would you guess an "ultraist" is? "An extreme radical." And so's the word.

2. *Tommy* was among the first movies to use quadraphonic sound.

[PER! Do it! Goodbye.]

Hello again. Let's see how you did. No prefix here. The first element is a base: QUADRA-, a Latin base meaning "four." Note please the combining vowel -a- which signals there's another base following, which is PHON- ("sound, voice"), a Greek root. So this word is that low breed called a hybrid. Vile, vile thing. The final element is the suffix *-ic* ("pertaining to"), and so the part of speech is an adjective. So what do you think "quadraphonic" means? Sounds like sounds are being produced four different ways somehow. Through four separate channels? Yes. So the definition is "pertaining to sound reproduction using four channels separately recorded and then replayed around the listener." I wouldn't expect you to arrive at that exact definition. Remember the words in this exercise are designed to push your skills. Trying your best to get to the right answer is what really matters here. Of course, if you happen to land on the correct definition, well, good for you. Try this one.

3. While low-temperature superconductivity gets all the press, advances are also being made in pyroconductivity.

[PER!]

Okay, what are the word elements here starting from the top: PYRo-, a base, meaning “fire” with the combining vowel -o- — it’s Greek — next, *con-* (a Latin prefix), meaning “with, together,” and then another base, this time a Latin one, DUCT-, meaning “lead.” And at the end of this etymological boa constrictor, two suffixes: *-iv(e)* (“tending to”), and *-ity* (“the quality of”). Part of speech? A noun. So what’s the etymological definition: “the quality of (tending to) ‘lead together’ (conduct) through fire.” What’s being conducted do you think? How about electricity? An important area of scientific research centers on making electricity flow from place to place without any resistance or loss of power. We know this happens at very low temperatures. The question is, does it also happen at high temperatures too? So the hyper-long hybridated miscegenous mess known as “pyroconductivity” refers to “the reduction in electrical resistance in the presence of high temperatures.” Sounds hot. Moving on without resistance, ...

4. The pseudandry of women authors like George Eliot let them reach a much larger Victorian readership.

[PER!]

Okay, the first element is the base PSEUD- (“false”) — it’s *not* a prefix! remember that! — and the second element is another base, ANDR- (“man, male”). The last element ... well, that’s easy. It’s just the suffix *-y* (“the quality of”), making this a noun meaning what? “The quality of being a false man”? What’s George Eliot, the woman author, doing? She’s pretending to be a man, isn’t she? So pseudandry is “the use of a masculine name as a cover by a woman author.” For once, not a hybrid! The important point here is: PSEUD- is not a prefix!

5. Postcanonical scriptures like the Gnostic gospels are undervalued as both religious and historical documents.

[PER!]

Done? Good! Let’s see how you did. The first element is the Latin prefix *post-* (“after”), the second is the Greek base CANON- (“standard list”), the third is the suffix *-ic* (“pertaining to”) and the last element is essentially the same as the third *-al* (“pertaining to”). “Pertaining to, pertaining to”? This word is definitively an adjective. So what is “postcanonical”? When do you think postcanonical scriptures were composed? Obviously, after the canon (the standard list) was created, so the definition of postcanonical is “written after the formation of an accepted list,” in this case, the twenty-six books of the New Testament.

6. Metaphors are pleasurable accessories . . . which are supererogatory when one comes down to the business of understanding what is said.

[PER!]

Hmmm, did you have some issues with the first elements in this word? So, what do you do when the beginning of the word doesn't break up easily? Go to the back! What's the last element of this word? The suffix *-ory* meaning "tending to" — which means it's an adjective so define it that way! — and in front of that is another suffix *-at(e)-*. Let's call it the verb-forming suffix, "to" which you can safely ignore in the definition. Continuing our movement from right to left, the next element is the base *ROG-* ("ask"), so what's left at the front of the word is *supere-*, which is not a form we learned. Can we break this up? Hmmm. Well, *super-* is a prefix in Latin — and so far this word's been all Latin, hallelujah! — *super-* means "over, above," but that still leaves *-e-* and you can't omit any letter when you're etymologizing a word. Is *e-* a Latin form? Oh yes, it's the abbreviated form of the prefix *ex-* ("out, from"). So this word etymologizes as "tending to (*-ory*) ask (*ROG-*) out (*e-*) above (*super-*, presumably over and above some standard or expectation)." Go back to the sentence. Metaphors are doing what? They're "asking" for more than ... what's necessary in the simple understanding of language." Oh, they're above what's asked for, "pleasurable accessories," that is, superfluous. Well, I totally disagree with the statement, but at least the point is clear — and clearly wrong. Harumph!

7. Pythagoras believed in metempsychosis, even identifying himself with a Homeric hero who lived centuries before.

[PER!]

Got it? Let's see. This word is all Greek, isn't it? But not Greek to you! Ha ha! The first prefix is *met(a)-* ("after, changed"), the second prefix is *em-* ("in"), and the base is *PSYCH-* ("mind, soul"). The *-o-* is a combining vowel which suggests there should be another base, but there isn't. There's a suffix *-sis* ("the state of"). Well, that's unusual, but I suppose saying "metempsychosis" isn't easy or appealing. So throw in an *-o-*, because, well, why not? Greek apparently has an endless supply of them. So, what part of speech is this word? A noun obviously ("the state of"). What's the etymological definition then? "The state of ... a soul being after (something) in (something else)." Hmmm. What does the sentence imply? Well, if Pythagoras thought he was a person who lived, and presumably died, long ago, then the implication of "after" is clearly after death. But in or into what? What could a person's soul go into after death? How about another person? So Pythagoras believed he was a reincarnated Homeric hero, which means the definition of metempsychosis is reincarnation. Big word, simple concept, weird idea.

8. Almost as noxious as bad grammar itself are hypercorrections, such as "between you and I."

[PER!]

All finished? Let's see how you did. The prefix is Greek: *hyper-*, meaning "over, excessive." There's another prefix, too, this time a Latin one: *cor-* (that is, *con-* in an assimilated form), meaning "with, completely." Then a Latin base *RECT-* ("right, straight"), and a Latin suffix *-ion* ("the act of"), making this word clearly a noun. [And, yuck, another hybrid!] So what's a "hypercorrection." Look at the sentence. What does it suggest? Well, for starters, a correction that isn't correct. "Between you and *me*" is correct grammar; "between you and *I*" is wrong. So this word must represent an attempt to sound correct but that leads to creating something

incorrect, something that someone who doesn't understand grammar would say. So hypercorrection must be "linguistic change created through false analogy to good grammar." Using "I" because you know saying things like "Me and my friend are going to a movie" is wrong — "My friend and I are going..." is right — but then because of that, you start using "I" instead of "me" everywhere, even when "me" is right. And in this case, me is right! Which sound terrible. Let's move on!

9. There was an unexpected reward when the vaccine turned out to be polyvalent and worked against several diseases.

[PER!]

Hmmm. Another hybrid, huh? They're everywhere. Just makes me want to take a shower. So, the first element? POLY-. Is that a prefix? No, it's a base, a Greek base, meaning "many, much." Next element? VAL-, a Latin base meaning "be strong, be worthy." Last element? The suffix *-ent*, meaning "-ing," so this word is what part of speech? An adjective. And what do you think it means? Construct an etymological definition: "being strong (i.e. effective) in many (i.e. multiple) ways," which implies a vaccine that "counteracts more than one toxin or microorganism." Be sure, however, that the first word of your definition ends in -ing. This is an adjective: "counteracting more than one toxin..." Last sentence:

10. The real tragedy is that drug use by women in this social class accounts for so many perinatal mortalities.

[PER!]

All done? Let's see how you did. The first element? A Greek prefix, *peri-* ("around, near"). Then what? A Latin base, NAT- ("be born"). And the last element? The suffix *-al* ("pertaining to"), which means this word is what part of speech? An adjective: "pertaining to being around being born." The implication is clearly the time of birth. So, what's the definition? Remember to make it an adjective. "Occurring at or around the time of birth."

Wow! You're done! Feeling any better about your Latin roots? No? Then it's time to study.

That's it for the video presentation for Greek Lessons 24 and 25. Next you should listen to its audio counterpart on the scientific and technical forms discussed in these lessons. You'll find a link to that audio presentation on the course web site. Stay strong! There's only one more lap around the etymological race course! Don't let up now! Be ...

... happy etymologizing!

ASSIGNMENT

This is the audio presentation covering the assignments in Greek Lessons 24 and 25. Please open your textbook to page 272. Here in the last two lessons of the textbook, Ayers closes down our study of scientific terminology, beginning with another pair of suffixes, *-in/-ine* and *-ium*. The

first (*-in/-ine*) meaning “a chemical substance” is of Latin derivation, not Greek. Its first variant *-in* shows up in words for antibiotics (penicillin) and pharmaceutical products (aspirin). The second variant *-ine* is often used in reference to hormones (adrenaline) and halogen elements (chlorine).

The second suffix *-ium*, meaning “part, lining or enveloping tissue, region,” is used widely as a technical term. Besides its medical applications like endocardium and the other examples Mr. Ayers provides, it’s also used in the naming of elements: barium, uranium and aluminum also known as aluminium, which is what the British call it. In truth, that’s what most of the world calls it. The shorter variant “aluminum” is seen mainly in the US and Canada. Either is preferable to — or at least easier to pronounce than — the original form of the word for this element, aluminum. The extra *-n-* in aluminum, presumably borrowed from the suffix *-in*, helps buffer the two *m*’s without having to dissimilate one of them (alunium? Yuck!).

Okay, you know the routine. Look over the bases on pages 273-275 and do the matching exercise on page 276. One note to make about one of these bases, PHAG- on the bottom of page 274 is used so much it’s worth considering it a suffix which shows up in three variants: *-phage* (“that which eats”), *-phagy/-phagia* (“the act of eating”), and *-phagous* (“eating”). A xylophage is a thing that eats wood (think termites), which is an act called xylophagy, making them xylophagous. Remember that I’m not going to ask you to etymologize any of the scientific forms in Greek Lessons 20-25, so whether you call PHAG- a base or a suffix really doesn’t matter. As long as you know that any *-phage* word means “eat,” you’ve done your job for this class.

Please pause the audio now, review the bases and do the matching on page 276. Restart the presentation when you’re done, and I’ll give you the answers.

Okay, you must be done. That was quick. You’re getting the hang of it, huh? The first answer for number 1 (rhinoplasty) is *i* (as in initial phase), 2 *j* (as in just getting started), 3 *b* (as in blast off), 4 *g* (as in getting up to speed), 5 *h* (as in halfway there), 6 *l* (as in leaving earth orbit), 7 *c* (as in climax), 8 *d* (as in downward trajectory), 9 *e* (as in entering the atmosphere), 10 *a* (as in accelerating toward the target), 11 *f* (as in final stage) and 12 *k* (as in kaboom).

One more lesson and you’re done with everything you have to learn in this course. Don’t give up! It’s mile 26 of the marathon.

The last Greek lesson, starting on page 276, focuses on diminutive suffixes, all meaning “little”: *-ium/-ion*, *-idium*, *-arium/-arion*, and *-isk/-iscus*. There are a variety of Latin and Greek forms jumbled up here: *-ion*, *-arion* and *-isk* are all Greek; the rest are Latin, though the difference is not that important since the Romans appropriated many Greek words with these suffixes as loan words, making their specific linguistic origin insignificant.

Do I have to recite the drill again? Pause, peruse, match, restart. There’s only one base here I have anything to say about: TOX- at the top of page 279. Originally, the base meant “bow and arrow,” as in archery. But because in antiquity bows were not all that effective at piercing things — the invention of the long bow in the Middle Ages would change that — the ancients used poison to make arrows deadlier. That way, all an enemy had only to be is just nicked by an arrow

to be killed. Thus, a *pharmikon toxicon* (literally in ancient Greek, “an arrow drug”) came to mean a toxin, a poison.

Okay, pause and I’ll see you on the other side of the river Styx.

Done. Here are the answers to the matching exercise on page 279: 1 (gonidangium) is h (as in Hallelujah!), 2 g (as in goodbye), 3 l (as in see you later), 4 k (as in kill me now), 5 j (as in just in time), 6 i (as in is this ever going to end?), 7 a (as in almost done), 8 e (as in end this please), 9 c (as in can’t stand it anymore), 10 b (as in breaking free), 11 d (as in don’t expect to see me again) and 12 f (as in finally freaking finished).

And that’s it for this finally final audio presentation. You’re done! It’s over. Nothing more to memorize! Nothing left but the final exam. So get to it! Start putting your notes together, sorting those flash cards, making lists of things that slipped through the cracks in your brain. You’re one step away from becoming a certified master of classical terms. And in the end, for the last time, that should make you ...

... happy etymologizing!