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Linguistics, English



Insert ENG 101, Section # Mrs. Michael Assignment 5: Definition of 'love' 'Love' is a word so hard to define. Many people often found themselves confusing it with lust or infatuation whenever they take a minute to define love. To me, 'love' is the intangible emotion that one experiences when they meet something or someone that makes them happy.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines love as "A strong feeling of affection and sexual attraction for someone", "A strong feeling of affection", "Affectionate greetings conveyed to someone on one's behalf", or "A great interest and pleasure in something" (OED N. p). The term 'love' originated from English language in the 8th century and evolved to become what we know it today. From the old English, the word 'lufu' is related to 'luve' in Old Frisian, 'luba' in old Germany and 'lubo' in Gothic. In early systems of Scandinavian languages, there was 'lof', an equivalent of today's 'love'. Its present meanings were also contributed by the Indo-European 'lubido' connoting desire and 'lubet' which meant that something was attractive. As the word was changing from culture to culture, it acquired a different meaning considering the varying purposes for which people wanted to use it and the kind of emotions they wanted to express and as it came to Greek, the word 'love' acquired its meaning, as I define it and from the OED definition, from the Greek mythology in ancient Greek where words like 'xenia', "philia," "storge," "eros," and "agape."

Apparently, it is intoxicatingly fascinating to note that the meaning of words evolves from time to time and culture to culture as necessitated by cultures and customs. My definition of love as an intangible emotion that one experiences when they meet something or someone that makes them happy

has been shaped by my American culture. Similarly, the word 'love' acquired various terms such as 'lubido', 'lof', 'luba' and 'lubet' in various languages as necessitated by what the people wanted to express and such meanings having been changing from time to time to a now relatively standard meaning of 'love'. Hence, the meaning of words is shaped by time, cultures and customs coupled with the message that they are envisioned to communicate.

Work cited

"Love - Definition of Love in English from the Oxford Dictionary." Oxford Dictionaries - Dictionary, Thesaurus, & Grammar. N. p., n. d. Web. 27 Mar. 2015.