



SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ENGLISH AND GERMAN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: *This academic paper provides a comparative study of English and German, and information about their techniques.*

Key words: *complex concepts, German phonetics, English vocabulary, vocabulary, easy ways, innovative methods*

INTRODUCTION.

Languages are fascinating entities that evolve over time, shaped by history, culture, and human interaction. English and German, two prominent Germanic languages, share a common linguistic ancestry, which has resulted in several striking similarities between them. In this article, we will delve into the intriguing parallels that exist between the German and English languages. Both English and German belong to the Germanic language family, which encompasses languages spoken primarily in Northern Europe. They trace their linguistic roots back to Proto-Germanic, a common ancestor that existed over a thousand years ago. This shared heritage means that English and German share many cognates, or words with similar meanings and origins.

One of the most apparent similarities between English and German is their common vocabulary. Many everyday words in both languages bear a striking resemblance. For instance, the English word "mother" corresponds to "Mutter" in German, and "house" equates to "Haus." These similarities can be attributed to their shared linguistic lineage. Home English and German both exhibit certain grammatical features typical of Germanic languages. These include the use of definite and indefinite articles (the, a/an), word order (subject-verb-object), and the inflection of nouns for case, number, and gender (though less so in English). These grammatical structures are remnants of their common Germanic ancestry.

Over centuries, English and German have borrowed words from each other due to historical, cultural, and scientific exchanges. For instance, English borrowed the German word «angst,» which denotes a feeling of anxiety, and «blitz,» meaning lightning. Similarly, German has incorporated English terms like «computer» and «internet.» English is a Germanic language

10 similarities in German and English

1. English is a Germanic language

Perhaps the most crucial point to make is that English is a language which originally derived from West Germanic more than 2,000 years ago. Indeed, both the German and English languages are considered to be members of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language family, meaning they are still closely related today. Given their shared origins, it should come as little surprise to learn there are strong resemblances between them. It is estimated that more than a third of English non-technical lexicons are of Germanic origin, as are many English words. Furthermore, the modern languages have both loaned words from Latin, Greek and French.

2. The two languages use the same alphabet



One of the most obvious similarities between German and English is the fact that both languages utilise the same 26 letters which form the Latin alphabet. This is a major plus point, as it makes it easy for English speakers to start writing in the German language straight away. With the exception of learning rules regarding the additional unlauded letters (ä, ö and ü) and the Eszett or sharp S (ß), this transition is fairly simple. Certainly, it represents an advantage over an English speaker trying to learn a language like Mandarin, Arabic or Japanese, which utilise completely different writing systems.

3. Several German words are used in the English language

If you are able to speak English, chances are you already know some German words! The English language has borrowed a number of words from German and some of them are used fairly regularly. For example, the word ‘rucksack’ to describe a bag carried on a person’s back, or the word ‘angst’, used in psychology to describe anxiety.

The use of German words in English is even more common when talking about food and drink. The word ‘spritzer’ (apple) is often used when talking about alcohol, while ‘pretzel’, ‘strudel’ and ‘bratwurst’ are all German too. Meanwhile, English has also borrowed the word ‘delicatessen’ to describe stores selling pre-prepared foods.

4. Several English words are used in the German language

Over the years, the German language has also borrowed a number of English words too. This is especially obvious in the worlds of technology, music, advertising and fashion, where English speakers should encounter a lot of familiar words and phrases while making the transition to German. For instance, the words ‘Computer’, ‘Designer’, ‘Album’, ‘Image’ and ‘Laser’ have all been adopted from English, and English words are often borrowed when a craze starts outside of German-speaking areas. Examples of this include ‘Skateboarding’ and ‘Aerobics’, which are both recognised by German speakers.

5. Many other words sound extremely similar

In addition to the vast number of words which are shared between the two languages, German and English also feature many words that sound extremely similar. This is a major plus point when it comes to learning German from a starting point of understanding English, as it is often possible to guess what some words mean. For example, the German word for ‘house’ is ‘Haus’, the German word for ‘university’ is ‘Universität’ and the German word for ‘camera’ is ‘Kamera’. For an English speaker, it would be fairly easy to ascertain that the German sentence “Ich trinke Wasser” means “I drink water,” even if they had never encountered these German words before.

6. German and English words often follow the same grammatical rules

For English speakers who are attempting to learn German, one of the features they will encounter is a similarity in grammatical rules. Perhaps the best example of this is with the way verbs change based on their tense and this can be demonstrated with the verb ‘to drink’, which is ‘trinken’ in German. The English word changes based on tense, from ‘drink’ to ‘drank’ to ‘drunk’. In German, for the same three tenses, you use the words ‘trinkt’, ‘trank’ and ‘getrunken’ and the same basic rule applies to most other verbs too. Therefore, an English speaker can often have a pretty good idea of German verb patterns from the very beginning.

7. Both languages use Arabic numbering systems

Another advantage of learning German as an English speaker is that the two languages use the same Arabic numerals and numbering system. Much like in English, numbers are all comprised of sequences of the digits 0-9 and while these numerals have different names in German, they follow the same core principles. This can perhaps be best observed by looking at the numbers from 10 to 20.

English: ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty.



German: zehn, elf, zwölf, dreizehn, vierzehn, fünfzehn, sechzehn, siebzehn, achtzehn, neunzehn, zwanzig. As you can see, the suffix ‘teen’ is replaced by ‘zehn’, but the basic pattern stays the same.

8. German and English are both popular global languages

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, but this status can sometimes hinder English speakers when it comes to their desire to learn a second language, especially if that language is deemed to have a lower level of global importance. However, the German language is still thriving and is the single most widely spoken language in the European Union. It has official language status in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium and various other countries, and is a recognised minority language in countries as diverse as Brazil, Kazakhstan, Namibia and Denmark

9. Both languages can boost your employment prospects

A further similarity between German and English is their importance when it comes to employment. Like English, German is recognised as a major business language and is widely used in political discussions as well. This importance means there is never a shortage of demand for translators able to speak both languages. Moreover, both languages can open up the possibility of working overseas in specific fields. Did you know, for example, that German is the second most widely utilised language in the field of science? Meanwhile, those who enjoy writing will be interested to know that one tenth of all books published globally are written in German.

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