

## THE MAIN SEMANTIC FEATURES OF HYDRONYMS IN ENGLAND

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**Annotatsiya.** Angliya gidronimlari kelt, lotin, qadimgi ingliz va norveg tillarining boy lingvistik ta'sirini aks ettiradi. Temza va Severn kabi yirik daryolar qadimgi ildizlardan kelib chiqqan bo'lib, "Temza" (keltcha *Tamesis*) "qorong'i" yoki "loyqa" degan ma'noni anglatishi mumkin, "Severn" esa kelt ma'budasi Sabrina nomidan olingan.

**Аннотация.** Гидронимы Англии отражают богатую смесь лингвистических влияний, включая кельтский, латинский, древнеанглийский и норвежский языки. Названия крупных рек, таких как Темза и Северн, происходят из древних корней: "Темза" возможно означает "тёмная" или "мутная" (от кельтского *Tamesis*), а "Северн" происходит от имени кельтской богини Сабрины. Эти названия служат не только географическими указателями, но и имеют глубокое историческое и культурное значение, отражая изменения в идентичности региона.

**Abstract.** The hydronyms of England reflect a rich tapestry of linguistic influences, including Celtic, Latin, Old English, and Norse. Major rivers like the Thames and Severn have names derived from ancient roots, with "Thames" possibly meaning "dark" or "muddy" (from Celtic *Tamesis*), and "Severn" from the Celtic goddess Sabrina. These names are not just geographical markers but hold deep historical and cultural significance, showcasing the evolving identity of the region.

**Kalit so'zlar:** gidronimlar, Temza daryosi, Severn daryosi, kelt kelib chiqishi, *Tamesis*, Sabrina, etimologiya, lingvistik ta'sir, norveg/viking ta'siri, qadimgi ingliz tili

**Ключевые слова:** Гидронимы, Река Темза, Река Северн, Кельтское происхождение, Тамезис, Сабрина, Этимология, Лингвистическое влияние, Норвежское влияни, Древнеанглийский, Географические названия, Культурное

**Key Words:** Hydronyms, River Thames, River Severn, Celtic origins, *Tamesis*, Sabrina, Etymology, Linguistic influence, Norse/Viking influence, Old English

Hydronyms are the names given to bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, seas, oceans, streams, and other water-related geographic features. These names often hold cultural, historical, and linguistic significance, reflecting the languages, societies, and natural environments in which they originated. Here's a general overview of hydronyms: Types of Hydronyms: Rivers and Streams: Names of flowing bodies of water (e.g., Nile, Amazon, Mississippi). Lakes: Names of large inland bodies of water (e.g., Lake Victoria, Lake Tahoe, Lake Baikal). Seas and Oceans: Names of large

saltwater bodies (e.g., Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, North Sea). Bays and Estuaries: Coastal water bodies where freshwater mixes with saltwater (e.g., Chesapeake Bay, Severn Estuary). Springs and Wells: Names of natural sources of water (e.g., Hot Springs, Holywell). Linguistic Origins: Celtic: Many hydronyms in Europe have Celtic roots, especially in regions like the British Isles and France. For example, Avon (meaning “river”) appears in many British river names. Germanic: In northern Europe, Germanic languages contributed to hydronyms such as Ouse (from Old English, meaning “water”). Slavic: In Eastern Europe, rivers like the Dnipro and Volga derive their names from ancient Slavic languages. Indigenous Languages: In the Americas, Australia, and Africa, many water names come from indigenous languages, such as the Mississippi (from a Native American word meaning "great river"). Latin and Greek: In the Mediterranean, hydronyms often derive from Latin or Greek. For instance, the Danube is from the Latin Danuvius, related to a pre-Latin Indo-European word for river. Etymological Themes: Many hydronyms are descriptive of the water’s appearance, behavior, or surrounding.

Thames (from Celtic Tamesis): Possibly meaning "dark" or "muddy." Mississippi (from the Native American word Misi-ziibi): Meaning "great river." Amazon (named by Spanish explorers after a mythological tribe of warrior women). Hydronyms can also refer to mythical or religious figures: Severn (from the Celtic goddess Sabrina). Ganges (a river in India, named after the Hindu goddess Ganga). Cultural and Historical Significance: Hydronyms often reflect the history of exploration, settlement, and colonization. For example, European explorers frequently named rivers and lakes after saints, royalty, or important figures (e.g., Hudson River, St. Lawrence River). Indigenous names are often preserved in hydronyms, serving as a cultural record of the people who lived near these water bodies long before colonization. In many regions, bodies of water are central to the identity of the surrounding communities. Rivers, in particular, have been vital to trade, agriculture, and transportation, and their names can evoke deep historical connections. Tautological Hydronyms: A common feature in hydronyms is tautology, where the name repeats the meaning of “river” or “lake” in different languages: River Avon: Avon is Celtic for “river,” so this means

"River River" Pendle Hill: Pen (Celtic for "hill"), hyll (Old English for "hill"), and "Hill," meaning "Hill Hill Hill." Modern Influence: Many rivers and lakes have been renamed or had their names altered by colonizers or modern governments, reflecting political or social changes (e.g., the Congo River, formerly called the Zaire River). Global Diversity: Hydronyms vary greatly across the world, shaped by geography and the unique linguistic and cultural contexts of each region. In North America, many rivers and lakes retain Native American names, while in Europe, a blend of Celtic, Germanic, Latin, and Slavic influences dominates. In Asia, rivers like the Yangtze and Indus have ancient names that connect to millennia of human civilization.

Functions of Hydronyms and Geographical Identification: Hydronyms serve as essential geographic markers, helping to identify and distinguish bodies of water. This is especially important in cartography, navigation, and resource management. Cultural Identity: Rivers, lakes, and seas often play a central role in the identity of regions and their people. Hydronyms become symbols of local pride, history, and culture (e.g., the Nile in Egypt or the Ganges in India).

The name may derive from Old English *waesc*, meaning "a flood" or "water that washes over." Humber Estuary: A major estuary in eastern England, formed by the rivers Trent and Ouse. The name "Humber" may have pre-Celtic origins and was known in Roman times as *Abus*. General Linguistic Influences Celtic: Many early hydronyms in England are of Celtic origin, dating back to the pre-Roman period. Latin: The Roman occupation of Britain (43-410 AD) also influenced some river names, often latinizing existing Celtic names. Old English: With the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, many names were adapted or renamed using Old English terms, such as *mere* (lake) or *ea* (river). Norse/Viking: Norse settlers in northern and eastern England influenced place names, especially in regions like Yorkshire, with terms like *fjord* (inlet) or *bekkr* (stream). These names reflect the complex history and linguistic layers of England. When examining the hydronyms of England linguistically and syntactically, several factors come into play, particularly how languages like Celtic, Latin, Old English, and Norse influenced naming conventions. Here's a breakdown of how these languages have contributed to the structure and formation of English hydronyms: Linguistic

Origins Celtic Influence: The Celtic language was spoken by the Britons before the Roman and Anglo-Saxon invasions, and many English river names retain Celtic roots. Common elements in Celtic hydronyms: Aber: Celtic for "river mouth" (e.g., Aberystwyth in Wales, but absent in England). Avon: Meaning "river," an example of tautology in hydronymy where "River Avon" translates as "River River." Usk/Exe: Derived from Celtic uisg meaning "water" or "river." Syntax: Celtic names were often simple, usually single lexemes (e.g., Avon, Exe) or compound words (e.g., Llyn Tegid, meaning "Lake Tegid"). Latin Influence: During the Roman occupation, some hydronyms were influenced or renamed in Latin, although many retained their Celtic roots. Example: The River Severn derives from Latin Sabrina, the name of a river goddess. Roman names often applied Latin endings to pre-existing names (e.g., Sabrina from the Celtic Hafren). Syntax: Latin naming conventions often placed the name of a river (usually the genitive form of a personal or mythological name) followed by "flumen" (river), but this has been simplified in later English usage. Old English Influence: After the Anglo-Saxons settled in England, Old English became the dominant language, influencing hydronyms across the country. Old English terms frequently used in hydronyms include: ea: Meaning "river" or "stream," as in Lea or Wear. mere: Meaning "lake" or "pool," as seen in Windermere (literally "Vinandr's Lake"). ford: Meaning "shallow crossing point," as in Oxford (from oxen and ford, meaning "a ford used by oxen"). Syntax: Old English naming conventions were descriptive and often compound. For example, Windermere breaks down into the Norse personal name Vinandr and the Old English mere (lake), syntactically forming "[Person's name] + [Geographic feature]." Old Norse Influence: Norse settlers in the north and east of England introduced many hydronyms, especially during the Viking Age. Common elements in Norse hydronyms include: bekk: Meaning "stream" or "brook" (e.g., Grimsby Beck). vatn/water: Meaning "lake" or "body of water," as in Derwent Water. Syntax: Norse hydronyms often combine a personal name or descriptor with a topographic term. For instance, Grimsby Beck could be parsed as "[Grim's settlement] + [stream]." Middle English and Modern English Influence: During the Middle English period, Norman and French influences also came into play,

but these did not significantly affect hydronyms compared to the earlier layers of language. Modern English hydronyms retain the older elements, but some names have been simplified or anglicized. Syntax has also become more uniform in recent centuries. Syntactical Structures in Hydronyms Single Lexeme Names: Many hydronyms consist of a single word, often derived from ancient roots: Avon (Celtic origin, meaning "river"). Ouse (Celtic or Old English, meaning "water" or "slow-moving river"). Severn (Latin origin from Sabrina). These names are typically nouns and function as the subject or object in sentences without any further descriptors. Compound Names: A large number of English hydronyms are compounds of a descriptive term and a geographic feature: Windermere (Old Norse Vinandr + Old English mere = "Vinandr's lake"). Oxford (Old English ox + ford = "ford used by oxen"). Stratford-upon-Avon (Old English straet "street" + ford + river name Avon = "Street Ford on the River Avon"). These compounds follow a syntactical pattern of [Descriptive/Personal Element] + [Geographical Feature]. Tautological Names: A common syntactical feature of hydronyms, particularly in England, is tautology, where both parts of the name have the same meaning: River Avon: "River" (English) + "Avon" (Celtic for "river"), so literally "River River." Pendle Hill: Derived from Pen (Celtic for "hill"), hyll (Old English for "hill"), and "Hill" (Modern English), making it "Hill Hill Hill." Topographical Descriptors: Hydronyms also frequently include descriptors of the geographic landscape: Highbridge: Describing a high bridge over a waterway. Saltburn-by-the-Sea: Including the geographic feature "Sea."

Hydronyms are more than just place names — they encapsulate centuries of linguistic evolution, cultural history, and geographical significance. By studying hydronyms, we can trace the influences of ancient peoples, uncover historical connections, and better understand the role that water plays in shaping human civilization. Hydronyms in England reflect the intertwining of language, geography, and history. Their study reveals patterns of human settlement, linguistic evolution, and cultural influence over millennia. The persistence and adaptation of these names underscore their role as markers of identity and continuity.

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