

Main Types of Borrowings in the Etymological Structure of English Vocabulary

There are certain structural features which enable us to identify some words as borrowings and even to determine the source language. Borrowing has several definitions, on the one hand, it is a process resorting to the word-stock of other languages for words to express new concepts, to further differentiate the existing concepts and to name new objects, and on the other hand, it is a result of a loan word, borrowed word — a word taken over from another language and modified in phonemic shape, spelling, paradigm or meaning according to the standards of the English language.

Borrowed words are adjusted in the three main areas of the new language system: the phonetic, the grammatical and the semantic. In our article we try to study different kinds of borrowings according to these three main areas of the new language system.

The lasting nature of phonetic adaptation is best shown by comparing Norman French borrowings to Parisian ones. The Norman borrowings have for a long time been fully adapted to the phonetic system of the English language. Some words, related to everyday vocabulary, were borrowed into Old English period, for example:

Middle English (ME) *husbonde* < Old Norse (ON) *hus-bondi* - New English "husband";

ME *skye* < ON *sky* < New English (NE) "cloud";

ME *windowe* < ON *vindagua* < NE "window".

The Scandinavian borrowing base was often displaced the appropriate vernacular Old English word, for example, the Old English verb *niman* "take", which in the Middle English was replaced by the word *taken*, formed from the Scandinavian verb *taka*;

OE *clipian* > ME *clepen* was replaced by ME *callen* < ON *kalla* < NE "call".

Some borrowings led to the formation of Nordic-English etymological doublets in cases when both lexical units preserved. The difference between the Scandinavian and English forms used for semantic differentiation, for example:

NE *shirt* – ON *skirt*; NE *road* and *raid* are connected with Danish (Dan.) *ridan* "ride".

As we can see, the diphthong ai in the Old English monophthongized in a, as in the Scandinavian languages moved to ei. But in some cases phonetic adaptation is not completed. Several later Parisian borrowings, even the ones borrowed as early as the XV-XVII century, still sound surprisingly French:

matinee – from French (Fr.) *matinee (musicale)*, from *matin* "morning" with a sense here of "daytime", from O.Fr. *matine*.

cafe – from Fr. *cafe* "coffee, coffeehouse," from Italian *caffè* "coffee". The first public *cafe* might have been the one opened in Marseilles in 1660.

Grammatical adaptation consists in a complete change of the former paradigm of the borrowed word. If it is a noun, it is certain to adopt, sooner or later, a new system of declension; if it is a verb, it will be conjugated according to the rules of the recipient language.

The Russian noun «пальто» > French (Fr.) *paletot* "coat" > Spanish (Sp.) *palletoque* "capote", Latin (L.) *palla* "outer garments".

It was borrowed from French early in XIX cent, and has not yet acquired the Russian system of declension. The same can be said about such English Renaissance borrowings as:

phenomenon > Late L. *phenomenon* > Greek (Gk.) *phainomenon* "that which appears or is seen," the plural form is *phenomena*,

dance – from O.Fr. *dander*, perhaps from Frankish, this word of uncertain origin but which, through French influence in arts and society, has become the primary word for this activity from Spain to Russia;

music – from O.Fr. *musique*, from L. *musica*, from Gk, *mousike techne* "art of the Muses," from feminine of *mousikos* ".

These words were fully adapted to the grammatical system of the language long ago.

By semantic adaptation is meant adjustment to the system of meanings of the vocabulary. Sometimes a word may be borrowed "blindly" for no obvious reason: there is no gap in the vocabulary or in the group of synonyms which it could fill. Quite a number of such "accidental" borrowings are very soon rejected by the vocabulary and forgotten. But some "blindly" borrowed words managed to establish itself due to the process of semantic adaptation.

The adjective *large*, for instance, was borrowed from French in the meaning of "wide, bountiful," from O.Fr. *large* "broad, wide," from L. *largus* "abundant, copious, plentiful, liberal," of unknown origin. The main modern meaning is "extensive, big". It fully coincided with the English adjective *wide* without adding any new shades or aspects to its meaning. This could have led to its rejection.

Yet, *large* managed to establish itself very firmly in the English vocabulary by semantic adjustment. It entered another synonymic group with the general meaning of "big in size". Still bearing some features of its former meaning it is successfully competing with "big" having approached it very closely, both in frequency and meaning.

It is often the case that a word is borrowed by several languages, not just by one. Such words usually convey concepts which are significant in the field of communication. Many of them are of Latin and Greek origin. For example, most names of sciences are international, such as:

philosophy – from O.Fr. *filosofie*, from L. *philosophia*, from Gk. *philosophia* "love of knowledge, wisdom," from *philos*- "loving" + *sophia* "knowledge, wisdom," from *sophis* "wise";

chemistry – from O.Fr. *alkemie*, from M.L. *alkimia*, from Arabic *al-kimiya*, from Gk. *khemeioa*. Perhaps from an old name for Egypt "*Khemia*", literary "land of black earth," or from Gk. *khymatos* "that which is poured out," from *khein* "to pour," related to *khymos* "juice, sap". The word seems to have elements of both origins.

There are also numerous terms of art in this group:

theatre – from O.Fr. *theatre*, from L. *theatrum*, from Gk. *theatron* "theater," literary "place for viewing," from *theasthai* "to behold", *thea* "a view," *theates* "spectator" + *-tron* (suffix denoting place);

drama – from Late L. *drama* "play, drama," from Gk *drama* "play, action, deed," from *dran* "to do, act, perform".

And sport terms:

cricket – from O.Fr. *criquet* "a cricket," from *criquer* "to creak, rattle, crackle," of echoic origin;

golf – Scot, *gouf*, usually taken as an alteration of Middle Dutch *coif*, *colve* "stick, club, bat" O.N. *kolfr* "clapper of a bell," German *Kolben* "mace, club".

It is quite natural that political terms frequently occur in the international group of borrowings:

policy – from M.Fr. *police* "contract, bill of lading", from Italian (It.) *polizza* "written evidence of a transaction," from M.L. *apodissa* "receipt for money," from Gr. *apodexis* "proof, declaration," from *apo-* "off" + *deiknyia* "to show," cognate with L. *dicere* "to tell";

democracy – from M.Fr. *democratic*, from M.L. *democratia*, from Gk. *demokratia* "popular government," from *demos* "common people," originally "district" + *kratos* "rule, strength".

XX century scientific and technological advances brought a great number of new international words:

antibiotic – from Fr. *antibiotique*, from *anti-* + Gk. *biotikos* "fit for life";

television – from Fr. *television*, from *tele-* + *vision*.

Fruits and foodstuffs imported from exotic countries often transport their names too and become international:

coffee – from It. *caffè*, from Turkish *kahveh*, from Arabic *qahwah* "coffee," said originally to have meant "wine," but perhaps rather from *Kaffa* region of Ethiopia, a home of the plant (coffee in Kaffa is called *buna*, which was borrowed into Arabic as *bunn* "raw coffee");

chocolate – from Nahuatl *xocolatl*, from *xococ* "bitter" + *all* "water".

We can see the similarity of such words as in the English "son", the German "Sohn" and the Russian «сын»:

son – O.E. *sunu* "son," from Proto-Germanic **sunuz*, from Proto-Indo-European root **sunu-/*sunnyu-* (Sanskrit (Skt.) *sunus*, Greek *huios*).

This group of words should not lead one to the quite false conclusion that they are international words. They represent the Indo-European group of the native elements in each respective language. They are words of the same etymological root, and not borrowings, so called structural elements of borrowings.

Latin and Greek borrowings appeared in English during the Middle English period due to the Great Revival of Learning. These are mostly scientific words because Latin was the language of science at that time. These words were not used as frequently as the words of the Old English period, therefore some of them were partly assimilated grammatically, such words as:

formula – from L. *formula* "form, rule, method, formula," literary "small form," diminutive of *forma* "form"; *formulae* is a plural form of *formula*;

memorandum – from L. *memorandum* "(thing) to be remembered," neutral singular form of *memorandus*, gerundive of *memorare* "to call to mind," from *memor* "mindful of".

Classical borrowings continue to appear in the Modern English as well. Mostly they are words formed with the help of Latin and Greek morphemes. The largest group of borrowings is French borrowings. Most of them came into English during the Norman Conquest. French influenced not only the vocabulary of English but also its spelling, because French scribes wrote documents as the local population was mainly illiterate, and the ruling class was French. Runic letters remaining in English after the Latin alphabet was borrowed were substituted by Latin letters and combinations of letters, for example:

love – O.E. *lufian*, from Proto-Germanic "*lubojanan*", from root of *love*, as we can see «v» was introduced for the voiced consonant /v/ instead of «f» in the intervocalic position/

By the end of the Old English period English underwent a strong influence of Scandinavian due to the Scandinavian conquest of the British Isles. Scandinavians belonged to the same group of peoples as Englishmen and their languages had much in common. As the result of this conquest there are about 700 borrowings from Scandinavian into English. Scandinavians and Englishmen had the same way of life, their cultural level was the same, and they had much in common in their literature therefore there were many words in these languages which were almost identical, such as:

skill – from Old Norse *skill* "distinction, discernment," related to *skilja* "distinguish, separate" from Proto Germanic **skaljo-* "divide, separate".

However there were also many words in these two languages which were different, and some of them were borrowed into English, such words as:

cake – from ON *kaka* "cake," from West Germanic **kokon-*, from PIE base **gag-*, **gog-* "something round, lump of something";

There are some 800 words borrowed from German into English.

In order to summarize all statements above, we can distinguish the following types of borrowings:

1. loan words proper — the sound-form and the meaning are borrowed together (ME *sky* - ME *skye* < ON *sky* "cloud"; to dance - from O.Fr. *dancier*).

2. borrowed word-building morphemes — first a number of words with the morpheme is taken from another language, then the morpheme begins to form new words (-able— Latin; -ment – French; -ism – Greek).

3. translation loans — patterns taken from another language are formed with native English material (Lingua materna — mother-tongue)

4. semantic loans — a new sense of an English word that appeared under the influence of a related word in another language (reaction; to move).

5. word coins from Latin and Greek — are formed to denote new notions or inventions using Latin or Greek words (antibiotic – from Fr. *antibiotique*, from *anti-* + Gk. *biotikos* "fit for life").

Thanks to the different kinds of borrowings above, we can conclude that all borrowed words are adjusted in three main areas of the new language system: the phonetic, the grammatical and the semantic. These three areas of the new language system not only identify some words as borrowings but even help to determine the main source language in the etymological structure of English vocabulary.

Литература

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