

Module II. Lecture 13

Borrowings

Plan

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3. Classification of borrowings according to the degree of assimilation
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1. Definition

Borrowing words from other languages is characteristic of English throughout its history. More than two thirds of the English vocabulary are borrowings. Mostly they are words of Romanic origin (Latin, French, Italian, Spanish). Borrowed words are different from native ones by their phonetic structure, by their morphological structure and also by their grammatical forms. It is also characteristic of borrowings to be non-motivated semantically.

English history is very rich in different types of contacts with other countries, that is why it is very rich in borrowings. The Roman invasion, the adoption of Christianity, Scandinavian and Norman conquests of the British Isles, the development of British colonialism and trade and cultural relations served to increase immensely the English vocabulary. The majority of these borrowings are fully assimilated in English in their pronunciation, grammar, spelling and can be hardly distinguished from native words.

English continues to take in foreign words, but now the quantity of borrowings is not so abundant as it was before. All the more so, English now has become a «giving» language, it has become Lingva franca of the twentieth century.

Borrowings can be classified according to different criteria:

- a) according to the aspect which is borrowed,
- b) according to the degree of assimilation,
- c) according to the language from which the word was borrowed.

(In this classification only the main languages from which words were borrowed into English are described, such as Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, German and Russian.)

2. Classification of borrowings according to the borrowed aspect

There are the following groups: phonetic borrowings, translation loans, semantic borrowings, morphemic borrowings. Phonetic borrowings are most characteristic in all languages, they are called loan words proper. Words are borrowed with their spelling, pronunciation and meaning. Then they undergo assimilation, each sound in the borrowed word is substituted by the corresponding sound of the borrowing language. In some cases the spelling is changed. The structure of the word can also be changed. The position of the stress is very often influenced by the phonetic system of the borrowing language. The paradigm of the word, and sometimes the meaning of the borrowed word are also

changed. Such words as: labor, travel, table, chair, people are phonetic borrowings from French; apparatchik, nomenklatura, sputnik are phonetic borrowings from Russian; bank, soprano, duet are phonetic borrowings from Italian etc.

Translation loans are word-for-word (or morpheme-for-morpheme) translations of some foreign words or expressions. In such cases the notion is borrowed from a foreign language but it is expressed by native lexical units, «to take the bull by the horns» (Latin), «fair sex» (French), «living space» (German) etc. Some translation loans appeared in English from Latin already in the Old English period, e.g. Sunday (solis dies). There are translation loans from the languages of Indians, such as: «pipe of peace», «pale-faced», from German «masterpiece», «homesickness», «superman».

Semantic borrowings are such units when a new meaning of the unit existing in the language is borrowed. It can happen when we have two relative languages which have common words with different meanings, e.g. there are semantic borrowings between Scandinavian and English, such as the meaning «to live» for the word «to dwell» which in Old English had the meaning «to wander». Or else the meaning «дар», «подарок» for the word «gift» which in Old English had the meaning

«ВЫКУП за жену». Semantic borrowing can appear when an English word was borrowed into some other language, developed there a new meaning and this new meaning was borrowed back into English, e.g. «brigade» was borrowed into Russian and formed the meaning «a working collective», «бригада». This meaning was borrowed back into English as a Russian borrowing. The same is true of the English word «pioneer».

Morphemic borrowings are borrowings of affixes which occur in the language when many words with identical affixes are borrowed from one language into another, so that the morphemic structure of borrowed words becomes familiar to the people speaking the borrowing language, e.g. we can find a lot of Romanic affixes in the English word-building system, that is why there are a lot of words - hybrids in English where different morphemes have different origin, e.g. «goddess», «beautiful» etc.

3. Classification of borrowings according to the degree of assimilation

The degree of assimilation of borrowings depends on the following factors: a) from what group of languages the word was borrowed, if the word belongs to the same group of languages to which the borrowing language belongs it is assimilated easier, b) in what way the word is borrowed: orally or in the written form, words borrowed orally are assimilated quicker, c) how often the borrowing is used in the language, the greater the frequency of its usage, the quicker it is assimilated, d) how long the word lives in the language, the longer it lives, the more assimilated it is.

Accordingly borrowings are subdivided into: completely assimilated, partly assimilated and non-assimilated (barbarisms). Completely assimilated borrowings are not felt as foreign words in the language, the French word «sport» and the native word «start». Completely assimilated verbs

belong to regular verbs, e.g. correct -corrected. Completely assimilated nouns form their plural by means of s-inflexion, e.g. gate- gates. In completely assimilated French words the stress has been shifted from the last syllable to the last but one. Semantic assimilation of borrowed words depends on the words existing in the borrowing language, as a rule, a borrowed word does not bring all its meanings into the borrowing language, if it is polysemantic, e.g. the Russian borrowing «sputnik» is used in English only in one of its meanings.

Partly assimilated borrowings are subdivided into the following groups: a) borrowings non-assimilated semantically, because they denote objects and notions peculiar to the country from the language of which they were borrowed, e.g. sari, sombrero, taiga, kvass etc.

b) borrowings non-assimilated grammatically, e.g. nouns borrowed from Latin and Greek retain their plural forms (bacillus - bacilli, phenomenon - phenomena, datum - data, genius - genii etc.

c) borrowings non-assimilated phonetically. Here belong words with the initial sounds /v/ and /z/, e.g. voice, zero. In native words these voiced consonants are used only in the intervocal position as allophones of sounds /f/ and /s/ (loss - lose, life - live). Some Scandinavian borrowings have consonants and combinations of consonants which were not palatalized, e.g. /sk/ in the words: sky, skate, ski etc (in native words we have the palatalized sounds denoted by the digraph «sh», e.g. shirt); sounds /k/ and /g/ before front vowels are not palatalized e.g. girl, get, give, kid, kill, kettle. In native words we have palatalization, e.g. German, child. Some French borrowings have retained their stress on the last syllable, e.g. police, cartoon. Some French borrowings retain special combinations of sounds, e.g. /a:3/ in the words : camouflage, bourgeois, some of them retain the combination of sounds /wa:/ in the words: memoir, boulevard.

d) borrowings can be partly assimilated graphically, e.g. in Greek borrowings «y» can be spelled in the middle of the word (symbol, synonym), «ph» denotes the sound /f/ (phoneme, morpheme), «ch» denotes the sound /k/(chemistry, chaos), «ps» denotes the sound /s/ (psychology).

Latin borrowings retain their polysyllabic structure, have double consonants, as a rule, the final consonant of the prefix is assimilated with the initial consonant of the stem, (accompany, affirmative).

French borrowings which came into English after 1650 retain their spelling, e.g. consonants «p», «t», «s» are not pronounced at the end of the word (buffet, coup, debris), Specifically French combination of letters «eau» /ou/ can be found in the borrowings: beau, chateau, troussaeu. Some of digraphs retain their French pronunciation: 'ch' is pronounced as /sh/, e.g. chic, parachute, 'qu' is pronounced as /k/ e.g. bouquet, «ou» is pronounced as /u:/, e.g. rouge; some letters retain their French pronunciation, e.g. «i» is pronounced as /i:/, e.g. chic, machine; «g» is pronounced as /3/, e.g. rouge.

Modern German borrowings also have some peculiarities in their spelling: common nouns are spelled with a capital letter e.g. Autobahn, Lebensraum; some vowels and digraphs retain their German pronunciation, e.g. «a» is pronounced as /a:/ (Dictat), «u» is pronounced as /u:/ (Kuchen), «au» is pronounced as /au/

(Hausfrau), «ei» is pronounced as /ai/ (Reich); some consonants are also pronounced in the German way, e.g. «s» before a vowel is pronounced as /z/ (Sitzkrieg), «v» is pronounced as /f/ (Volkswagen), «w» is pronounced as /v/, «ch» is pronounced as /h/ (Kuchen).

Non-assimilated borrowings (barbarisms) are borrowings which are used by Englishmen rather seldom and are non-assimilated, e.g. addio (Italian), tete-a-tete (French), dolce vita (Italian), duende (Spanish), an homme a femme (French), gonzo (Italian) etc.

4. Romanic borrowings

a) Latin borrowings

Among words of Romanic origin borrowed from Latin during the period when the British Isles were a part of the Roman Empire, there are such words as: street, port, wall etc. Many Latin and Greek words came into English during the Adoption of Christianity in the 6-th century. At this time the Latin alphabet was borrowed which ousted the Runic alphabet. These borrowings are usually called classical borrowings. Here belong Latin words: alter, cross, dean, and Greek words: church, angel, devil, anthem.

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 the time. These words were not used as frequently as the words of the Old English period, therefore some of them were partly assimilated grammatically, e.g. formula - formulae. Here also belong such words as: memorandum, minimum, maximum, veto etc. Classical borrowings continue to appear in Modern English as well. Mostly they are words formed with the help of Latin and Greek morphemes. There are quite a lot of them in medicine (appendicitis, aspirin), in chemistry (acid, valency, alkali), in technique (engine, antenna, biplane, airdrome), in politics (socialism, militarism), names of sciences (zoology, physics) . In philology most of terms are of Greek origin (homonym, archaism, lexicography).

b) French borrowings

The influence of French on the English spelling. The largest group of borrowings are 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 documents were written by French scribes 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, e.g. «v» was introduced for the voiced consonant /v/ instead of «f» in the intervocal position /lufian - love/, the digraph «ch» was introduced to denote the sound /ch/ instead of the letter «c» / chest/ before front vowels where it had been palatalized, the digraph «sh» was introduced

instead of the combination «sc» to denote the sound /sh/ /ship/, the digraph «th» was introduced instead of the Runic letters «0» and « » /this, thing/, the letter «y» was introduced instead of the Runic letter «3» to denote the sound /j/ /yet/, the digraph «qu» substituted the combination «cw» to denote the combination of sounds /kw/ /queen/, the digraph «ou» was introduced to denote the sound /u:/ /house/ (The sound /u:/ was later on diphthongized and is pronounced /au/ in native words and fully assimilated borrowings). As it was difficult for French scribes to copy English texts they substituted the letter «u» before «v», «m», «n» and the digraph «th» by the letter «o» to escape the combination of many vertical lines /«sunu» - «son», luvu» - «love»/.

There are the following semantic groups of French borrowings:

- a) words relating to government: administer, empire, state, government;
- b) words relating to military affairs: army, war, banner, soldier, battle;
- c) words relating to jury: advocate, petition, inquest, sentence, barrister;
- d) words relating to fashion: luxury, coat, collar, lace, pleat, embroidery;
- e) words relating to jewelry: topaz, emerald, ruby, pearl;
- f) words relating to food and cooking: lunch, dinner, appetite, to roast, to stew.

Words were borrowed from French into English after 1650, mainly through French literature, but they were not as numerous and many of them are not completely assimilated. There are the following semantic groups of these borrowings:

- a) words relating to literature and music: belle-lettres, conservatoire, brochure, nuance, pirouette, vaudeville;
- b) words relating to military affairs: corps, echelon, fuselage, manoeuvre;
- c) words relating to buildings and furniture: entresol, chateau, bureau;
- d) words relating to food and cooking: ragout, cuisine.

c) Italian borrowings

Cultural and trade relations between Italy and England brought many Italian words into English. The earliest Italian borrowing came into English in the 14-th century, it was the word «bank» /from the Italian «banco» - «bench»/. Italian money-lenders and money-changers sat in the streets on benches. When they suffered losses they turned over their benches, it was called «banco rotta» from which the English word «bankrupt» originated. In the 17-th century some geological terms were borrowed: volcano, granite, bronze, lava. At the same time some political terms were borrowed: manifesto, bulletin.

But mostly Italian is famous by its influence in music and in all Indo-European languages musical terms were borrowed from Italian: alto, baritone, basso, tenor, falsetto, solo, duet, trio, quartet, quintet, opera, operette, libretto, piano, violin. Among the 20-th century Italian borrowings we can mention : gazette, incognito, autostrada, fiasco, fascist, dilettante, grotesque, graffito etc.

d) Spanish borrowings

Spanish borrowings came into English mainly through its American variant. There are the following semantic groups of them:

- a) trade terms: cargo, embargo;
- b) names of dances and musical instruments: tango, rumba, habanera, guitar;
- c) names of vegetables and fruit: tomato, potato, tobacco, cocoa, banana, ananas, apricot etc.

e) Germanic borrowings

English belongs to the Germanic group of languages and there are borrowings from Scandinavian, German and Holland languages, though their number is much less than borrowings from Romanic languages. 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, they had much in common in their literature therefore there were many words in these languages which were almost identical, e.g.

ON	OE	Modern	E
syster		sweoster	sister
fiscr		fisc	fish
felagi		felawe	fellow

However there were also many words in the two languages which were different, and some of them were borrowed into English, such nouns as: bull, cake, egg, kid, knife, skirt, window etc, such adjectives as: flat, ill, happy, low, odd, ugly, wrong, such verbs as: call, die, guess, get, give, scream and many others. Even some pronouns and connective words were borrowed which happens very seldom, such as: same, both, till, fro, though, and pronominal forms with «th»: they, them, their.

Scandinavian influenced the development of phrasal verbs which did not exist in Old English, at the same time some prefixed verbs came out of usage, e.g. ofniman, beniman. Phrasal verbs are now highly productive in English /take off, give in etc/.

There are some 800 words borrowed from German into English. Some of them have classical roots, e.g. in some geological terms, such as: cobalt, bismuth, zink, quarts, gneiss, wolfram. There were also words denoting objects used in everyday life which were borrowed from German: iceberg, lobby, rucksack, Kindergarten etc.

In the period of the Second World War the following words were borrowed: Volkssturm, Luftwaffe, SS-man, Bundeswehr, gestapo, gas chamber and many others. After the Second World War the following words were borrowed: Berufsverbot, Volkswagen etc.

Holland and England have constant interrelations for many centuries and

more than 2000 Holland borrowings were borrowed into English. Most of them are nautical terms and were mainly borrowed in the 14-th century, such as: freight, skipper, pump, keel, dock, reef, deck, leak and many others. Besides two main groups of borrowings (Romanic and Germanic) there are also borrowings from a lot of other languages. We shall speak about Russian borrowings, borrowings from the language which belongs to Slavonic languages. Russian borrowings.

There were constant contacts between England and Russia and they borrowed words from one language into the other. Among early Russian borrowings there are mainly words connected with trade relations, such as: rouble, copeck, pood, sterlet, vodka, sable, and also words relating to nature, such as: taiga, tundra, steppe etc.

There is also a large group of Russian borrowings which came into English through Russian literature of the 19-th century, such as: Narodnik, moujik, дума, zemstvo, volost, ukase etc, and also words which were formed in Russian with Latin roots, such as: nihilist, intelligenza, Decembrist etc. After the Great October Revolution many new words appeared in Russian connected with the new political system, new culture, and many of them were borrowed into English, such as: collectivization. udarnik, Komsomol etc and also translation loans, such as: shock worker, collective farm, five-year plan etc. One more group of Russian borrowings is connected with perestroika, such as: glasnost, nomenklatura, apparatchik etc.

Questions for discussion

1. Give the definition of borrowings
2. How are they classified according to the borrowed aspect?
3. How are they classified according to the degree of assimilation?
4. What are the non-assimilated borrowings? Give examples
5. Give examples to Latin borrowings
6. Give examples to French borrowings
7. Give examples to Germanic borrowings

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