

THE CLASSIFICATION OF BORROWED WORDS

*Scientific supervisor: Sarvaraxon Gofurova,
Nurmatova Umida - the student of
Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages*

Abstract: The classification of language contact phenomena has always been an important concern among researchers in the field. In particular, the term borrowing has received different definitions from different writers, covering a wide spectrum of words, from pure loanwords to hybrid loans and semantic extensions. This paper presents one of the most influential taxonomies of borrowings in the literature, and analyzes the way in which the various categories proposed in this taxonomy apply to the Romanian/English contact situation. English borrowings selected from a corpus of journalistic prose and from the specialized literature are used to illustrate the theoretical discussion.

Key words: Borrowing, loanword, loanblend, loanshift.

Introduction

The classification of words borrowed from one language into another was one of the first aspects of their study to engage the attention of researchers in the field. This special interest in the categorization of borrowings was motivated by the fact that, in the early stages of language contact study, the emphasis was mainly on the products of borrowing rather than on the process in itself. At the same time, it was a consequence of the large array of possible combinational patterns between native and foreign material, which in turn reflected the highly complex character of the borrowing process. These realities formed the backdrop against which various proposals for classification emerged, some of which are still in use today. Thus, Winford reports on attempts to classify borrowings as early as the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, for example by Paul (1886), Seiler (1907-1913), Eugene Kaufman (1939), and Betz (1949). However, one of the most comprehensive taxonomies of borrowings was developed by Haugen (1950, 1956) based on the analysis of the speech of Norwegian immigrants into the United States.

The main tenet of Haugen's theoretical framework is that borrowing results from the joint action of two mechanisms, importation and substitution. Importation occurs when a foreign word is reproduced in a language so that it can be unmistakably tracked back to the model. Substitution, on the other hand, involves the replacement of some morphemes in the source language word by recipient language ones, in an attempt to integrate it into the structures of this language.

Haugen is of the opinion that "speakers are in a rough way carrying on an

operation of linguistic comparison between the two languages”with the following result: “Any likeness between them is importation, while any difference between them is regarded as substitution of native material. Substitution means that the imitation of the foreign model is less than perfect, but it also means that it has become more familiar to those who speak the native language.” Depending on the ways in which importation and substitution combine in the borrowing process, the outcomes of this process can range on a form-meaning continuum from foreign forms being borrowed together with their meanings, to meanings entering a language on their own. In broad lines, Haugen’s taxonomy of borrowing includes two main categories – loanwords and loanshifts – each of these containing other subcategories. Thus, loanwords are divided into pure loanwords (unassimilated, partly assimilated and wholly assimilated) and loanblends (derivative and compound). Loanshifts, in their turn, comprise extensions or semantic loans, and creations.

In the following sections of this paper we are going to illustrate these separate classes of borrowings with examples from a corpus of Romanian journalistic prose. The source of the corpus was the economic magazine *Capital* on CD-ROM, consisting of PDF files. Following a process of English words identification and filtering so as to eliminate Romanian homographs and proper nouns, we arrived at the final amount of data: 1,442 borrowed types occurring in a total of 20,534 tokens. All these words were tagged according to the formation process from which they resulted, thus allowing for conclusions regarding the numerical

1. Einar HAUGEN, 1956, *Bilingualism in Americas: A Bibliography and Research Guide*, University of Alabama Press, p. 388.

2. *Ibidem*.

3. The annotated corpus was used as part of a PhD project on recent English borrowings in Romanian, conducted at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj Napoca.

4. This raw data underwent a series of processing procedures, i.e. Optical Character Recognition, sentence splitting, tokenization and part-of-speech tagging and lemmatization. All these processing tasks were performed by Eckhard Bick (researcher) and Tino Didriksen (student assistant), from the Institute for Language and Communication (ISK) at the University of Southern Denmark. The tagging was done using the MSD tagger developed by the Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence of The Romanian Academy, under Professor Dan Tufiş’ supervision. The pos-tagged corpus is available at <http://corp.hum.sdu.dk/cqp.ro.html>.

5. Our method for the identification and filtering of English borrowings partly follows the method used by Onysko (2007) in his corpus study of Anglicisms in German representation of pure loanwords and of loanblends in the total of borrowings, as well as the relations these two classes hold with each other. The main focus of analysis in

the present paper is constituted by the first category of borrowings in Haugen's taxonomy (i.e. loanwords), which is discussed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Some brief considerations regarding loanshifts will also be present, although the examples used to illustrate this class of borrowings (mainly from the Romanian literature on the topic) are not analysed quantitatively, the discussion being conducted mainly in descriptive, qualitative terms.

3. Presentation of results and discussion

3.1. Loanwords

The first important category in Haugen's classification of borrowings is that of loanwords. Loanwords "show morphemic importation without substitution" but with some degree of phonological substitution. In other words, a language borrows both the form and the meaning of a foreign word, which may undergo a process of phonetic integration into the structures of the recipient language. According to their level of adaptation, loanwords can be described as unassimilated, partly assimilated and wholly assimilated. Some of the assimilated loanwords that have been identified in the studied corpus, or have been reported by other researchers (Ciobanu 1996, Manolescu 1999) in their studies on Anglicisms in Romanian are: administrație, bancnotă, box, boiler, brec, budincă, canoe, cargo, casetă, cec, cent, chec, chicinetă, cocher, colocvial, cocteil, corner, crichet, cros, derbi, dischetă, doc, docher, duplex, electron, fan, fault, finiş, folclor, fotbal, golf, handicap, henț, hipi, hol, iard, interviu, jeanși, laburist, lider, lift, pasa, picnic, picup, pocher, pop, puncti, recesiune, reporter, rugby, sandviș, scheci, scor, seif, slip, smoching, sport, star, start, stoc, stop, stres, șampon, șerif, șiling, șort, șut, tenis, test, tichet, tramvai, treni, troleibuz, trust, video, volei, trening, laburist, televiziune, tehnologie.

However, depending on a number of several factors (e.g. speakers' proficiency in the source language and attitude towards borrowing in general, the frequency with which the loanword is used and its age of existence in the borrowing language), phonetic integration may be slowed down or not take place at all. In this case, we are dealing with pure loanwords, or foreign words in which importation takes place in the absence of any substitution. The corpus of Capital 2005 contains approximately 850 English words (lemmas) which can be described as relatively unassimilated, the main marks for their inclusion in this category being their formal identity with the model they copy. These recent borrowings are used in a number of 1,339 types and 19,395 tokens, a situation which indicates a repetition rate of about 14 for each borrowed type. Examples of unassimilated loanwords in the studied corpus include: advertising, advocacy, airbag, brand, business, cash, card, dealer, email, leasing, software, rating, broker, job, notebook, futures, laptop, lobby, chart, charter, boom, wireless, leadership, outsourcing, player, hardware, showroom, weekend, coach, knowhow, flash, hobby, talk-show, roaming, target, all-inclusive, feedback, teambuilding, mouse, show, open-

source, derby, download, outdoor, browser, shopping, offshore, outplacement, board, copywriter, desktop, research, banner, bearish, bullish, freelancer, brief, smartphone, bestseller, trendy, voucher, zoom, lowcost, dressing, e-tax, blockbuster, shipping, etc. The borderline between assimilated and unassimilated loanwords cannot be easily drawn, the idiosyncratic and variable character of the integration process making it possible for the same word to exist in a language at different stages of phonetic and morphosyntactic adaptation (C. Myers-Scotton, 1993). In this context, a special situation is constituted by those unadapted borrowings that double already integrated forms: bungalow vs. bungalov, cocktail vs. cocteil, cricket cs. crichet, ski vs. schi, yacht vs. iaht, leader vs. lider, derby vs. derbi, inchi vs. inci. The introduction of a foreign word into a language at different times and more than once, in spite of its existence in an already assimilated form, was described by Haugen (1956) as loanword “re-borrowing”, being seen as the result of different, co-existing stages of bilingualism within a speech community whose members are becoming increasingly exposed to a foreign language. We believe that the present-day Romanian society constitutes a fertile ground for loanword reborrowing, as its members, being more and more exposed to English as the international lingua franca of the contemporary world, are adopting words that were borrowed in the past and exist as established borrowings. Similar studies regarding the impact of English on other European languages have shown that when such doublets are present, the more recent and modern word tends to replace the older, assimilated form. For example, Onysko⁷ presents evidence which suggests that the integrated forms klub and handicap are being displaced in German by the more recent borrowings club and handicap, presumably as a result of some special psycho-social factors surrounding German/English contact. Conclusions and outlook

The analysis of borrowing from English into present-day Romanian has revealed the richness and complexity of this process. Thus, from assimilated to unassimilated loans, from pure to blended or merely semantic transfers, the language of the studied corpus provides examples from all the main classes of borrowings in Haugen’s classical taxonomy. However, the relationship between these classes deserves further study. Although there is some evidence which shows that sometimes already adapted borrowings are reintroduced into the language in an unadapted form, the relationship between loanwords and loanshifts is less clear.

Recent studies on the topic (Z. Manolescu, 1999) have shown that the number of English loanwords in present-day Romanian is on the increase. In this context, it would be interesting to see whether this increase is paralleled by a rise in the number of semantic loans, or takes place at the expense of this class of borrowings.

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