

PHILOLOGY

HISTORY OF LOAN WORDS IN ENGLISH. SOURCES OF LOANS. CALQUES. PERIODICAL STATES OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

The long documented history of English includes contact with languages in a variety of contexts, including: the dissemination of Christian culture in Latin in Anglo-Saxon England, and the interactions of French, Latin, Scandinavian, Celtic, and English during the Middle Ages; exposure to languages throughout the world during the colonial era; and the effects of using English as an international language of science. The causal rich variety of the English vocabulary appertains the vast number of words it has taken from other languages. The purpose of the current article is to analyze the ways and the reasons of loan words and borrowings being adopted from other languages. It is ubiquitous fact that when two languages congregate together, words are borrowed from one language to another. Lexical borrowings, or loanwords, are by far the most commonly attested language contact phenomenon. Invariably, in a borrowing situation the first foreign elements to enter the borrowing language are words," and, based on a cross-linguistic survey of lexical borrowings. Loanwords are studied from many different standpoints, touching upon different subfields of linguistics, including phonetics, phonology, morphology, and semantics, as well as sociolinguistics and historical linguistics. Loanwords are not only recognized as the most common of language contact phenomena but also occupy an important position in general linguistics due to the evidence they bring to our understanding of the grammatical structure of language and to the theory of language change and historical linguistics. "Loan" and "borrowing" are of course metaphors, because there is no literal lending process. There is no transfer from one language to another, and no "returning" words to the source language. They simply come to be used by a speech community that speaks a different language from the one they originated in. Borrowings are the consequences of cultural interaction between two language communities. The actual process of borrowing is complex and involves many usage events.

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Introduction. Loanwords are words brought into one country from another. Words are generally 'loaned' when two different cultures come into contact with each other. This might be because of immigration, trade, fashions or foods, the arts, technologies, wars or colonisation. Most loan words tend to be nouns. New objects or attitudes coming from abroad need new words, and often the loaners adopt the original word as their own. Likewise, some speakers of the borrowing language know the source language too, or at least enough of it to utilize the relevant words. They adopt them when speaking the borrowing language. If they are bilingual in the source language, which is often the case, they might pronounce the words the same or similar to the way they are pronounced in the source language. Presumably the very first speakers who used the word in English knew at least some French and heard the word used by French speakers. Those who first use the new word might use it at first only with speakers of the source language who know the word, but at some point they come to use the word with those to whom the word was not previously known. To these speakers the word may sound 'foreign'. At this stage, when most speakers do not know the word and if they hear it think it is from another language, the word can be called a *foreign word*. Whereas, in time more speakers can become familiar with a new foreign word. The community of users can grow to the point where even people who know little or nothing of the source language understand, and even use the novel word themselves. The new word becomes conventionalized. At this point it is called a borrowing or

loanword. (Not all foreign words do become loanwords. If they fall out of use before they become widespread, they do not reach the loanword stage.

The definition of loan word. In lexicology, a loanword is a word (or lexeme) imported into one language from another language. Also called a borrowed word or a borrowing.

Over the past 1,500 years, English has adopted words from more than 300 other languages. Loanwords make up a huge proportion of the words in any large dictionary of English. They also figure largely in the language of everyday communication and some are found even among the most basic vocabulary of English. The term *loanword*, from the German *Lehnwort*, is an example of a calque or loan translation. The terms loanword and borrowing are, at best, imprecise. As countless linguists have pointed out, it's extremely unlikely that a borrowed word will ever be returned to the donor language.

Examples and Observations.

French loanwords. The major reason why words are taken over from another language is for *prestige*, because the foreign term for some reason is highly esteemed. Borrowings for prestige are sometimes called 'luxury' loans. For example, English could have done perfectly well with only native terms for 'pig flesh/pig meat' and 'cow flesh/cow meat,' but for reasons of prestige, *pork* (from French *porc*) and *beef* (from French *boeuf*) were borrowed, as well as many other terms of 'cuisine' from French--*cuisine* itself is from French *cuisine* 'kitchen'- because French had more social status.

Spanish Loanwords. Among Spanish *loanwords* that are likely to be used by most speakers of contemporary English without particular consciousness of their Spanish origin, and certainly not with reference only to Spanish-speaking cultures, are: *machete* (1575), *mosquito* (1572), *tobacco* (1577), *anchovy* (1582), *plantain* 'type of banana' (1582; 1555 as *platanos*), *alligator* (1591; earlier *lagarto*). The ulterior etymology is uncertain), *canyon*(1837), *bonanza* (1844), *tuna* (1881), *oregano* (1889)."

Loans and native words. The fact that for many of the above words Germanic equivalents already existed in English and continued to exist led to a stylistic splitting of the vocabulary of English. Thus a word like *work* is a Germanic word and the normal everyday word whereas *labour* is a Romance loanword which is regarded as being on a higher level, e.g., 'The value of labour in our society'. Among the various types of changes which took place in the period in which Middle English borrowed from French through direct contact, are those which led to a mixing of Germanic and Romance elements. For example, the English verb *choose* obtained a noun *choice* on the basis of a borrowing of French *choix*. In some circumstances, one can no longer decide whether the Germanic or the Romance form of a word has survived into Modern English. Thus in the case of the adjective *rich* one cannot tell whether it is a continuation of the Old English *rice* or the later French borrowing *riche*. However, one can in many cases see a contamination of the morphology of words due to French borrowing. With the previous adjective one can see the Romance suffix in the noun formed from it: *richness* as opposed to Old English *richdom* with the Romance ending *-ness*. This is for example the case with Old French *viage* which was borrowed into Middle English but where the later French form *voyage* was borrowed into English and adapted in its pronunciation. The same is true of the Middle English noun *flaute* which was changed under the influence of later French *flute*. Relative chronology of borrowings The form of many French loanwords can be used to date borrowing. As mentioned above there are two strands of French influence, an early Anglo-Norman one and a later Central French one. It is essentially important to note that the later borrowing did not replace the earlier one in keeping with the principle that if two variant forms come to be distinguished semantically their continuing existence in the language is as good as guaranteed.

The vocabulary of English. Due to colonial expansion and recently, due to its status as a lingua franca, English is found in many countries across the world. In the present context, the main countries with native speaker populations are Great Britain (England, Wales, Scotland) and Ireland, both of which contributed to overseas forms of English during the colonial period (1600-1900) according to deportation and emigration, both voluntary and involuntary. There are many pidgins deriving from English as a lexifier language, e.g. in the Caribbean, West Africa and the South-West Pacific. English is also found as a second language, with various degrees of proficiency, in many countries of South and South-East Asia. Due to recent immigration, especially after WWII, forms of English from South Asia and the Caribbean, established themselves in Britain and have interacted with traditional forms of English. Although present-day English does not borrow very often from foreign languages, the vocabulary of English in the history of the language has been characterised by at times massive influence from other languages.

CALQUES (loan translations). Before looking at loans in detail one should remark that these are not only direct borrowings but also includes what are called calques. These are new formations in a

language which are attained by translating the elements of a word in a foreign language. For instance Greek *sympathia* comes from *syn* 'with' and *pathia* 'suffering'. It was borrowed into Latin as *compassio* (from *con* 'with' and *passio* 'suffering') and then into German as *Mitleid* from *mit* 'with' and *Leid* 'suffering'. Another instance of a calque would be *Vorhersehung* 'providence' from *providentia* and *Ausdruck* 'expression' from *expressio*. In English the word *gospel* is a calque as it derives originally from *good* + *spell* which is a translation of Greek *evangelion*.

Latin borrowings Early Latin loans. Some loans from Latin were present in the Germanic dialects which were brought to England in the first place. These probably entered Germanic because of contact and trade with the Romans on the continent. In England some loans may be due to exchange with the descendants of the original Romans who remained in the country after the departure of the Roman legions. The next group of Latin loans is directly connected with the Christianisation of England which began from the south at the end of the 6th century (there was already a presence in Scotland and the north of England. It is possible to establish a relative chronology for Latin loans on the basis of word forms. For instance the word for wine in English is obviously an old loan from Latin (older than the ecclesiastical loans) as it goes back to trade with the Romans and is found in German in the same form as well (originally /wi:n/). Later the word changes its vowel to /ai/ (due to later internal changes in both German and English). Now the Latin of this early period had a sound /w/ which was written *v*, i.e. the word for 'wine' was *winum*. This sound shifted in later Latin from an approximant to a fricative and was then pronounced as [v]. After this stage the word for the bush on which the wine grape was grown was borrowed into English, this time as *vine* with an initial /v-/. Hence the contrast in present-day English between wine 'Wein' and vine 'Weinstock' with /w-/ versus /v-/. Later Latin loans continue to appear continuously throughout the history of English. In the early modern period (16th and 17th centuries) there is a particularly strong influence due to the development of technical vocabulary and the desire to enrich English to make it an equal of the classical languages Latin and Greek. This should be seen in connection with general cultural developments of the time. In the early modern period one has on the one hand a renewed interest in Classical culture, deriving from the new perspective on pre-Christian culture developed in the Renaissance, and on the other one has the necessity to devise terms for the many inventions and developments of science. This created an atmosphere in which scholars concerned themselves intensively with Latin and Greek and considered how English might be enriched by borrowing words from the classical languages. To the modern reader this controversy appears to be a case of extreme prescriptivism where some authors attempted to apply notions of undue conservatism to their contemporary language by insisting that Latin and Greek were superior to English and that one should borrow wholesale from these languages. However there is one Raymond Hickey *The vocabulary of English: history* 4 of 16 pages respect in which the classical borrowings did indeed fulfil a genuine need in English. Because of its lexical structure English had at the time many instances of nouns without corresponding adjectives. These are so-called lexical gaps. Furthermore because English formed (and still forms) semantic compounds by joining an adjective to a noun there was a real need for adjectives. Note that German forms semantic compounds by formal compounds in which two nouns are joined together (see translation below). before after noun sea adjective --- marine (E Latin *mare*) example marine life Now in some instances the corresponding adjective was present in the language but had a non-neutral connotation (in the examples below the word *watery* means 'containing too much fluid' and *horsy* means 'in gait like a horse'); another instance would be *dermatologist* (not skin doctor, and most certainly not skinny doctor) for *Hautarzt*, before after noun water horse war adjective watery horsy --- aquatic equestrian martial The above cases fill lexical gaps. But during the early modern period many loans were made which were not strictly demanded by the language but which nonetheless have remained. There is a general observation that if two words originally have the same meaning then they survive in a language only if they are later differentiated, semantically or stylistically. This is what has happened with those loans which were not strictly speaking necessary in a functional sense but which have stayed in English all the same (many have disappeared since).

Conventionalization. Conventionalization is a gradual process in which a word progressively permeates a larger and larger speech community. As part of its becoming more familiar to more people, with conventionalization a newly borrowed word gradually adopts sound and other characteristics of the borrowing language. In time, people in the borrowing community do not perceive the word as a loanword at all. Generally, the longer a borrowed word has been in the language, and the more frequently it is used, the more it resembles the native words of the language.

Germanic period or Pre-Old English. It can be deduced that these borrowings date from the time before the Angles and Saxons left the continent for England, because of very similar forms found in the

other old Germanic languages (Old High German, Old Saxon, etc.). The source words are generally attested in Latin texts, in the large body of Latin writings that were preserved through the ages.

The number of new borrowed words finding their way into the shared international vocabulary is on a long downward trend. It's very hard to be precise about the boundaries of the vocabulary of any language, especially a global one like modern English. Every speaker of a language has a slightly different vocabulary. English speakers living in New Zealand are likely to be familiar with a wider range of words of Maori origin, like *Pakeha*, a New Zealander of European descent, *aroa* (sympathy, understanding), *kiaora* - a greeting or farewell. English speakers in Scotland may know more words of Scottish Gaelic origin, like *cranachan*, a type of dessert, *pibroch*, bagpipe music, *Sassenach*, Englishman. Dictionaries, even very big ones like the OED, monitor those words that have some traction in English across the world. This sort of monitoring reveals some surprising trends. Although English is now borrowing from other languages with a worldwide range, the number of new borrowed words finding their way into the shared international vocabulary is on a long downward trend.

One big reason for this is the success of English as an international language of science, scholarship, business, and many other fields. If we think about words coming into English from foreign languages in the 18th and 19th Centuries, we may think first of the impact of colonialism and expanding internet, computer, cell phone, meeting, business trade. Words like jungle, bangle, yoga, khaki came into English from languages of South Asia. But in many other cases new words slipped into English as a result of scientific coinages in other European languages.

A similar story applies to paraffin, formed in German in (from Latin elements), and then borrowed into English in 1835. Other borrowings like semester or seminar reflect German innovations in higher education. Such borrowings are still sometimes found today, but have become much less common, as English has become the lingua franca of the world of learning (and of so many other fields). Today, the balance is tipping much more towards English as a donor of new words (e.g.) rather than a borrower. By contrast, new borrowings into English today tend to cluster much more closely in a few subject areas, especially names of food and drink.

If we look back further, it was in the Middle Ages that the everyday vocabulary of English was affected most deeply by borrowing from other languages. In the wake of the Norman Conquest, French and Latin put English in the shade for centuries as the language of learning. The church, law, and officialdom. Even everyday business records were typically written in Latin or French down to the late 1300s. This has left an indelible mark on the English language today. Words like *age*, *air*, *cause*, *city*, *idea*, *join*, *material*, *poor*, *suffer*, *tax* have become part of the fabric of modern English. Not far short of half of the 1,000 most frequently occurring words in modern written English have come into the language from French or Latin, mostly in the period from 1066 to 1500.

Fewer in number, but even more striking in their impact on the language of everyday life, are those words that came into English from Scandinavian languages. When communities of Scandinavian settlers in late Anglo-Saxon England began to switch to using English, they brought with them some words that have become part of the most basic layer of the vocabulary of English, such as *give*, *take*, *hit*, *leg*, *skin*, *sky*, and even the pronoun *they*. This was greatly helped by the close similarities between the early Scandinavian languages and medieval English.

Close contact does not inevitably lead to borrowing. For example, although English has been rubbing shoulders with Welsh and other Celtic languages in the British Isles for many centuries, relatively few words have come into everyday English from this source. There are some examples, like *trousers*, *gull*, *clan*, or (maybe) *baby*, but they are tiny in number compared with the vast numbers borrowed from French and Latin, and they have had less impact on the everyday language than words from Scandinavian sources.

Ultimately, patterns of borrowed words reflect complex patterns of cultural contacts across the centuries. Names of foods, plants, animals, and other features of the natural world are borrowed as part of the basic traffic between peoples in different parts of the world. Borrowings affecting other areas of the vocabulary typically follow the pathways of power and prestige between languages. English today may, for once, be more of a lender than a borrower.

Early Modern English Period (1500-1650). The effects of the renaissance begin to be seriously felt in England. We see the beginnings of a huge influx of Latin and Greek words, many of them learned words imported by scholars well versed in those languages. But many are borrowings from other languages, as words from European high culture begin to make their presence felt and the first words come in from the earliest period of colonial expansion.

Modern English (1650-present). Period of major colonial expansion, industrial/technological revolution, and American immigration.

Words from European languages.

French

French continues to be the largest single source of new words outside of very specialized vocabulary domains (scientific/technical vocabulary, still dominated by classical borrowings).

– High culture—ballet, bouillabaise, cabernet, cachet, chaise longue, champagne, chic, cognac, corsage, faux pas, nom de plume, quiche, rouge, roulet, sachet, salon, saloon, sang froid, savoir faire

– War and Military—bastion, brigade, battalion, cavalry, grenade, infantry, pallisade, rebuff, bayonet

Spanish

– armada, adobe, alligator, alpaca, armadillo, barricade, bravado, cannibal, canyon, coyote, desperado, embargo, enchilada, guitar, marijuana, mesa, mosquito, mustang, ranch, taco, tornado, tortilla, vigilante

Italian

– alto, arsenal, balcony, broccoli, cameo, casino, cupola, duo, fresco, fugue, gazette (via French), ghetto, gondola, grotto, macaroni, madrigal, motto, piano, stanza, stucco, studio, tempo, torso, umbrella, viola, violin

– from Italian American immigrants—cappuccino, espresso, linguini, mafioso, pasta, pizza, ravioli, spaghetti, spumante, zabaglione, zucchini

German

– bum, dunk, feldspar, quartz, hex, lager, knackwurst, liverwurst, loafer, noodle, poodle, dachshund, pretzel, pinochle, pumpnickel, sauerkraut, schnitzel, zwieback, (beer)stein, lederhosen, dirndl

– 20th century German loanwords—blitzkrieg, zeppelin, strafe, U-boat, delicatessen, hamburger, frankfurter, wiener, hausfrau, kindergarten, Oktoberfest, schuss, wunderkind, bundt (cake), spritz (cookies), (apple) strudel

Russian

– apparatchik, borscht, czar/tsar, glasnost, icon, perestroika, vodka

Loan words and their influence on English. Thus, a loan word as well in terms is also called “borrowing” is a word adopted by speakers of a language from another language which is called “source language”. The controversial issue is that the metaphoric aspect of the words “borrowing” and “loan”, given the absence of an actual lending process; words are not transferred from one language to another, nor returned to the source language, but they are simply used by a community speaking a language other than their original tongue. This complex process is a consequence of cultural contact between two different communities. Those who first use the words may know the source language as well, and may find it easy to use them with their original pronunciation. But others may find it weird and “foreign”. Over time, however, more and more speakers become familiar with the new word and come to use it even though they have no knowledge of the source language. When such a word is used subject to conventionality in a borrowing community, it can finally be called a “loan word”.

The English language today contains loan words from around the world, but French is definitely the largest source of new words, in various fields of vocabulary. Take for instance *grotesque, garage, niche, bigot* or *ballet, chic, savoir faire, corsage* or *nom de plume* when thinking of high culture.

Spanish immigrants also had a great influence on English speakers, to the extent that words such as *armadillo, coyote, desperado, embargo, enchilada, guitar, marijuana, mosquito* and *tortilla* are now commonly used all around the world and are well-known by everyone.

It should not be taken for granted the variety of words borrowed from Italian, especially in the cultural and gastronomic fields: *alto, gondola, madrigal, piano, opera, prima donna, soprano, stanza, tempo, viola, broccoli, macaroni* and so on. The most recent words “stolen” from Italian include *cappuccino, linguini, pasta, pizza, espresso* and *zucchini*. Whether in Italy or not, all menus now contain *ravioli* or *spaghetti*.

Russian words such as *vodka* and *perestroika* also penetrated all borders and are used with the same frequency as the Scandinavian *fjord, ombudsman, ski* or *slalom*. These are words that are deployed in English today without striking us as being unusual.

Another important language is Japanese, enriching our vocabulary with words which are symbols of Japanese culture, such as *geisha, kimono, samurai, sumo, suchi, hara kiri, judo*. An increment in vocabulary is at the same time accompanied by an increase in meaning, which finally leads to enriching the language in

Resume. English has gone through many periods in which large numbers of words from a particular language were borrowed. These periods coincide with times of major cultural contact between English speakers and those speaking other languages. The waves of borrowing during periods of especially strong cultural contacts are not sharply delimited, and can overlap. For example, the Norse influence on English began already in the 8th century A.D. and continued strongly well after the Norman Conquest brought a large influx of Norman French to the language.

It is part of the cultural history of English speakers that they have always adopted loanwords from the languages of whatever cultures they have come in contact with. There have been few periods when borrowing became unfashionable, and there has never been a national academy in Britain, the U.S., or other English-speaking countries to attempt to restrict new loanwords, as there has been in many continental European countries.

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