



# ON THE PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE BORROWING (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE)

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## ABSTRACT

*This article addresses the issue of borrowing language units from other languages by Russian. It is important to note that the problem of borrowing language units from one language to another is one of the controversial issues in modern linguistics. It also provides a comparative description of the views of some linguists on the process of language borrowing, its causes, and the designation of similar elements in the Russian language. Following Zemskaya E.A., it is asserted that the formation of new words from the Russian language borrowed with the help of dictionary educational means is a condition of "russification", and such education must be attributed to original words. Examples are given of words formed by combining the borrowed basis with Russian word forming elements. The main reasons for borrowing in the work are confirmed to be extra-linguistic (economic, political and other relations between the native speaker people of the successor language and the people of the source language) and linguistic (the language's need to identify new phenomena).*

**KEYWORDS:** *borrowing, foreign words, lexical unit, source language, successor language, Russian, anglicism, adaptation, reasons for borrowing, internal language needs.*

## INTRODUCTION

The question of borrowing elements, words and whole word combinations from one language to another is a controversial issue in linguistics. By following the borrowing process, you can obtain valuable information about the development of the language in general. This problem has been and continues to be of interest to linguists from different nations.

For the first time the problem of language interaction and interpenetration of elements was considered in the works of the Baudouin de Courtenay I.A. (1875) (Geranina, 2008, pp. 101-102).

The essence of the process of borrowing is treated differently by researchers. Let us consider the basic interpretations of the concept of borrowing. Some linguists understand borrowing to mean the process of "moving" lexical units from one language to another (Krysin L.P., Mayorov A.P., etc.), others to mean words obtained as a result of the process of mastering foreign words (graphic, phonetic, morphological design) (Akhmanova O.S., Marinova E.V., etc.). Rosenthal D.E. understands borrowing much more widely - as "the words which are entering into Russian language from other languages, as a result of economic, political and cultural communications of Russian people with other states ... They also can arise as consequence of snobbism, a fashion" (Rosenthal, 2001, p. 69).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

An equally controversial issue in linguistics is the designation of words of foreign origin. Lotte D.S. notes that such words in Russian have several designations: *foreign words, foreign language words, foreign borrowings, foreign borrowings*, etc. Previously, the terms foreign words and foreign words were also used (Lotte, 1982, p. 9).

In considering this issue, some researchers are even trying to differentiate these concepts from each other. For example, Yartseva V.N. contrasts foreign words, sound, spelling, grammatical and semantic features of which are alien to borrowed words learned in the language (Yartseva, 2002, p. 158).

In our opinion, the concepts of "borrowed word" and "foreign word" are absolutely identical: in both cases, a foreign word penetrates the language and is shaped accordingly. Here we only have to distinguish between the types of borrowings by the degree of adaptation in the language, under which we distinguish between fully acquired borrowings and words that are partially adapted. In the first case, the word can serve as a producing base (*рыцарь – рыцарство* (knight – knightly), *рыцарский – по-рыцарски* (chivalrous - chivalrously)), in the second case, it is understandable to native speakers and is graphically arranged, but its derivative potential is



zero (*дедлайн, стартап, логин* (deadline, start up, login)).

Thus, the problem of borrowing lexical units is one of the most pressing in linguistics, the appearance of which is connected with the process of language interaction (Khokhonin, Ovsyannikova, 2017, p. 10). Indeed, the penetration of borrowings into a certain language is due to contacts between carrier nations. With regard to the designations of the language to which the borrowed word refers and the receiving language, there are several terms in linguistics:

- 1) Source language, base language, transmitter language, donor language, etc;
- 2) The successor language, the borrowing language, the recipient language, etc.

Of these, we prefer to use the terms "source language" and "successor language", considering them clearer from a semantic point of view.

Foreign-language borrowings are the subject of research in many sciences and branches, as well as their terminology systems. It should be noted that the issue of foreign language borrowing has been now taken on particular importance in view of the increasing globalization of science. Now more than ever, there is a real need for a detailed, in-depth analysis of this phenomenon, based on ample practical material.

As Yuypin Ch. correctly notes, "*there is no language that is completely free of foreign language phenomena, because no nation in today's world lives completely isolated*" (Yuypin, 2015, p. 87). This is also confirmed by the words of the great Russian linguist Reformatsky A.A., who points out that there is not a single language in the world a lexicon of which consists only of original words: each language has a layer of borrowed words (Reformatsky, 2004, p. 139). Politicians that do not accept this axiom sometimes artificially create a tendency at the legislative level to prohibit borrowing, for example, in Iceland the use of foreign language inclusions and borrowings is restricted by law (Kolomejtsjeva, 2014, p. 185).

If borrowing is considered the result of economic, political, cultural, sports and other relationships, its penetration into the language is necessary for language development. Some governmental and non-governmental organizations are trying to taboo borrowed words, particularly in Russia. One example is the LDPR's initiative to ban the use of foreign words in the media by journalists (Forbes, 2013) or the British petition to ban Americanism (BBC, 2017).

If we look back at the history of the fight against borrowing, Valgina N.S. notes that in the 40s of the 20th century they were evaluated as ideologically alien elements, the use of which in speech was equated with anti-patriotism (Valgina, 2001).

Thus, the "fight" against foreign-language borrowing has been carried out before, but today it is becoming increasingly important, as evidenced by its inclusion even in the election programmes of some presidential candidates.

The borrowed word, organically included in the Russian language system, can be subject to semantic transformations, grammatical transformations, phonetic learning, as evidenced by the following opinion of Khokhonin D.E. and Ovsyannikova K.V.: "*Some borrowings have been so organically included in the lexical system that they are perceived as native Russians*" (Khokhonin, Ovsyannikova, 2017, p. 10).

The proof of the "russification" of a borrowed word is the formation of new words from it with the help of the original word-generating means. Examples of such words typical of older generation speech include: **аэродром** (aerodrome) (French: *aerodrome* ← Greek: air + dromos: running) - territory for parking, take-off, landing and maintenance of aircraft, aviation units or subdivisions; **мануфактура** (manufacture) (manufaktura ← lat. manus - hand + facere - to do) - industrial enterprise where hand tools are used; **танцкласс** (dance class) (German tanzen - dance + Klasse - class) - dance school.

Unlike Goncharova N.A. and Shvetsova V.M., who believe that "*such a way of enrichment as borrowing enriches only the foreign part of the language, while the native part remains intact*" (Goncharova, Shvetsova, 2017, p. 6), we consider the adjectives **аэродромный** (airfield-related), **мануфактурный** (manufactural), **танцклассный** (dance class-related), **танцклассовый** (dance class-related), generated from these words to be Russian, because they are based on Russian word morphs. In this regard, Zemskaya E.A. notes that "*the use of a foreign word as a basic basis is an additional indicator of its entry into the Russian language system*" (Zemskaya, 2017, p. 14).

When the question of the reasons for the borrowing arises, it should be noted that there are two types of reasons for the borrowing - extra-linguistic (foreign language) and linguistic (intra-linguistic). The first has to do with the economic, political and other relations between the mother tongue of the successor language and the source language, while the second has to do with the need for the language to identify new phenomena or new meanings of multiple words. In our opinion, the reasons for borrowing language units are in most cases interrelated.

Bukina L.M. considers "*historical contacts of peoples, wars, establishment of international corporations and organizations, migration of peoples, the nature of relations between different nations, the high prestige of language in the world or*



*international arena, scientific and technical progress*" to be extra-linguistic factors in borrowing foreign words (Bukina, 2016, p. 92). In our opinion, apart from the factor of war, all these factors may involve a lot of borrowing in the language. This also includes integration in the cultural, educational, political and tourism services sectors. In particular, the higher education sector has been enriched in the first two decades of the 21st century with the latest borrowings indicating new methods of learning (*инсерт, синектика, синквейн* (insert, synectics, cinquain)), the names of bachelor's areas ("*Аудио-видеотехнологии*", "*Дефектология*", "*Энергетика*" ("Audio-Video Technology", "Defectology", "Energy") and master's specialities ("*Биотехнология*", "*Геотектоника и геодинамика*", "*Ихтиология и гидробиология*" ("Biotechnology", "Geo-tectonics and Geodynamics", "Ichthyology and Hydrobiology")).

In their turn, Volkov S.S. and Senko E.V. prefer the trend of "language saving", which is the replacement of long word combinations with single word names (Volkov, Senko, 1983, p. 48). For example, the word *veteran*, which often accompanies the names of older people (from Lat. *veteranus* ← *vetus* old, tried and tested) - 1) an older person who took part in a war; 2) a person who has worked for a long time in a company or field.

When investigating the reasons for borrowing, Valgina N.S. distinguishes between the following types:

1) The need to name new things, phenomena, concepts (*компьютер, факс* (computer, fax));

2) The need to differentiate notions (the player, unlike its Russian equivalent "*проигрыватель*", is equipped with headphones);

3) Necessity to specialise in concepts (*риэлтор* (realtor) - entrepreneur engaged in real estate);

4) "Established" language as the basis for a particular terminology industry (e.g. the basic computer language, sports terminology is English);

5) Need for euphemistic replacement (pediculosis instead of its Russian equivalent "*вшивость*" (lice));

6) The desire for a fashionable word with the meaning of "elitism" (a boutique instead of a Russian equivalent "*маленькая лавочка*" (small shop)) (Valgina, 2001).

Thus, the borrowing of an element of one language from another may be due to one or more reasons, and many works in Russian linguistics are devoted to this research. In our opinion, the most detailed wording of the reasons is given by Valgina N.S.

As we mentioned above, by analysing the "path" of individual borrowed units, we can obtain valuable information about the pace of language development as a whole. Thus, the Russian language, like other languages that are open to mutual contact, is experiencing a rapid process of loan penetration. In a short period of time, foreign elements, once they have fully acquired it, can move into an active vocabulary. This process can be traced back to the following concrete example, which proves the pace of language development.

For example, in her article published in 2003, Vorobyeva S.V. writes that "words and units such as *browser, chat, internet* and *on-line trading* have not yet been fully acquired by Russian" (Vorobyeva, 2003, p. 117). Now, after 16 years, we have seen that these units have been fully acquired by the Russian language in both graphic (*браузер, чат, интернет, онлайн-торговля* (browser, chat, internet, online trading)) and word-generating relationships (*браузерный, чатовый, интернетовский, интернетный, онлайн-переводчик, онлайн-игра* (browser-related, chat-related, internet-related, internet-related, online translator, online game, etc.)).

It should also be added that units such as "*on-line trading*" were named by Krysin L.P. as the words "centaurs", since they consist of different, difficult-to-compatible (and yet combined) parts. As examples, the scientist cites the words *ТВ-программа, PR-служба, IQ-тесты, PIN-код, SIM-карта, SMS-сообщение, e-mail-адрес, WWW-страницы* (TV programme, PR service, IQ tests, PIN code, SIM card, SMS, e-mail address, WWW pages (Krysin, 2010, p. 575). Of course, after 10-15 years these dictionary units ("centaurs") can be acquired by Russian, which also depends on the pace of development, "acceptance" of these units by native speakers and other circumstances.

Looking at the composition of borrowings in Russian by source language, it should be emphasised that they are dominated by units borrowed from English, the first of which were recorded in Russian by Russian ambassadors to the court of the English kings Elizabeth I and James. The reason for this was the linguistic necessity to use borrowings when drafting reports to the government, where they were used to denote subjects and concepts that did not exist in the Russian state. There are plenty of examples of such penetration into the language of "foreign" elements due to the extra-linguistic factor, in particular, diplomatic relations between peoples in each language.

At present, the vocabulary of many languages is being replenished with Anglicisms (Bukina, 2016, p. 92), the reason for which is the process of globalization covering all spheres of human life: politics, economics, culture, education,



spiritual and moral development, language (Vlasova, 2016, p. 72).

In addition, anglicisms are used in Russian not only as terms or names of concepts that do not exist in Russian reality, but also as an imitation of Western culture (Vlasova, 2016, p. 73). Indeed, especially youth slang is penetrated by a large mass of "foreign" elements, as it represents one of the most open and dynamic systems. For example, instead of the Russian word (sorry), young people began to use an anglicism *сопи* (sorry), *покупка* (shopping) is replaced by *шопингом* (shopping), *песня* (the song) is replaced by a *трек* (track), etc. In addition, anglicism began to displace not only native Russian words, but also borrowings from other languages that had long adapted to it (*прайс-лист* (price list) instead of the German word, *прейскурант* (Preiskurant); *постер* (poster) instead of the French word *плакат* (placard), *тренд* (trend) instead of Latin word *тенденция* (tendency), etc.). It should be noted that some researchers (Krysin L.P., Fedorova I.O., Levikova S.I., Rubtsova E.A., etc.) consider the trend towards foreign language borrowing as a "clogging" of the language.

However, as Valgina N.S. points out, on a wave of satisfying the needs of the language, a lot of verbal junk has surfaced that clogs the language. As an example of such "unnecessary" words, the author cites conversion lexemes *конверсия*, *стагнация*, *консенсус*, *имидж* (stagnation, consensus, image) that have a corresponding equivalent in Russian (Valgina, 2001).

Indeed, the language does not need to borrow similar, overlapping meanings of native Russian or words previously learned from one language or another. This trend, in our opinion, may cause artificial obsolescence, the transition to a passive vocabulary of native dictionary units. Speech oversaturation with borrowings, as Apresyan Yu. D. believes, "is a hallmark of semi-educated language knowledge" (Apresyan, 1992, p. 51).

In considering this question, another author notes that "people want to stand out in everything - to dress in a non-standard way, to behave in an American manner, to use in their vocabulary words, meanings of which are known only to a few" (Sidakova, 2016, p. 112). We may find the opposite in Bukina L.M., who points out that "the knowledge and use of foreign words in speech emphasises the speaker's education and erudition. This gives him some self-confidence, enhances his psychological status and emphasises his belonging to a higher status group" (Bukina, 2016, p. 96).

One can agree with all researchers in a certain sense, since nowadays, as a result of the pursuit of language fashion, some members of society allow themselves to use borrowed units, despite their stylistic unjustifiability and redundancy.

Dmitrieva O.A. notes in this regard, "Speaking about the frequency of reproduction of a language unit, it is necessary to distinguish between fashion and parasitism associated with the ultra-frequency use of a language unit, possibly fashionable" (Dmitrieva, 2014, p. 536). It was to describe such abuses of foreign words that the concept of "macaronic language" arose among people to describe speech that is replete with unjustified borrowings.

Nowadays, English is becoming the main language of communication between different peoples of the world. Moreover, its elements have become quite common in the press, and by penetrating into the "legislative lexicon" of the language they are strengthening their position. An example of this is the words *грант* (grant) and *инфраструктура* (infrastructure), which have now managed and internationalised. Let us look at the meanings of these words:

- **грант** (grant) – additional financing of institutions and cultural figures, scientific research on a competitive basis;

- **инфраструктура** (infrastructure) - (infrastructure formed from lat. infra - under, + structura - structure, order), etc.

These words have penetrated the Russian language from or through English. Examples of the use of these words in official document titles:

- Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 30 of January 30, 2019 "On the Presidential **Grants** for the development of civil society";

- Federal Law No. 214-FZ of 29 July 2017 "On conducting an experiment to develop resort **infrastructure** in the Republic of Crimea, Altai Territory, Krasnodar Territory and Stavropol Territory".

It is important to note that the meaning of the abovementioned borrowings does not cause difficulties for native speakers of the Russian language, as at present almost everybody is aware of political events, economic reforms and is interested in the latest news, which means that these foreign language words are constantly on the human ear.

At present, anglicisms are replacing not only native Russian words, but also long adapted borrowings from other languages (*сэндвич* (sandwich) instead of the German word *бутерброд* (Butterbrot); *дисплей* (display) instead of the French word *экран* (écran), etc.) (Valgina, 2001).

## CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of borrowing foreign language elements is therefore driven by the internal needs of the language and the state's ties with foreign countries. Given that the language is characterised by certain norms and restrictions, the use of borrowing in speech must also comply with the norms. First of



all, in order to avoid communication failures, it is necessary to use the units already adapted to the native language and secondly, it is necessary to pay attention to the justifiability of including a "foreign" word in speech.

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