

Lgcs 101: Historical Linguistics. Lecture Notes. Tues 6 Sept 2011.

0. Announcements

-Reminder: Assignment 1 due Thurs. Exercises 3.1 and 3.2 from the handout distributed, and Exercise 2.4 from the text.

0.1 Phonetics review: Remaining answers

1. Borrowing

1.1 It is common for one language to **borrow** (adopt) words from another language. Words that are borrowed are called **loanwords**, or **loans**.

Some well-studied cases (Campbell 2004):

- French and Scandinavian loans in English;
- Native American loans in Spanish; Spanish loans in Native American languages;
- Basque, Germanic, and Arabic loans in Spanish;
- Arabic in languages of Africa and Asia; English in Japanese.

All aspects of a grammar can be borrowed: sounds, phonological rules, grammatical morphemes, syntactic patterns, meanings, etc.

1.2 Why do languages borrow words from one another?

“More than 60% of the Old English vocabulary has disappeared, and the Norman Conquest is the greatest single reason for this.” (Trask 2007, p. 24)

1.3 Loanwords are ‘remodeled’ to fit the phonological or morphological structure of the borrowing language. This is called **nativization**.

For example, a foreign sound is often replaced by a ‘close’ phonetic equivalent:

- (1) Tagalog [piˈjesta] < Spanish *fiesta* (Bloomfield 1933).
- (2) Menomini [atamo:pen] < English *automobile* (Bloomfield 1933).
- (3) Finnish *humpuuki* ‘humbug’ < English ‘humbug’.
Finnish *parta* ‘beard’ < Germanic **bardaz*.
- (4) French and German substitutions for English [ð].
- (5) Sayula Popoluca (Mixe-Zoquean, southern Mexico) *mu:na* < Spanish *mula*.

1.4 Loans are also altered to fit the **phonotactics** of the borrowing language:

- (6) Spanish *cruz* ‘cross’ > *rus* in Chol (Mayan), *kurus* in Tzotzil (Mayan).
- (7) Tongan /aisikilimi/ < English *ice cream*.
- (8) Finnish *Ranska* ‘French’ < Swedish *Franska* ‘French’.
- (9) English loans in German can be devoiced: e.g., *Trend* with voiceless coda [t].

1.5 With enough contact, **new phonemes** can enter into the borrowing language:

- (10) English at one point had no phoneme /v/, but did have allophonic [v] between vowels, e.g., *wife/wives*. Word-initial [v] came through French loans, e.g., *very* < Fr. *vrai* ‘true’. and /v/ ultimately became phonemic.
- (11) French has borrowed many English loans with *-ing*, which many speakers now pronounce as [ɪŋ], giving French /ɪŋ/.
- (12) Bantu clicks borrowed from Khoisan languages.
- (13) The retroflex consonants of Indo-Aryan languages were likely borrowed through contact with Dravidian languages in southern India.

1.6 New **phonotactics** can enter the language as well;

- (14) Native Finnish words permit no initial consonant clusters, but through intimate contact with Swedish and English now permits loans like *krokotiili* ‘crocodile’.

1.7 Substitutions are not always uniform, though there may be patterns. Irregularities can be due to a number of factors, e.g., different timing of borrowings (more intensive contact can result in less-nativized forms); influence from orthography.

- (15) Tzotzil (Mayan) *pulatu* < Spanish ‘plate, dish’, reborrowed later as *platu*.
- (16) Finnish *jeeppi* [jɛ:pi] based on spelling of English *jeep*.

Exercises 2.2, 2.6

1.8 Sometimes loans are made to sound **more** foreign (**hyper-foreignization**).

- (17) In English, *Azerbaijan* and *Beijing* pronounced with [ʒ], rather than [dʒ]; *coup de grace* pronounced without the final consonant of *grace*.

There are many different kinds of language contact situations, and the outcome of borrowing will vary according to: length/intensity of contact, social/political dynamics between populations, degree of bilingualism between populations.

1.9 Loans can also be altered to fit the **morphological type** of the recipient lg:

- (18) Turkish has borrowed heavily from Arabic, but the two differ in morphological type. Turkish is highly agglutinating, whereas Arabic verbs consist of only consonants, and inflect using vowel patterns (*katab* 'he wrote' vs *kutib* 'it was written'). To get around these differences, Turkish borrows the nominal form of a verb, and combines it with a dummy verb, *etmek* 'do'. Thus: from Arabic *ispat*, Turkish *ispat etmek* 'prove'. Similarly, *nakavt etmek* 'to knockout' from Eng. 'knockout'.
- (19) Arabic *resibo* 'receipt' (singular), but *rūaseb* (plural) < Spanish *recibo*.
- (20) Arabic *bābor* 'a steamship', but plural *buāber* < Spanish *vapor* /bapor/
Compare Modern Arabic *bābūr* 'steamship', *bwābūr* (plural).

1.10 A **calque** or **loan translation** is a new word created by translating a foreign word or phrase morpheme-by-morpheme. Examples:

- (21) English *black market* from German *SchwarzMarkt*.
- (22) English *almighty* based on Latin *omnipotens* 'all + powerful'.
gospel < *gōdspell* (*gōd* 'good' + *spel* 'news'), based on Latin *evangelium* from Greek *eu-aggelion* 'good-news'
- (23) *Railroad*; Finnish *rauta-tie* ('iron-road'); Ger. *Eisenbahn*; Fr. *chemin de fer*; Sp. *ferro-carril* ('iron-lane/way'); Swedish *järnväg*.

1.11 **Phonological rules** can also be borrowed:

- (24) Borrowed stress rules: first syllable stress of many of the languages of the Baltic area; stress on the vowel before the last C in a word shared by several unrelated Native American languages of southern Mexico and Guatemala.
- (25) Vowel harmony borrowed into several Greek dialects < Turkish.

1.12 **Morphology** can be borrowed:

- (26) The suffix *-able* comes from French loans (*equitable, legible, potable*).
- (27) Agentive *-er* comes from Latin loans.
- (28) The periphrastic comparative 'more A' in English comes from French 'plus A', now co-existing with the native *-er* suffixation (A-er).

1.13 **Syntax** can be borrowed:

- (29) Vietnamese may have become more isolating through contact with Chinese.

1.14 **Word meaning** can be borrowed.

Loan shift = changing the meaning of an existing native word to accommodate the meaning of a foreign word.

- (30) Old English *Heofen* 'sky';
hel 'underworld';
god 'non-Christian deity'

Latin *caelum* 'sky'/'Christian heaven';
inferna 'abode of the dead/Christian hell';
deus 'deity/God'.

1.16 **Basic vocabulary** words are **less** likely to be borrowed. These are high-frequency vocabulary items including: pronouns, lower numerals, kinship terms, names of body parts, simple verbs, color terms, simple adjectives, names of natural phenomena, function words like *and, or, if, when*.

English looks more like German with respect to basic vocabulary:

(31)	Eng	Fr	Ger	(Hock & Joseph 2009)
	<i>I</i>	<i>je</i>	<i>ich</i>	
	<i>she</i>	<i>elle</i>	<i>sie</i>	
	<i>it</i>	<i>il</i>	<i>es</i>	
	<i>do</i>	<i>faire</i>	<i>tun</i>	
	<i>be</i>	<i>être</i>	<i>sein</i>	
	<i>eat</i>	<i>manger</i>	<i>essen</i>	
	<i>drink</i>	<i>boire</i>	<i>trinken</i>	
	<i>earth</i>	<i>terre</i>	<i>Erde</i>	
	<i>sky</i>	<i>ciel</i>	<i>Himmel</i>	
	<i>and</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>und</i>	
	<i>to</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>zu</i>	
	<i>of</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>von</i>	

There are exceptions: English *face* < French; *give, sky, they* from Old Norse.

1.17 Consequences of borrowing for reconstruction

Borrowing can cause problems for reconstruction. Relatively recent loans from unrelated, or distantly-related, languages are generally recognizable as loans. However, loans from a closely-related language can be difficult to recognize.

Consider Sinaugoro and Motu, both languages of Papua New Guinea:

(32)	Sinaugoro	Motu	Crowley/Bowern (2010)
	ɣita	ita	'see'
	ɣutu	utu	'lice'
	ɣate	ate	'liver'
	ɣulita	urita	'octopus'
	tuliya	turia	'bone'
	ɣatoi	ɣatoi	'egg'
	leɣi	rei	'long grass'

Borrowing from a closely related language can also result in what appear to be multiple reflexes of the same ancestral word:

- (33) In English, the regular reflex of **sk* is *ʃ*. But alongside *shin*, we have *skin*, alongside *shirt*, we have *skirt*, *ship* and *skiff*. This is not because of a sporadic change from **sk* > *ʃ*; rather, **sk* > *ʃ* regularly in English, while the *sk* words later borrowed from northern Germanic languages (from Trask)

In some cases, borrowing is so extensive that linguists are confused as to which family a language belongs to: "The Maisin language of Oro Province in Papua New Guinea has been variously described by linguists as being Austronesian with considerable non-Austronesian influence, non-Austronesian with considerable Austronesian influence, and finally as a truly mixed language. The confusion has arisen because whatever conclusion we come to, we must recognize that there has been massive copying of vocabulary from some outside source." (Crowley 2010)

The borrowed cognates need to be ruled out for comparative reconstruction.

1.18 How to identify loans

-Phonological cues (words that contain non-native sounds or phonotactics are strong candidates for loans);

-Geographical/ecological/semantic cues. E.g., *zebra*, *aardvark*. *powwow*.

1.19 Loans as clues to older stages of a language

Loans can help document older stages of a language, before later changes took place. In particular, loans can provide clues about the phonetic nature of the original sounds at the time of the borrowing, as well as the timing of later sound changes.

Examples from Campbell (2004):

- (34) Spanish used to contrast *b* and *v*, but the two merged to *b* in modern Spanish. Spanish loans in Native American languages preserve the contrast:
- (a) *nabos* 'turnips' borrowed as K'iche' *napuf*, Tzotzil *napuf*.
 - (b) *jabón* 'soap' (phonetically [ʃabón] in the 16th century) borrowed as Chol *ʃapum*, Huastec *ʃabu:n*, Motocintlec *ʃa:puh*, Tzeltal *ʃapon*.
 - (c) *navajas* 'knives' borrowed as Akateko *nawas*, Q'anjobal *nawus*, Tzotzil *navaʃaf*.
 - (d) *clavos* 'nails' borrowed as Akateko *lawuf*, Chol *lawuf*, K'iche' *klawuf*.
- (35) Finnish *patja* 'mattress' < Proto-Germanic **badja* 'bed'. In Germanic, **badja* > *bedja*, by umlaut, and *-ja* was then lost, yielding *bed*. Only the umlaut form is preserved in modern Germanic languages. The pre-umlaut stage can be reconstructed from comparison with other branches of IE; the Finnish loans support this reconstruction.
- (36) Finnish *rengas* 'ring' is borrowed from Germanic **hreng-az*. All attested Germanic languages show only forms with *i*, e.g., *ring*. Finnish *kuningas* 'king' is borrowed from Germanic **kuning-az*. This suggests that *e*, *i* once contrasted before *n*, but were later neutralized to *i* in this position, after the word was borrowed.

Examples from Bloomfield (1933):

- (37) The name *Caesar* appears in Germanic as Old High German *keisur*, OE *casere*, Old Saxon *kēsur*. Compare Italian *cesare* [čezare]. These loans suggest that at the time of contact between Rome and Germanic peoples, Latin *k* had not yet changed. In Old Bulgarian, *Caesar* appears [tse:sari], borrowed from Germanic. It can be determined independently that **aj > e:* and **k > ts* in Proto-Slavic. The loan thus dates these changes to a time **after** borrowing from Germanic (which can be dated at between 250-450 AD, based on what is known about contact between the languages).
- (38) In the early Christian era, Latin [w] was borrowed into Germanic as [w]: *vinum* [wi:num] 'wine' > OE *win* [wi:n]. In the early Middle Ages, Latin [w] > [v]. From the 7th century on, [v] is borrowed as [f] in Germanic: Latin *versus* is borrowed into Germanic as *fers* (English now has *verse*, German *Vers* [fe:rs].)

Loans can also provide evidence of the chronology of sound changes:

- (39) Proto-Mayan **ko:ŋ* > Cholan (Mayan) *čon*.
Mocho (Mayan) *čoj* 'to sell' is borrowed from Cholan *čon*.

1.20 The role of prestige in borrowing

In the history of English (from Hock & Joseph):

-4th-6th centuries AD: Germanic tribes begin to migrate to England. They settle; their language is Old English. Little borrowing into English from Celtic languages; borrowing limited to names for places (e.g., *London*), topography (e.g., *crag*)

-Large number of borrowings from Old Norse, including basic vocabulary (*they, their, them, give, like, take*); in some cases borrowing alongside native words, e.g., *skin/shin, skirt/shirt*. Lexical meanings do not differ in social connotations (e.g., *to raise* vs. *to rear*).

-Heavy borrowing from French; basic vocabulary unaffected. Social connotations reflect higher prestige.

-Little borrowing from Native American languages; borrowing limited to names of places (*Illinois, Michigan*), animals (*woodchuck, moose*).

1.21 Social attitudes and nativization

Icelandic, Chinese resistant to direct borrowing.

How is this related to linguistic nationalism?

References

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Hock, H. H. and B. D. Joseph. 2009. *Language History, Language Change, and Language Relationship*, 2nd Edition. Mouton de Gruyter.