

**Lgcs 101: Historical Linguistics.** Lecture Notes. Thurs 8 Sept 2011.

### 0. Announcements

- Read for next Tuesday: Chapter 3 from *Trask's Historical Linguistics*.
- Assignment 2 (Due next Thurs): 2.4 (Proto-Slavic to Russian) and 2.5 (Dravidian).

### 1. Borrowing recap

- When two languages come into contact, speakers borrow words (loans/loanwords).
- Loans are often nativized to fit the grammar of the borrowing lg (nativization).
  - Foreign sounds are replaced by a 'close' equivalent.
  - Sequences of sounds are altered to fit the phonotactics of the borrowing lg.
- More intensive contact can result in less-nativized forms.
- With enough contact, new phonemes/phonotactics can be adopted.
- In the case of **calques**, words are borrowed by a morpheme-by-morpheme translation; no nativization occurs.
- Basic vocabulary words are less likely to be borrowed (but there are exceptions.)
- Loans can help document older stages of a lg, before later changes occurred.
- Loans can help track the chronology of changes.

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

- (1) 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'.
- (2) Arabic *resibo* 'receipt' (singular), but *rūaseb* (plural) < Spanish *recibo*.
- (3) Arabic *bābor* 'a steamship', but plural *buāber* < Spanish *vapor* /*bapor*/  
Compare Modern Arabic *bābūr* 'steamship', *bwābūr* (plural).

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

- (4) First syllable stress in many of the languages of the Baltic area.
- (5) Vowel harmony borrowed into several Greek dialects < Turkish.

**1.12 Morphology** can be borrowed:

- (6) The suffix *-able* comes from French loans (*equitable, legible, potable*).
- (7) Agentive *-er* comes from Latin loans.
- (8) 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:

- (9) 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.

- (10) 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'.

**1.20 The role of prestige in borrowing.** Prestige plays a role in determining the kinds of words borrowed and the quantity of borrowings.

### 1.21 Social attitudes and nativization

English has a strong tendency to borrow directly; Icelandic tends to calque.

## 2. Sound change exercises: solutions

### 371. Old Icelandic

#### Umlaut

\*o: > ö: / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> i

Long mid back rounded tense vowels → front / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> high front vowel

Umlaut must apply before the high vowel deletes. The form in (7), 'fury', also has shortening: \*o: > ö. This is the only case in which the high vowel is preserved.

### 372. Old Icelandic

#### Raising/Rounding

\*a > ɔ / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> u

Low vowel → mid round / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> high back vowel

Note that this rule must apply before the high back vowel is deleted.

### 373. Spanish

#### Fronting/Raising

\*a > e / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> i/e

Low back vowel → front mid / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> front non-low vowels

There appear to be two rules deleting front non-low vowels: one resolves vowel hiatus, deleting the first of two adjacent vowels, and the second is apocope, deleting word-final front mid vowels. The first must be crucially ordered **before** the Fronting/Raising rule, as examples like (1) show, while the second is crucially ordered **after** the Fronting/Raising rule, as examples like (13) show.

### 374. Old High German

#### Raising

\*i > e / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub> e/a

High front tense vowel → mid / \_\_ C<sub>0</sub>-[non-syllabic] non-high V

Here too, Raising must apply before the loss of the conditioning non-high V. Forms like (14), *sibzia*, indicate that non-syllabic vowels block the rule from applying, hence the specification that C be [non-syllabic].

### 377. Rumanian

#### Apocope

\*u > Ø / \_\_ #, unless the word ends in a consonant cluster comprising an obstruent and a sonorant.

Note that the rule states that apocope applies unless its output would produce an illegal coda consonant cluster (obstruent + sonorant).