

Lgcs 101: Historical Linguistics. Lecture Notes. 25 Feb 2010.

0. Announcements

-Assignment 3: Exercises 3.1, 3.2, 3.5.

1. Borrowing

So far, we've looked at three types of language change: **sound change**, **analogical change**, and **morphological change**.

Languages can also change through **borrowing**, where one language (the **recipient** language) borrows some linguistic property from another (the **donor** language). Usually there is some degree of **bilingualism** in both languages.

Sounds, phonological rules, grammatical morphemes (like suffixes), syntactic patterns, etc. can all be borrowed.

Words that are borrowed are called **loanwords**. E.g., English *pork* (< French *porc*), *beef* (French < *bœuf*). Extensively studied cases: French and Scandinavian loans in English; Germanic and Baltic loans in Finnish; Basque, Germanic, and Arabic loans in Spanish; Native American loans in Spanish, and Spanish loans in Native American languages; Turkic in Hungarian; English in Japanese; Arabic in languages of Africa and Asia. (p. 63)

Why do languages borrow from one another?

How do languages borrow from one another?

Loanwords are often **nativized**, that is, 'remodeled' to fit the phonological and morphological structure of the borrowing language (the process is called **nativization**.)

Adaptation (phoneme substitution) = a foreign sound in a borrowed word is replaced by the nearest phonetic equivalent to it in the borrowing language.

E.g., Finnish *parta* 'beard' < Germanic **bardaz*, and *humpuuki* 'humbug' < *humbug*. Finnish *kahvi* 'coffee' < Swedish *kaffe*.

Accommodation of foreign phonological patterns.

E.g., Spanish *cruz* 'cross' borrowed as *rus* in Chol (Mayan) and *kurus* in Tzotzil (Mayan). Finnish *Ranska* 'French' < Swedish *Franska* 'French'.

If there is enough contact (though length of interaction and degree of bilingualism) new phonemes can be introduced into the borrowing language. E.g., English *rouge*, *very* (< French *vrai* 'true').

Substitutions are not always regular/uniform, though there may be patterns. This is due to a number of factors: (i) different timing of borrowings; more intensive contact can result in less nativized forms; (ii) borrowings are based on pronunciation usually, but also can be based on orthography.

Loanwords can be nativized to fit the morphology of the recipient language. E.g., Turkish has borrowed heavily from Arabic, but the two have very different verbal morphologies. Arabic verbs consist only of consonants, and inflect via internal changes (*katab* 'he wrote' vs *kutib* 'it was written.') Turkish is highly agglutinative. Rather than directly borrowing verbs, Turkish borrows the corresponding noun, and combines it with a dummy verb, *etmek* 'do'. Thus: *ispat etmek* 'prove' from Arabic *ispat* 'proof'. Similarly, *nakavt etmek* 'to knockout' from English 'knockout'. (Trask 2009, p. 27).

How can loanwords be identified, and the direction of borrowing determined?

- (a) Phonological cues (words that contain non-native sounds or phonotactics).
- (b) Morphological complexity (the morphologically complex case is the donor). E.g. *aardvark* < Afrikaans *aard* 'earth' + *vark* 'pig'.
- (c) Clues from cognates.
- (d) Geographical and ecological cues. E.g., *zebra*, *aardvark*.
- (e) Semantic cues. E.g., *powwow*.

Do: Exercises 3.3, 3.6.