

Borrowing

1. Some borrowings in English

- (1) *catsup* < *ketjap* (Dutch) < *ke:chap* (Malay) < *kôe-chiap* ‘brine of pickled shellfish’ (Chinese)
chocolate < *chocolate* (Spanish) < /ʃokola:tl/ (Nahuatl)
coffee < *kahveh* (Turkish) < *qahwa* (Arabic)
potato < *patata* (Spanish) < *patata* (Taino)
sugar < *çucré* (Old French) < *sukkar* (Arabic)
tomato < *tomate* (Spanish) < *tomatl* (Nahuatl)

Borrowings because of *need*:

New items need words to go along with them - accounts for why some words are similar in many languages:

- (2) *tobacco*, *tupakka* (Finnish), *tembakau* (Indonesian), *tabako* (Japanese), ... < *taba:q* (Arabic)

Borrowings because of *prestige*:

For various reasons, another language can have prestige associated with it; borrowings will attest to that prestige, ‘luxury loans’:

- (3) Norman French was the language of the ruling class in England from 1066-1300 - many French words were borrowed into English; e.g. *pork* (< *porc* ‘pig’), *beef* (< *bœuf* ‘ox’), *cuisine* (< *cuisine* ‘kitchen’).
- (4) Anglicisms in Spanish; e.g. *beisbol*, *chatear*, *flipar*, *eslip*, *choped*, ...
- (5) Prestige associated with an underclass, e.g. English *pal* < *pal* ‘brother’ (Romani), Bolivian Spanish diminutive /-y/ e.g. *Mamitay* ‘Mommy’ < Quechua, Spanish *chabal* ‘dude’ < Caló.
- (6) Negative or pejorative borrowing: French *hâbler* ‘brag’ < *hablar* ‘speak’ (Spanish), Finnish *koni* ‘old horse, nag’ < *kon’* ‘horse’ (Russian)

2. How words are borrowed

In short-term, or casual contact, borrowings are adapted to fit the receiving language’s phonology and morphology:

- (7) Finnish *parta* ‘beard’ < **bardaz* (Proto-Germanic) Finnish lacks voiced stops
 Sayula Pololuca (Mixe-Zoquean) *kúnu:f* < *cruz* (Spanish) Sayula Pololuca lacks /r/ and /l/

This can lead to unpacking:

- (8) Finnish *pihvi* < *beef* (English) - Finnish lacks voiced stops, and [f]

Also, accommodation to syllable structure:

- (9) Rol (Mayan) *rus* < *cruz* ‘cross’ Spanish – cluster reduction

When there is long-term contact, borrowings can alter the receiving language’s phonology:

- (10) English *rouge* < French, added the phoneme /ʒ/ to English; English originally had [v] only as an allophone of /f/ (e.g. *wife* ~ *wives*); loans from French, e.g. *very* < *vrai*, added /v/ and phonemesized [v].

Morphological adaptation:

- (11) Arabic *risibou* (sg.), *ruʔa:sib* (pl.) < Spanish *recibo* ‘receipt’
ba:bur (sg.), *buʔa:bir* (pl.) < Spanish *vapor* ‘steamship’

Swahili *kitab* (sg.), *vitab* (pl.) < Arabic *kitab* ‘book’ (pl. *kutub*)
kipilefi (‘roadsign, sg.’), *vipilefti* (pl.) < English ‘keep left’

3. How to tell a loanword

Unusual phonological pattern

- (12) Nahuatl words don’t begin with /p/ (Proto-Aztec *p > h > Ø; e.g. **pa* > *a* ‘water’) hence, *petla* ‘mat’ is a borrowing (< Mixe-Zoquean **pata*)

Morphological complexity – clue to the direction of the borrowing:

- (13) English *alligator* < *el lagarto* (Spanish)
 English *vinegar* < *vin+aigre* ‘sour wine’ (French)
 English *aardvark* < *aard+vark* ‘earth pig’ (Afrikaans)
 Spanish *albondiga* < *al-bunduqa* (Arabic ‘ball’)

However, systematic compound reduction:

- (14) Spanish *choped* < *chopped ham* (English)
Filis < *Phillips sole saver* (English)

Also, folk etymology, sometimes leading to apparent morphological complexity:

- (15) English *crayfish* < *crevice* (French)

Clues from cognates

- (16) When a group of cognates is well known, a similar word in another, unrelated, language may well be a borrowing, e.g. Spanish *ganso* < Germanic **gans* (cf. French *oie*, Italian *oca* < Latin *ānser*)

Geographical and cultural items

When a word refers to an item (e.g. plant, animal) from another geographical region, or a cultural artifact from another culture, it may well be a borrowing:

- (17) English *impala* < Zulu
Spanish *aljibe* < Arabic

Borrowings can provide clues to earlier sound changes – sometimes out of range of reconstruction.

- (18) It turns out that **e* > *i*/ __n in Proto-Germanic – since this happened early on, there is no evidence for the earlier **e* in any attested Germanic language. However, Finnish *rengas* ‘ring’ and *kuningas* ‘king’ provide evidence for an earlier **e*/**i* contrast.

- (19) Up until around the 16th century, Spanish contrasted /b/ and /v/ - these merged into a single phoneme /b/. Loan words in some Native American languages show the contrast:

Chol (Mayan) /ʃapum/ ‘soap’ < /ʃabon/ (Old Spanish *xabon*, Modern Spanish /xabon/
jabón, ‘soap’
/kawaju/ ‘horse’ < /kavajo/ Old Spanish *cavallo*, Modern Spanish
/kabajo/ *caballo*, ‘horse’)

4. Non-lexical borrowings:

- (20) Sounds/phonemes (e.g. /z/ in English; phonemicization of /v/)
- (21) Clicks in some Bantu languages (from neighboring Khoisan languages)
- (22) Rules – e.g. Greek dialects in Asia Minor acquired Turkish-like vowel harmony
- (23) Diffused sound changes – a sound change may ‘jump’ genetic lines and diffuse over an area where unrelated languages are spoken (‘areal effect’). E.g. *k* > *tʃ*/ __V_{front} diffused throughout S. India, effecting both Dravidian languages (Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam) as well as Indo-European languages (Marathi).

(24) Calques – loan translations:

- English *black market* < *Schwarzmarkt* (German)
 gospel < *gōd+spel* ‘good news’ (O. English) < *evangelium* ‘good news’
 (Latin) < *eu-aggleion* ‘good message’ (Greek)
- Spanish *rascacielos* < *skyscraper* (English)
 llamar p’trás < *call back* (English)