

Lexicological Influence through Language Contacts

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Abstract

Language contacts can be studied in three directions: a) language acquisition; b) language borrowing; c) translation. In this project all of the three directions are investigated. The process of language borrowing is analysed on four levels: phonological, morphological, semantic, and syntactic. During the borrowing process, language model adaptation takes place. The adaptation of a model (a foreign word) shows two kinds of changes: primary and secondary changes, which take place on all four levels. The adaptation on the quoted levels is carried out according to the three types of transphonemisation (zero, compromise and free), three types of transmorphemisation (zero, compromise and complete) and according to the degree of change of meaning on a semantic level. In terms of impact languages have on one another, one has to assert that lexis and phonetics are the language branches most subject to changes. Syntax comes next, followed by morphology, which resists outer impacts the longest. People borrow not only words as such, but also full syntactic constructions. Today's linguistics terms the phenomena as calques (or loan translations), derived from the French word *calquer* ("to copy"). It is a term used in comparative and historical linguistics to indicate the type of borrowing in which the morphemic constituents of borrowed words or phrases are translated into the equivalent morphemes of another language item by item. This division is essentially methodological due to inseparability of three linguistic realms within the linguistic sign, which, even when it comes to integration of lexical loans, stand in a link of mutual dependence and interaction.

Keywords: languages in contact, linguistic borrowing, primary and secondary adaptation, indirect borrowing, direct borrowing, foreign word, foreign loan, loanword

Resumen

Los contactos entre lenguas se pueden estudiar en tres direcciones: a) adquisición del lenguaje; b) préstamos de idiomas; c) traducción. En este proyecto, se investigan las tres direcciones. El proceso de préstamo de idiomas se analiza en cuatro niveles: fonológico, morfológico, semántico y sintáctico. Durante el proceso de préstamo, se lleva a cabo la adaptación del modelo de lenguaje. La adaptación de un modelo (una palabra extranjera) muestra dos tipos de cambios: primarios y secundarios, que tienen lugar en los cuatro niveles. La adaptación en los niveles citados se lleva a cabo de acuerdo con los tres tipos de transfonemización (cero, compromiso y libre), tres tipos de transmorfemización (cero, compromiso y completo) y de acuerdo con el grado de cambio de significado en un nivel semántico. En términos del impacto que los lenguajes tienen entre sí, uno tiene que afirmar que el léxico y la fonética son las ramas del lenguaje más sujetas a cambios. La sintaxis viene después, seguida por la morfología, que resiste los impactos externos por más tiempo. La gente toma prestadas no solo palabras como tal, sino también construcciones sintácticas completas. La lingüística de hoy denomina los fenómenos como calcos (o traducciones de préstamos), derivados de la palabra francesa "calquer" (copiar-calcar). Es un término usado en lingüística comparativa e histórica para indicar el tipo de préstamo en el que los constituyentes morféimicos de palabras o frases prestadas se traducen elemento por elemento a los morfemas equivalentes de otro idioma. Esta división es esencialmente metodológica debido a la inseparabilidad de tres dominios lingüísticos dentro del signo lingüístico, que, incluso cuando se trata de integración de préstamos léxicos, se encuentran en un vínculo de dependencia e interacción mutuas.

Palabras clave: idiomas en contacto, préstamos lingüísticos, adaptación primaria y secundaria, préstamos indirectos, préstamos directos, palabras extranjeras, préstamos extranjeros, palabras prestadas

Language contacts are always a result of historical and cultural bonds, and Montenegrin Roman influence and permeation lasted from the very beginnings of Montenegrin history, opening ways to Mediterranean culture, being one of the important constituents of Montenegrin cultural identity.

In order to indicate full significance of these effects, both synchronic and diachronic aspects need to be considered. Regardless of the moment of its

development, language is always a result of historical processes that determine its structure and properties.

Linguistic diversity of the world is relevant in the overall ethnological and cultural diversity among human communities. There is no common opinion among scientists on the subject, as to when the human species developed language skills, or even whether it happened abruptly, as a result of a genetic mutation, or due to a long-term process that could have lasted for

hundreds of thousands of years. Language changes occur unevenly in time and space; if a group of people migrates far enough, the language of that group will evolve in a different manner in relation to the language of the group that did not migrate. We can rest assured that languages emerged and disappeared in the past as well as today.

In essence, each language classification is similar: some group members are joined to certain subgroups with respect to elements shared by all members of respective subgroups. Scientific classification is differentiated from day-to-day classification by certain elements according to which are performed and are relevant in terms of identity of the classified items.

Two languages are genetically related provided that they have sprung from the same primordial language. It follows that, for the genetic relatedness of languages, what happened with them during their history is of vital importance. Language family is the name we use to identify a set of languages that have probably evolved from the identical primordial language. Indo-European languages belong to the same language family, since it has been proved that their common primordial language, Indo-European, was in fact their language ancestor. One should emphasize that within a language family we place all languages shown to originate from the same primordial language, because, otherwise, we would have to regard Slavic languages, Romance, Celtic, etc., as language families, being that they share a common primordial language, as proven before.

Complexity of language issues and their relation to other human activities is reflected through existence of

a number of scientific disciplines that were founded precisely on the verge of linguistics and other sciences. Those are sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, philosophy of language, applied linguistics and those related thereof.

Human language history shows that there is no such language that has not been exposed to contact with other languages during its historical development. These contacts could have been made by various means – migrations, military assaults, colonisation, within ethno-linguistic enclaves, through education or expansions of international languages. The results were different – from borrowing solely a few words to the creation of brand new languages. This was substantially influenced by internal factors (types of relationships between languages, particularly typological relatedness), but also by social and psychological factors (intensity and duration of contact between language communities, and by their size and prestige of relationship). It is well known that the languages within the Balkan Peninsula (particularly Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian and Modern Greek), belonging to different branches of Indo-European, exhibit many similarities, not only in lexis, but also in morphology, syntax, idioms, even in phonetics, which is attempted to be explained by the action of mutual substratum.

Romance lexical influence on many European languages and dialects, among which stand the Montenegrin dialects, comes as a result of their centuries old presence in these regions, and their huge impact in various epochs.

At its zenith, the Roman Empire stretched from the east to the west along a territory of five thousand

kilometres, and from the north to the south three thousand two hundred kilometres. The entire Romania, i.e. the totality of Roman countries from a linguistic point of view, is divided into two: the east and the west.

The east encompasses the Balkan region, including Romania and remnants of Romanian dialects, whereas the west encompasses Roman lands of today's southern and western Europe: Italy (save the Slovenian and Croatian part of Istria, Gorički kraj, Slovenian parts of province Venezia Giulia and Lastovo), cantons Grisons, Vaud, Neuchâtel in Switzerland, (namely, Italian, French, and a so-called Romansh, a part of Switzerland), France (save the land of Baska) and Portugal.

Both Romanias today are geographically disconnected. South-Slavic countries were squeezed in between. In terms of linguistics, Roman dialects, that used to connect both Romanias, were employed in medieval Dalmatian and Istrian cities. They used to form a connection with dialects in the Friuli region and with the Venetians.

The rise of the Venetian Republic in Istria and Dalmatia disrupted the connection as reflected in the cities where the Venetian dialect suppressed the primarily older Romance language in the province that had developed there in the Byzantine age. South-Slavic villages boosted the breaking of the link by introducing a new, non-Roman population, which surged into the cities and their surroundings.

This group includes Romanian, and the now-vanished (Old) Dalmatian language.

Latin loanwords in the Albanian language are of great importance for making a comparison. The Balkan Peninsula

was, with the exception of Dacia, superficially romanised; much of it remained entirely Greek. The connection with the Roman centre was broken in the fifth century, at the latest. Dane Kristian Sandfeld, in his work titled *Linguistique balkanique*, summarised the observations nineteenth century linguistics already tackled, in particular, by the Slovenian linguist Franc Miklošič.

In the Balkan Peninsula, languages that coexist are genetically related: three Slavic, Greek, one Romance, and one Albanian, probably the last relic of the Illyrian language group. The listed languages exhibit significant common features.

According to Skok, pre-Slavic languages in the Balkans are as follows: the Vulgar Latin, from which Romanian has been preserved to this day Illyrian-Thracian, resulting in today's Albanian (Arnaic), and the Old Greek, which in the present phase of its name is called New Hellenic, or Modern Greek, or Rumanian. The last name originates from the Byzantine age.

Slavic borrowings from Latin have a certain value for Romanists, in particular for the reconstruction of, the so-called Balkan identity, which Latin elements of Albanian and Modern Greek stem from, and from which today's Romanian and Old Dalmatian Romance language evolved.

These loanwords are not a significant issue for Romanists, as they are for Germanists. Their importance decreases, since for many Slavic Latinisms (*as for cesarь, vrt, ocat, kotao, kuhinja, tresnja, kupovati, etc.*) it is claimed, by more or less right, that they had not entered Slavic languages directly via the Romans, but the Germans, especially the Goths, who arrived at the Danube frontier and came

into contact with the Romans first rather than the Slavs.

This fact indicates the very name the Slavs give to the Romans. The general Slavic term for them is not of Roman, but of Germanic origin. Vlach (Vlah) is derived from Germanic *walhoz*, the latter from the name of the Celtic people Volcae, who at the time of first contacts between Romans and Germans, were their closest neighbours.

According to these data, the Slavs learnt about the Romans via the Germans. However, according to Skok, when things are considered up close, this is true only to some extent. Therefore, according to Skok (1940):

[...] it is possible, that in the Slavic languages, especially those of the northwest and south, there are words of Vulgar Latin origin of late period, say from sixth and seventh century, according to the theory before the arrival of Hungarians in Pannonia, before the founding of the first Romanian principalities and before the colonising of the Bavarian Alpine countries, and that the northern Slavdom was not separated from the southern as it is today, hence, before the individual establishment of Romance languages” (p. 130).

Indeed, Vulgar Latin *castellu(m)*, a diminutive form of *castrum*, is to be found in South-Slavic’s *kostel* in its original meaning, and in the Czech and Polish meaning of “church”.

There are other words, such as: *vinum* > *vino* (wine), *oleum* > *ulje* (oil), *lactuka* > *ločika*, *rapa* (croat.) > *repa* (tur-nip), *graecus* > *grk* (Greek), *paganus* > *pogan* (pagan, peasant), *casulla* > *košulja*

(shirt), etc., words mainly found in northern Slavic languages.

The first penetration period of Latin words into Slavic languages encompasses South-Slavic words stemming from the Balkan Latin provenance, as listed above, but which have not entered the northern Slavic languages: *ratione* > *račun* (reason, count), *calendae* > *koleda* (carol), *rosalia* > *rusalje* (rose festivity), *altare* > *oltar* (altar), *radicem* > *rotkva* (radish), *menta* > *metvica* (mint), *molinum* > *mlin* (mill), *calce* > *klak* (clack), *camara* > *komora* (chamber), *fo-catia* (or-*cea*) > *pogača* (type of bread), *laurum* > *lovor* (laurel), *pavone* > *paun* (peacock), *sapone* > *sapun* (soap), *per-sica* > *breskva*, *praskva* (peach).

This, as a result, raises the question of whether the South-Slavic dialects preserved something of the Balkan Vulgar Latin. The following words are used everyday, as exemplified in: *račun*, *košulja*, etc, derived from the purely Latin *ratio*, accusative case *rationem*, *casulla*. This brings us to believe that our ancestors, who were great tradesmen, acquired a great deal of cultural and culture-related words from the Balkan Romans. Culture-related words did not stem solely from the Balkan-Latin provenance, but from those with regard to folklore as well. These are *koleda*, *carol*, followed by the Bulgarian *rusalje*, etc. *Koleda* was derived from the Latin *calendae*, and beyond a calendar-related meaning, the word denoted a song or carol, sung in cycles. *Rusalje* comes from the Latin *rosalia*, marking a beginning of rose festivities. These examples give viable evidence about the source, as they play an important role in the folklore of the nations of Roman descent (Caraman, 1933, p. 146).

The relations between the Slavs and Romans existed not only during the first settlements in the Balkans; they remained vibrant to this day.

It is not just the question of strong influence, as the Venetian influence was, which was intensively exercised from the fourteenth century until the fall of the Republic under Napoleon. The reason this influence was intensive within our Adriatic belt is due to prestige (Skok, 1940: 6).

Romance study is not just a matter of Roman impact resulting from prestigious law, but one coming to existence under the law of symbiosis. In the nineteenth century, Romance loanwords penetrated into our language in two ways: directly via Romance-Slavic linguistic symbiosis on the east coast of the Adriatic, and indirectly through the German language, i.e. through the influence of Vienna and Austria in the west. This occurred because the cultural centres of the Adriatic coast shifted towards inland, consequently forming brand new areas of influence of Romance loanwords (Jernej 1998:60-61).

The influence of Romanisms, passing on the east coast of the Adriatic, i.e. via direct contact between two language groups, primarily appertained to “non-technical” terms, such as (as listed by Jernej), *čâr* (*it. chiaro*) “*jasan*” (*clear*), *kòntenat* (*it. contento*) “*zadovoljan*” (*conten(ed)*), *ečèlenat* (*it. eccellente*) “*izvrstan*” (*excellent*), *kàntat* (*it. cantare*) “*pjevati*” (*sing*), etc., for which there are authentic terms in the standard language of ancient origin. For that reason, such Romance loanwords could not penetrate further inland,

or enter the standard language, and, thus, were compressed inside a narrow area along the coast, doomed to die out (Jernej, 1998, pp. 65-66).

The fate of “Austro-Italian” words (so called by Jernej) is different, however, exhibiting a greater degree of expansion and tending to suppress the Dalmatian-Italian forms in all areas of standard language, and even in those cases where both variants, the “northern” and the “southern” entered the standard language. As an example, Jernej is the name of the famous mask from the Italian *comedia dell’arte*, entering the south directly via the Italian term *arlecchino*>*Arlekin* (Harlequin), whilst on the north it entered via the German form *Harlekin*>*Harlekin*.

According to Jernej, the latter suppresses the former (Jernej himself is, nonetheless, somewhat reserved about this observation). As for the other types he mentions, Jernej is undoubtedly right in his assertion that the northern form of *maska* suppresses the southern *maškara*, the form *menza* suppresses *mensa*, *gitara-kitara*, *violina-violin*, etc. (Jernej, 1998, p. 67).

Italianisms, which for the last hundred years penetrated into the standard language, and in this way reached the dialects in Montenegro, are for the most part related to the regions where the Italian language dominated Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth century and expanded to all European languages. Most numerous are the commercial and banking terms (*banka*, *konto*, *bilans*, *kredit*, *bankrotirati*, etc.), as the territory of present-day Italy was the first country in the Middle Ages which introduced a sort of money-commodity exchange relation, in a country where the first

European banks and credit institutes were established. Music-related terms are also included (*tenor, bas, bariton, viola, violončelo, kantata, sonata, serenada, duet, kvartet, etc.*), theatre related terminology (in Italy, by the end of the fifteenth century, classical theatre was restored), terms in architecture (Italian Renaissance architecture was a model for Europe at the time), military terms (*alarm, bataljon, kaplar, citadela, major, kapetan, general, etc.*), and many more that spread from Italy to all European countries and, thus, via major European languages, especially German, penetrated our own Montenegrin dialects (Jernej, 1998, pp. 70-80).

Sudden extinction of urban population provided opportunity to the Slavic, predominantly rural populace, to increasingly occupy positions in Roman cities.

By the end of the nineteenth century, such bilingualism acquired new features before it had completely vanished.

The fact that we can reach out only as far as language permits, leads us to tackle research processes of the word even more, its origin, and possible changes that may have occurred during its usage.

The importance we attach to language as a tool, which helps us understand ourselves and the society we belong to, is reflected in the notion of two basic objectives of language, that of thought and communication. Precisely that the "mission" of language permits a number of subjective paths towards human enlightenment that, within their wholes, constitute something of the objective, many paths "not only to show the known truths, but to reveal some of those of the unknown" (Humboldt, 1820, Bd.IV).

Conclusion

The study of language contacts represents one of the most exciting fields of sociolinguistic research. R. Filipović lists seven ways in which loanwords are classified within a language: classification by alphabetical order, by subject, type of words, grammatical level, degree and means of integration, by how desirable and needed certain loanwords are, and according to speakers who import them and their personal standpoints. The most common and the most evident changes are those in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary, and, therefore, they are the most studied.

The most important reason with regard to word borrowing is in filling lexical gaps. In most cases, words are borrowed in order to accentuate particular lexical differences local words do not reflect.

The harmonious co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the aspiration to be united in diversity. Languages define personal identities, but are also part of a shared inheritance. They can serve as a bridge to other people and open access to other countries and cultures, promoting mutual understanding. Approached in this spirit, linguistic diversity can become a precious asset. Language is always changing.

In spite of an impressive amount of work on language by linguists, literary critics, psychologists, and philosophers, language still remains a marvel and a mystery. It remains wonderful that mere puffs of wind should allow men to discover what they think and feel, to share their attitudes and plans, to anticipate the future and learn from the past, and to create lasting works

of art. One need only imagine the consequences of an onslaught of semantic amnesia, with progressive loss of meaning of the words we employ so casually, to be reminded of the importance of language in human affairs.

Without words, we would be dumb in more senses than one. Yet we understand very little, after centuries of investigation, about how this infinitely fine web of communication is established, improved, and preserved. We can be sure, however, that the old definition of language as a vehicle serving primarily for the expression and transmission of thought is too narrow to be helpful (Black, 1962, p. 47).

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