

THE INFLUENCE OF MILITARY CONTACTS ON FRENCH LOANWORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract. The article considers the problem of French words as loanwords in the English language, as a result of various armed conflicts and military contacts in the previous millennium. Loanwords are an important component of any language and, indeed, the vast majority of languages are heavily influenced by loanwords. War and armed conflicts in general, together with military cooperation, provide 'ideal' conditions for the emergence of loanwords in foreign languages. The English language experience of imperialism, globalization and cross-national commerce, involving such English-speaking countries as Great Britain and the United States of America, has led to a great many loanwords entering the language. Beginning from the Norman conquest of England, led by William the Conqueror in the year 1066, the French language in particular has had a considerable influence on the English language in general. This was a time of a new, French-speaking king, and the imposition of a new French-speaking ruling elite for England. Over the course of the next two hundred years, the royal family of England, along with their closest associates, were of French descent, intermarried with French royalty and nobility, and employed French retainers. Later, the Hundred Years' War (a series of military conflicts between England and France from 1337-1453) enabled a continuation of borrowings from the French language into English.

This all left the indelible stamp of the French language on English forevermore. This was especially so in the sphere of military vocabulary, and even for the very word 'army', and also for words describing military formations, military terms as a whole, and military ranks. In World War I French words entered military slang. Different loanwords from old French, middle French and modern French are reviewed and analyzed in the context of English language military experience. A conclusion is made on the topicality of studying French words as loanwords in the English language due to armed conflicts and military contacts.

Keywords: loanwords; military term; the English language; the French language; cultural linguistics.

Borrowing is a process, as a result of which certain elements of a language (generally, words or meaning-bearing phonemes) appear in another language. Loanwords of another language are the result of interaction between different nations in aspects of economic, military, social and scientific relations [1].

Generally, loanwords are considered to be a way of denoting new phenomenon and expressions, which had no equivalent in the target language until that moment. Loanwords can overlap existing lexical units, which represent these or those occurrences, as well. The reason behind the appearance of loanwords is usually due to semantics attached to the word, whether it be an international term or a forced introduction (during military occupation or acceptance of new religion).

Loanwords form a special category of the vocabulary of a particular language both for the process of nomination and for the aspect of motivation. Such a method of receiving new vocabulary is, probably, one of the solutions to the problem of linguistic nomination. Loanwords, which arise as a result of language contacts and expansion, caused by the influence of other languages, represent a certain way of economizing linguistic effort along with generating speech, because an already existing lexical unit is used to fill a nominative gap in that language. At the same time, the loss of former associations, which had existed in the language from which they were loaned, therefore involves the loss of motivation, which had probably existed in the source language. This results in considerable difficulties with their meaning recognition in the course of speech perception [2].

Borrowing, as a process of exploitation of one's language elements in other language, is conditioned by the contradictory nature of language: in some cases borrowing by force is permitted, and in other cases language acts to prohibit borrowings [Ibid]. Apparently, this explains the fact that the process of loaning words from a foreign language in modern English is highly unproductive, as in other languages. According to the available data, it is considerably lower than such processes of nomination as semantic derivation and layer formation. Nevertheless it does not mean that the percentage of loaned vocabulary in modern English is particularly small.

About 75% of English vocabulary is formed by loanwords from 50 languages, emerging during various historical periods and in various conditions of existing and developing [Ibid]. The following groups of lexical units may be identified among loanwords: political, geographical, cultural, historical, military, economic, scientific, etc. Of considerable interest also are the ways and kinds of borrowings, as well as the changes which borrowed lexical units undergo in the language environment.

Nowadays the world is in the process of constant developing - discoveries in spheres of medicine, technology, art etc. are made year after year. Relations between states and the international situation as a whole changes as well - different events occur in different regions and countries.

Changes in every particular language take place as well. There is the necessity of denoting various things, events or occurrences, originating in the course of such processes. As far as we can see, in conditions of globali-

zation, English has become a lingua franca and has an influence upon other languages.

In the course of this paper we will examine the issue of loaning military terms in English. This will help to expand knowledge in the sphere of derivation and etymology, which later could facilitate work with military translations to a certain extent, and deepen overall language knowledge.

Nowadays there is no language which has no loanwords from other languages. Moreover, in some languages borrowed lexical units can form a major part of the total vocabulary.

As already stated, the English language is characterized by its wide exploitation of various words borrowed from different foreign languages. This occurred and occurs because of migration, numerous military conflicts, expansion and conquering of territories by English-speaking countries (predominantly, Great Britain and the USA), tourism growth, globalization etc. In this paper we shall examine the origin of neologisms and loanwords in English coming from French. Along with Latin and German, French had a great influence on the English language - about 29% of English words have a French root [3].

"As is known, during certain historical periods the greatest influence on other languages is exerted by the language whose native country dominates in economic and / or cultural aspects, or where significant historic events take place" [4: 6]. During the last millennium, since the conquering of England by William the Conqueror in 1066, French words have become part of the English vocabulary. It was a time of a new French-speaking king and the establishment of a new French-speaking nobility in England. In the course of the following two centuries, the English royal family and their intimate circle were descendants of French culture, having intermarried with members of the French royal family and employing French courtiers. Later the Hundred Years' War (a series of military conflicts between England and France in the years 1337-1453) caused the further emergence of loanwords from French to English. All of this resulted in the indelible mark of French influence upon English.

The borrowing of French military terms includes the very word "army" (from Old French "armee") and words denoting the branch of forces, such as "infantry" (from Middle French "infanterie"), "cavalry" (from Middle French "cavalerie"), "artillery" (from Old French "artillerie"). Moreover, there are different borrowed military terms such as "reconnaissance" (from Middle French "reconnaissance"), "sortie" (from Middle French "sortie") and "siege" (from Old French "siege").

There are many words denoting military formations (including "formation" from Old French "formacion") also came from French: "squad" (from Middle French "escouade"), "platoon" (from Middle French "platoon"), "company" (from Old French "compaignie"), "squadron" (from Mid-

dle French “escadron”), “battalion” (from Middle French “bataillon”), “regiment” (from Middle French “regement”), “brigade” (from Middle French “brigade”) and “corps” (from Old French “corps”).

English military ranks also came from French, such as “corporal” (from Middle French “caporal”), “sergeant” (from Old French “sergeant”), “lieutenant” (from Middle French “lieutenant”), “captain” (from Middle French “capitaine”), “major” (from Middle French “major”), “lieutenant colonel” (from French “lieutenant colonel”), “colonel” (from Middle French “coronel”), “lieutenant general” (from Middle French “lieutenant-general”) and “general” (from Old French “general”).

It should be noted that borrowing of French military terms occurred gradually, over different historical periods. For example, the English word “castle” acquired its modern meaning because of the influence of the Old Norman language in the 12th century [5], but the military rank “lieutenant colonel”, which was established in France only in 1669 [6], came to English only in the 18th century. Lengthy military conflicts are especially conducive to lexical borrowing. Close collaboration between soldiers created comfortable conditions for the acceptance of some words.

Now we can see a variety of Francophone loanwords in English military terms. As France was an ally of the USA in World War I, with whom there was close cooperation, so a source of borrowing is French, as well as German, the language of the enemy. In these circumstances, borrowing cannot be limited to military terms; borrowing of everyday words and slang terms also occurs. Let us examine some examples [7]:

Barn door / bon jar / bon jaw - a greeting, a borrowing by means of transliteration of the word *bonjour* from French;

Bokoo - an excess of something, the synonym of the word “very”, a borrowing by means of transcription of the French word *beaucoup*;

Bonswar - farewell, a borrowing by means of transcription of the French word *bonsoir*;

Camel corps - infantry, came from other famous phrase “camel flags”, which is the original interpretation of the French word *camouflage*;

No bon - bad, from the French word *bon*;

Tres bon / tres bong - very good, a borrowing by means of transcription of the French word *tres bien*;

We we town - Paris, owing to a jocular imitation of the word *oui* in French, which means “yes”. This ironic name for Paris appeared due to the reputation of the inhabitants as people with easy morals.

We can, therefore, make a conclusion that the borrowing of French words is a dynamic linguistic phenomenon, occupying a leading position in the changing of English military terms and slang phrases of servicemen from English-speaking countries during the whole last millennium. Furthermore, we see that conflicts and military actions, for the

most part, provide “propitious” conditions for intensive foreign language borrowings.

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