

PARALLELS BETWEEN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN BORROWINGS FROM FRENCH AND THEIR SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

Olga COVALIOV, lector superior

Rezumat

În acest articol este abordată tema cuvintelor împrumutate, care este un fenomen caracteristic pentru toate limbile și care au fost întotdeauna o sursă importantă de dezvoltare a vocabularului limbii engleze. Unele cuvinte împrumutate se numesc articole și fenomene noi, altele înlocuiesc conceptul deja cunoscut de către analogii lor străini, care mai târziu au devenit neclare din cauza asimilării lor cu cuvintele native.

Russian as well as English borrowed words from French. In both cases it was one the main sources of loan words. Not only words were borrowed but phrases as well. Some of them are still alien in these languages, others have been assimilated and cannot be recognized as borrowed and are frequently considered to be native words.

The influence of the French language on the American English was much less than on the English language in general. In spite this fact borrowed words enriched the vocabulary of American English and are used in everyday life, especially ones which refer to coinage, furniture and building.

The majority of borrowed words have approximately the same pronunciation and spelling in both languages. Thus, French is the etymological source of borrowings. In English they are more widely used than in Russian and in some cases have synonyms composed of native words and very often preference is given to the latter.

In the following example there are several variant of translation of the borrowed word *tête-à-tête*:

„If you are not compassionate as to dine today with Louisa and me, we shall be in danger of hating each other for the rest of our lives, for a whole day's *tête-à-tête* between two women can never end without a quarrel” [1, p. 26].

According to the Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary *tête-à-tête* is a private conversation between two people. However, in the given example it does not fully correspond to the mentioned sense, but acquires new semantic meaning: it does mean private conversation, but presupposes that two people are obliged to stay together because of the lack of company.

Russian borrowed the word *tête-à-tête* as well and it sounds as *mem-a-mem* which has the same meaning as given in the Dictionary, but in this case it is not the correct variant of translation. We would prefer the following variant: *вынужденное пребывание вдвоем*.

Another word that has some differences in the meaning is *favourite*:

„How long has she been such a *favourite*? - and pray, when am I to wish you joy?” [1, p. 23].

Favourite is a person liked more than others. It has also another meaning, that of the horse expected to win. The former variant is more suitable for the example. In Russian we also have the word, *фаворит* but is not widely used and has a foreign shade of meaning. It was used earlier to signify people whom Russian emperors singled out from their escorts. However, in Russian there is more frequently used the word *любимец* to define a *favourite*. Wide semantic aspects of the word *favourite* contribute to the fact that different people perceive its meanings differently. For some people in the phrase *this girl is his favourite* this word may possess insulting meaning, for they imagine a horse, when see the word *favourite*.

The meaning of the word *angel* depends on the context as well. In the following example:

„I am going to Gretna Green, and if you cannot guess with who, I shall think you a simpleton, for there as but one man in the world I love, and he is an *angel*” [1, p. 223].

The word *angel* does not mean a spirit that lives the heaven and has two wings, but a person who possesses all positive features a human being can have: gentleness, sweetness, kindness.

In the other example:

„All Meryton seemed striving to blacken the man who, but three months before, had been almost an *angel* of light” [1, p. 225].

The word acquires another semantic meaning: an ideal person.

In Russian the word *angel* may be translated as in both cases and it has the same slight semantic differences in the meaning.

The word *cousin* represents a great interest. It means a child of one's uncle and aunt and the gender of the child may be guessed due to the context:

„When the ladies were separating for the toilette, he said to Elizabeth – „Do not make yourself uneasy, my dear *cousin*, about your apparel”.

„You want a candle to rub on it make it proper slipper, Bert had said and Brian was impressed with the useful know-how of his much-travelled *cousin*” [5, p. 66].

In Russian there are two variants: *кузен* (a boy) and *кузина* (a girl). However, these words are not used and have become obsolete. They have a foreign shade of meaning and they have completely been assimilated grammatically. Instead of these words in Russian there are used the following words: *двоюродный брат* and *двоюродная сестра*. These words, *кузен* and *кузина*, have been used in earlier times and translators prefer them in transferring the message of the 19th century books.

The words *Sir* and *Madam* are widely used in English, while in Russian their counterparts *сэр* and *мадам* are seldom met. These words signify a person widely respected or of higher rank. Original Russian words for this phenomenon are *барин*, *боярин* and *барыня*, *боярыня*, but today these words are obsolete. However, French variants did not replace them and did not pass into the use. Moreover, these words are used in translating to render the epoch and relations between people. *Sir* and *madam* are used in modern English in reference to people of higher rank or to unknown people.

„You may depend upon it, *Madam*,” said Miss Bingley, with cold civility, “that Miss Bennet shall receive every possible attention while she remains with us” [1, p. 35].

„Certainly, *sir* and it has the advantage also of being in vogue amongst the less polished societies of the world” [1, p. 22].

Some words have the same meaning in both languages. In the following examples words are translated into Russian using borrowings:

„Miss Bingley was engrossed by Mr. Darcy, her sister scarcely less so and as for Mr. Hurst, by whom Elizabeth sat, he was an intolerant man, who lived only to eat, drink and play at cards; who when he found her prefer a plain dish to a ragout, had nothing to say to her” [1, p. 29].

„When he was gone, they were certain at least of receiving constant information of what was going on, and their uncle promised, at parting, to prevail on Mr. Bennet to return to Longbourn, as soon as he could, to the great consolation of his sister, who considered it is the only security for her husband's not being killed in a *duel*” [1, p. 225].

„The *soup* was fifty times better than what we had at the Lucas' last week, and even Mr. Darcy acknowledged, that the partridges were remarkably well done...” [1, p. 263].

„I saw one case holding four dozen of *champagne* smashed all to bits, and there was the *champagne* fizzing and boiling about in the bottom of the dirty cargo boat” [4, p. 44].

The Russian corresponding counterparts are *рагу*, *дуэль*, *суп* and *шампанское*. These words are assimilated grammatically in English and Russian differently. In English they may be of Possessive case, but not all of them can change their number, that is some of borrowed words are uncountable. In Russian the situation is the same: *дуэль* may be declined and may change its number, while *рагу* neither declines nor changes its number. The word *шампанское* declines in Russian, but cannot change its number. The word *суп* in Russian declines as well and there are registered the plural forms of the word: *супы*. Thus, the grammatical assimilation of borrowed words proceeds differently in Russian and English: in some words grammatical categories are more obviously manifested than in others.

One of the words that came from French and became very popular in everyday speech is *hotel*. Its Russian counterpart is *отель*, but this word is not always used in the process of translation. In the following sentence:

„Mr. Bennet had been to Epsom and Clapham, before his arrival, but without gaining any satisfactorily information and that he was now determined to inquire at all the principal *hotels* in town” [1, p. 226].

In Russian there is another word that renders the same meaning but is more appropriate for the given sentence. It is the word *гостиница*. The given part of sentence may be translated as follows:

„... теперь он решил опросить всех в главных *гостиницах* города”.

The results of this analysis may be shown in the table:

Word	Actual meaning	Contextual meaning
<u>Tête-à-tête</u>	A private conversation between two people.	Living together, because of the lack of company.
angel	A spirit that lives in heaven.	An ideal man; gentle, kind person.

Borrowings are very significant. Their first function is to name new objects. Their second aim is to show the process of the development of the language. The vocabulary of any language is the best evidence of its bearers' history. On the example of English and Russian and basing on the borrowings we may say that the representatives of these nations had relations with many peoples: Indians, Spanish, French, Dutch, Italian etc. This relation was not very close. This supposition may be supported by the fact that borrowings were few and English and Russian remained the predominant languages.

Bibliography

1. Austen, Jane, *Pride and Prejudice*, Penguin Books, London, 1994,
2. *Comprehensive English-Russian Dictionary*, ed. V. Muller, U-Factoria, Yekaterinburg, 2006.
3. *Comprehensive Russian-English Dictionary*, ed. Smirnitsky A.I., Russky yazyk Media, Moscow, 2004
4. Haggard, H.R., *King Solomon's mines*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 2002.
5. Sillitoe, Allan, *Key to the Door*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 2001.