

THE USE OF LEXICAL BORROWINGS AND THEIR LITHUANIAN EQUIVALENTS IN THE COMPUTER-MEDIATED ENVIRONMENT IN STUDENTS' SPEECH

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The paper aims to establish the differences between lexical borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents, to introduce the concept of borrowing, what has been achieved in this field and to examine the challenges the learners face in using specific terminology in the computer-mediated environment. Different types of borrowings have been analysed according to the degree of their assimilation. The rate of occurrence of borrowings in students' speech has been examined as well as the reasons for choosing borrowings rather than native words. The factors determining the degree of borrowings' recognition are age, knowledge of foreign languages and the degree of assimilation of borrowings.

Keywords: assimilation, borrowings, Lithuanian equivalents, loanwords, frequency rate of occurrence.

Introduction

Languages are in a continuous process of development. Every language is transformed over centuries, however, the rate and pace of a language change is different. Nowadays, due to the rapid development of technologies, the need for coining new terms is increasing. Some linguistic communities are more concerned about their language than others, and, usually, smaller countries are more concerned with the purity of their languages because they want to preserve them for future generations. They must learn from traditionally dominant languages (like French and German that have come under pres-

sure from English and have been minoritized by it in this way) how to respond to assimilationist translation pressure (Suchanova 2014: 131).

There is no doubt that English is now the international, global and universal language. English is generally considered to be the lingua franca of the scientific community. For example, roughly 80% of all the journals indexed in Scopus are published in English. (Research Trends 2012).

It is common practice that English terms associated with computers and information technology are introduced in the language together

with their concepts. The languages which simply do not have the words for the new concepts either borrow the word without any concern or try to find the replacements of these words, i.e. neologisms. Ebest S. B. (1999: 449) defined a neologism as a newly coined word or phrase or a new usage of an existing word or phrase.

Assimilation of new words is a long process, because, usually, it takes a long time for the words to be assimilated and incorporated into the language. Most scholars argue that the need to name new objects and concepts is the main reason for borrowing words. However, languages have enough resources for creating their own terminology. What is crucial in favouring the adoption of English loanwords is the students' positive attitude to Anglicisms. The borrowing process involves a complex procedure of acceptance and integration of a new lexical item into the recipient language (RL). As pointed out by Haspelmath (2009), each loanword may produce various effects: (a) *insertion*, when the loanword is adopted by the RL as a new lexical item; (b) *coexistence*, when the loanword is adopted by the RL in spite of the existence of a native equivalent; (c) replacement, when the loanword is replaced by an already existent native equivalent and it falls out of use. If coexistence is the case, when an Anglicism exists alongside or in competition with a native equivalent to denote the same referent, then, we may argue that the influence of English has had a potentially disruptive effect, in that it creates multiple terminology within the same language. In reality, multiple terminology is the rule rather than the exception, especially because of the mass media, so that an English technical term may appear side by side with a native equivalent. (Pulcini *et al.* 2012).

The aim of the research

The research is aimed at establishing the differences between borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents in order to avoid the assimilation of unacceptable borrowings, i.e. barbarisms.

Objectives of the research

In order to achieve the aim, the following objectives were identified:

1. To analyze the rate of occurrence of borrowings in students' speech in the computer-mediated environment.
2. To examine students' attitudes to the use of Lithuanian equivalents to English terms.

Methods of the research

Traditional methods of lexical, semantic, and comparative analysis of English borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents are used. The methods of the research include the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire, as well as the survey and the statistical treatment of the results. The results obtained in analyzing the use of borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents have been based on the analysis of the data collected in 2013. The study involved university students of Fundamental Sciences, when ninety-nine respondents were questioned by submitting questionnaires. The statistical analysis was carried out by using "SurveyMonkey" and Excel programs. The unusable/unacceptable computer terms and their equivalents were taken from the list provided by the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language (VLKK 2015). The study was conducted at VGTU, and ninety-nine students were questioned. The words were grouped according to three categories: never, sometimes and always used borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents. The cases of using 37 computer borrowings and their equivalents have been examined, defining the adoption and rejection of loanwords according to the degree of assimilation.

Theoretical background

Languages borrow words freely from one another. Usually, this occurs, when some new object or institution is developed for which the

borrowing language has no word of its own. For example, the large number of words denoting computer applications have been borrowed from the English language. “Taking a word or phrase from one language into another, or from one variety of a language into another” (McArthur, T., McArthur, F. 1992: 141) is one definition for borrowing. The second one is taken from the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (Hornby 2005) and defines a borrowing as “a word and a phrase [...] taken from [...] another language and used in their own”. A borrowing can also be called a loanword. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines a loanword as “a word from another language used in its original form”.

The status of a “loanword”, however, is traditionally conferred only on words which recur relatively frequently, are widely used in the speech community, and achieved a certain level of recognition or acceptance, if not normative approval. (Poplack *et al.* 1988: 52).

Crystal notes that terms, such as “borrowing”, “loanwords”, “loanblend” and “loanshift”, are rather misnamed, as words are not “given back” in a reciprocal sense. Consequently, one might have advocated the use of “copy”, both as a verb and a noun, instead of “borrow” or “loan”. (Crystal 1992: 46). Furthermore, there is no assumption that anything will be given back to the donor, precisely because nothing has been given in the first place.

The word which has been borrowed will change and develop in different ways in the donor and recipient language, or it may very possibly fall out of use in either or both. However, there may be a possibility for a word to get back, e.g. the English word «brigade» was borrowed into Russian and developed there a new meaning «a working collective», «бригада». This new meaning was borrowed back into English as a Russian borrowing. The same is true of the English word «pioneer».

However, not all foreign words can become loanwords or borrowings; if they fall out of use before they become widespread, they do not reach the loan stage. As concerns the

word *browser*, it has not found its way into the Lithuanian language, because the neologism *naršyklė* was introduced together with the concept.

Classification of borrowings according to the degree of assimilation

There are different classifications of borrowings. According to Haugen (1950: 210–231), there are three groups of borrowings: loanwords, which show morphemic importation without substitution, loanblends, which show morphemic substitution as well as importation and loanshifts, which show morphemic substitution without importation. This classification is connected not only with the penetration of the borrowed words into the recipient language, but also with the process of assimilation.

The factors that mainly determine the degree of recognition of borrowings are age, occupation, knowledge of foreign languages and the degree of assimilation of borrowings. (Ashrapova, Alendeeva 2014). The term assimilation of borrowing implies the process of adapting the borrowed word to the grammatical, phonetic, graphical and semantic properties of the language which accepts these words. McArthur defines assimilation of borrowings as a continuous process developing “from words that remain relatively alien and unassimilated in pronunciation and spelling, through those that become more or less acclimatized to forms that have been assimilated so fully that their exotic origin is entirely obscured.” (McArthur, T., McArthur, F. 1992: 142).

All in all, according to the rate of assimilation, there can be different kinds of borrowings, including completely assimilated (true loanwords), partly assimilated (international words) and non-assimilated words (barbarisms).

Completely assimilated or true loanwords are usually old words, as well as the words adopted from another language and completely naturalized and fully assimilated words demonstrating complete semantic and structural

assimilation. They fully resemble the native words of the language. Completely assimilated borrowings are not accepted as foreign words in the borrowing language, e.g. *aktyvus*, *active*; *aktualus*, *actual*, etc.

Partly assimilated or international words are loanwords that occur in several languages with the same or at least similar meaning and etymology. Their pronunciation and orthography are similar so that the words are understandable in different languages. International words have undergone the process of complete phonological and morphological adoption. However, they can be easily distinguished as the words of foreign origin, e.g. *multimedia* – *multi-medija*, *inovatyvus* – *naujoviškas*, *-a*, *naujas*, *-a*, *pažangus*, *-i*; An international word and its equivalent coexist.

Non-assimilated loanwords are considered to be unusable, they are non-standard words or expressions (barbarisms) which are morphologically and phonologically unacceptable. These words, e.g. *flešas*, *folderis*, *tačskrinas*, etc. do not conform to the normative aspects of general language.

Assimilation is the process consisting of the following stages of borrowings' transformation in a particular way:

1. Adaptation (word quoted and it can change). At this stage, words borrowed together with their spelling, pronunciation and meaning can be found. They are not modified at all and have the features which are foreign to the borrowing language. They undergo assimilation. In some cases, the spelling is changed. The structure of the word can also be changed.
2. Intermediary stage. Words in a wider use but still felt to be foreign can be found there.
3. Adoption. The decision to start using a particular word has been taken.

For example, the words *multimedia*, *multi-medija*; *file*, *failas*, etc. have undergone all the stages of the assimilation process. First they were perceived as foreign words, however, over time, during an intermediary stage, they were

adapted, and, finally, adopted, and acknowledged as international words.

McArthur gives the following reasons for borrowing:

1. Close contact, especially, in multilingual situations, making the mixing of elements from different languages more or less commonplace.
2. The domination of some languages over others.
3. A sense of need, when users of one language are drawing the material from another for educational purposes and technology.
4. Prestige associated with using words from another language.
5. A mix of some or all of these. Individuals may use an exotic expression because it seems to be the most suitable term available, the only possible term (with no equivalent in any other language), or the most impressive term (McArthur, T., McArthur, F. 1992: 141).

Research findings

The actual process of borrowing is a complex process involving a number of assimilation stages and is unpredictable. As shown in the diagram below, the following words seem to be completely "foreign" and unacceptable to Lithuanians, e.g. *čatas* (*čiatas*), *desktopas*, *flešas* (*fliašas*), *folderis* (*foulderis*), *hakeris*, *printeris*, *kompas*, *laptopas*. However, they entered a target language and are used by most of the students. Now they are frequently used borrowings and the percentage of the respondents who never use these words is rather low. In this case, even two pronunciations of some words are possible. If the speakers know a foreign language, they can pronounce the words very closely to the way they are pronounced in the source language. They have been changed slightly to match the patterns of English, e.g. by adding inflections *-as* or *-is*. *Flešas* is mostly used by 80.61% of all the respondents, *desktopas* – by

75.76%, *laptopas* – by 75.76%, *folderis* – by 70.71%, *kompas* – by 69.39%, *čatas* – by 66.67%, *printeris* – by 64.29% and *hakeris* – by 61.23% of the respondents (Fig. 1).

Let us take the word *kompiuteris*, *kompas* presented in this list and analyse it separately.

Kompiuteris is an international word. *Kompas* is an unacceptable term, but its use is increasing. Thus 69.39% of the respondents use it always, and 29.59% sometimes, while only 1.02% of the respondents never use it. *Kompiuteris* is also rather widely used and 60.20% of the respondents use it sometimes (Fig. 2).

Shorter terms are easier integrated into the colloquial language than longer ones or two-word composite equivalents. Respondents give preference to shorter words, e.g. *demo* for

demonstracinė versija, *kompas* instead of *asmeninis/nešiojamasis kompiuteris*, *laptopas* instead of the correct equivalent, *skreitinis kompiuteris*, *skreitinukas*.

The correct pronunciation is [kom' - p'ù - t'e - r'is]. The English pronunciation of [kəm'pjʊ:tə] (the pronunciation with [j]) is unacceptable in the Lithuanian language, because of the combination of two consonants *pj*. There are some exceptions to the rule, for example the words *bjaurus*, *pjauti*, *rugpjūtis*, but the correct pronunciation is without [j].

There are a lot of terms used to describe different types of computers in English, basically, these are one-word terms. However, Lithuanian equivalents consist of two words (Fig. 3).

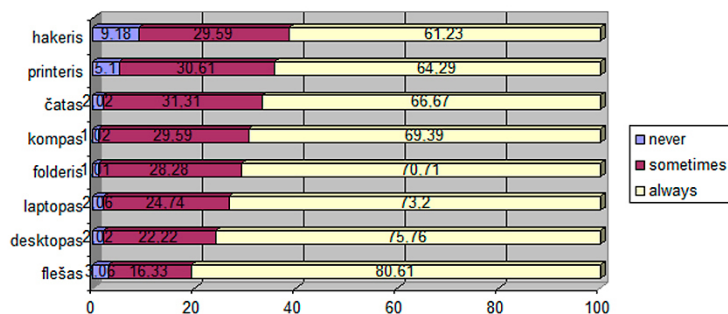


Fig. 1. High-frequency borrowings

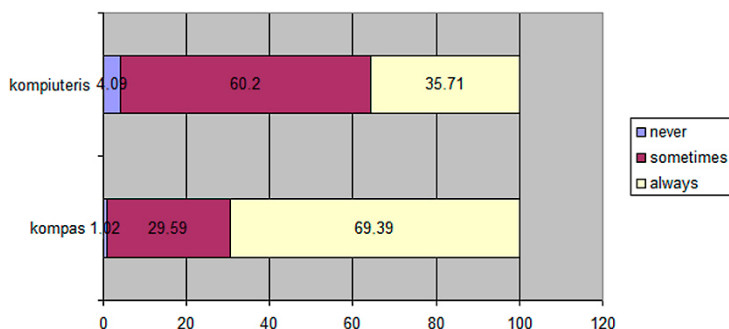


Fig. 2. The rate of using the terms *kompiuteris* and *kompas*

Notebook, netbook and laptop usually have one equivalent, consisting of two words, *nešiojamas kompiuteris*, which takes time to say it. The frequency rate of using borrowings is higher than that of Lithuanian equivalents. Students are unaware of the existence of such Lithuanian equivalents as *skreitinis kompiuteris*, *skreitinukas* for laptop; *tinklinukas* for netbook. The great majority of students use neither the loanwords *tabletas* (63.27%), *netbukas* (61.36%), nor the Lithuanian equivalents of the words *kišeninis kompiuteris* (60.21%) and *internetinis kompiuteris* (77.55%). They simply call it *kompas* or *PC* [*pe ce*]. However, there has been a marked increase in the use of the borrowed terms *noutbukas*, which is used sometimes by 37.76% of the respondents, and always by 27.55% and the borrowed term *laptopas*, which

is used sometimes by 24.74%, and always by 73.2% of the respondents (Fig. 3).

As shown in Figure 4, the frequency rate of using borrowings is higher than that of Lithuanian equivalents, for example, *hakeris* is always used by 61.22% of the students, *draiveris* by 56.57%, while *programišius* is always used only by 10.20% and *tvarkyklė* is always used by 5.05% of the respondents. The respondents are unaware of the existence of the words *čipas* (63.64%) and *lustas* (79.59%). They mostly use *demo* (53.06%) instead of *demonstracinė versija* (10.01%).

The longer the unacceptable words are used, the higher the degree of their assimilation. These words are incorporated, you get accustomed to them and they sound natural. No one calls the word “knyga” as “bukas”, but 61.36%

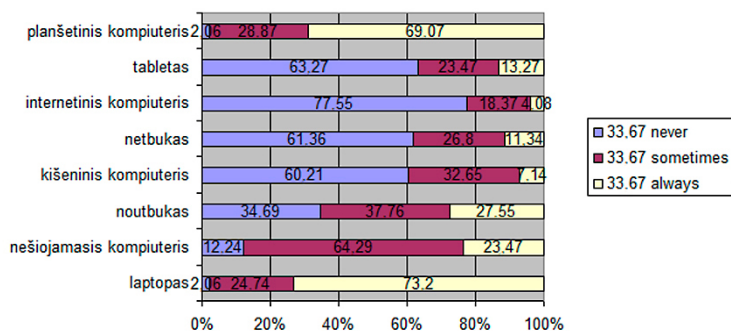


Fig. 3. The frequency rate of using loanwords and their Lithuanian equivalents

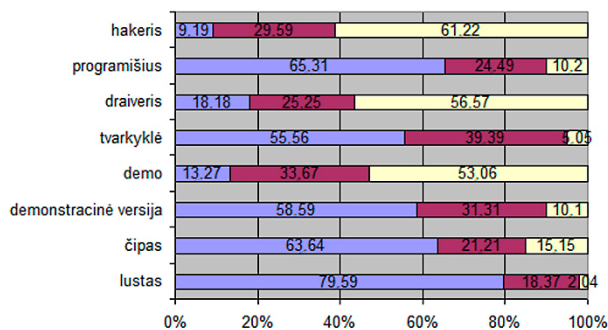


Fig. 4. The use of borrowings and their Lithuanian equivalents

of the students use “netbukas” and are not confused about it, though it sounds “foreign”. The current tendency to use barbarisms is slightly decreasing, however, their incorporation into the Lithuanian context is increasing.

Reasons for borrowing

The degree of assimilation of borrowings depends on the following factors:

a) a group of languages the word is borrowed from, if the word belongs to the same group of languages to which the borrowing language belongs, it is assimilated easier due to a similar morphological and phonological structure. Most borrowings come from English. English and Lithuanian are the languages of different origin. English is the dominant Germanic language, while Lithuanian is the most archaic of all the living Indo-European languages. Therefore, it will probably survive the “lexical invasion” of English. Many terms sound too foreign, e.g. *flashas*, *hakeris*.

b) the way how the word is borrowed: orally or in a written form. Words borrowed orally are assimilated quicker. In the computer-mediated environment, these are usually jargon mostly used among specialists, and barbarisms which are completely unacceptable.

c) the frequency of the borrowing's use in the language: the higher the frequency of its use, the quicker it is assimilated.

d) the length of the period over which the word has been used, as well as its importance for communication and of occurrence frequency, i.e. the time of the word's life in the language implying that the longer it lives, the more assimilated it is. The Lithuanian term *naršyklė* was adopted at the same time as a new reality, therefore, it was easily incorporated into the language. Only 10.10% of the respondents use the borrowing “brauzeris”, while *naršyklė* is always used by 63.64% of the respondents and, sometimes, by 27.27% of them.

Conclusions

The most common motivations for lexical borrowing have been identified as need and prestige. Borrowing for need is required because there is a lexical gap, which needs to be filled, while borrowing for prestige is unnecessary, because an adequate means of expressing the same concept already exists. Some neologisms are new lexical entities, and students find it difficult to recognize their Lithuanian equivalents: *skreitinis kompiuteris*, *skreitinukas* for *laptop*; and *tinklinukas* for *netbook*.

Morphological and phonological peculiarities of English borrowings in Lithuanian have been presented. A larger number of borrowings have become conventionalized, though the process of their assimilation is rather slow. The current tendency to use borrowings while incorporating them into Lithuanian context can be explained by various reasons. Presumably, students become familiar with new foreign words, get accustomed to them and, later, find a newly coined Lithuanian equivalent unattractive and unusual. The computer environment is described mostly in English. English is the first foreign language taught in almost every secondary school in Lithuania, and, therefore, students find English words more acceptable. In conclusion, the assimilation of the borrowed words illustrates that when two words for the same concept compete for domination, adaptability and adoptability are key elements. The results of the study may be used in further exploration of terms and their usage, as well as in teaching.

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LEKSIKOS SKOLINIŲ IR JŲ LIETUVIŠKŲ ATITIKMENŲ VARTOJIMAS KOMPIUTERIJOS STUDENTŲ KALBOJE

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Straipsnio tikslas – nustatyti skirtumus tarp leksinių skolinių ir jų lietuviškų atitikmenų, supažindinti su pasiekimais šioje srityje ir atlikti skolinių bei jų lietuviškų atitikmenų dažnumo tyrimus kompiuterijos studentų kalboje, nustatyti leksikos variantų lemiančius veiksnius bei skatinti taisyklingą lietuvių kalbos vartojimą. Skoliniai yra analizuojami pagal asimiliacijos laipsnį. Sakytinė leksinių skolinių ir jų atitikmenų vartoseną tirta remiantis anketinių apklausų duomenimis. Pagrindinės priežastys, skatinančios pasirinkti skolinius, yra užsienio kalbų žinios ir skolinių asimiliacijos laipsnis.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: asimiliacija, skoliniai, lietuviški atitikmenys, svetimžodžiai, vartojimo dažnumas.