

UDC 801(891):802.6:806.2

Original scientific paper

Accepted for print on 26, February 1980

## Historical Background of Anglo-Russian Linguistic Borrowing

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The following study is a historical approach to the phenomenon of linguistic borrowing. The special field of study is Anglo-Russian political, cultural and economic contacts from the 16<sup>th</sup> century up to the present time. The aim of this work is to point out the exceptional importance of history as the first step in studying linguistic borrowing. The penetration of England into Russian economic and political life, and the Russian endeavours to strengthen links with a much more progressive and developed country, that is, England, resulted, among other things, in the enrichment of the Russian lexicon. Many English words were adopted by the Russians and after a long process of phonological, morphological and semantic adaptation became an integral part of the everyday Russian vocabulary.

History has always been a necessary accompaniment of linguistic borrowing. Invasions, wars, discoveries of new countries, as well as political, economic and cultural interests have created a fruitful basis for the acceptance of many an unknown word or term. From this point of view it is of great importance for a linguist who has the intention of studying the borrowing phenomenon to elucidate the historical facts and data most relevant for solving important phonological, morphological and semantic problems of loan words.

The following survey has been limited to the historical background of Anglo-Russian borrowing. To throw light on the beginning of the Anglo-Russian contacts one should go back deep into the past, as far as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

These contacts start in the reign of Ivan the Fourth, who was claimed by the Russians to be a symbol of centralistic

power. Since at that time some of the most important trade routes led through Russia, all great European states struggled with might and main to take over the Russian and Eastern trades.

In 1553 an English expedition sailed off to find the Northern route to India and China. All the ships were wrecked off the Norwegian coast, except one which was under the command of Captain Richard Chancellor. It was driven by the winds across the White Sea and finally landed near the mouth of the North Dvina. Captain Chancellor was asked to come to Moscow where he was warmly received by the Tsar. Many historians take this date as the beginning of direct Anglo-Russian contacts. Richard Chancellor left Moscow on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1554. After his return to England he was the first to describe the economic, political and social state of affairs in 16<sup>th</sup> century Russia. He was dazzled by the luxurious way of life at the Russian court and, interestingly, gave a vivid account of Russian trading — he wrote about people on sledges bringing bread, fish and other products to Moscow in order to exchange them for fur and hides brought by the inhabitants of the Northern districts. "The narrative in Hakluyt of his first visit to Moscow is the first account of some importance in English of the Russian people".<sup>1</sup>

In 1554 King Philip and Queen Mary established the "Moscow Trading Company" to protect the interests of English merchants in Russia.

Being ambitious to gain an exit to the Baltic Sea, Tsar Ivan led the twenty-year Livonic War against his neighbours and conquered Narva. As part of his attempts to win the support of England and Queen Elizabeth the First he offered some special privileges to English merchants who were trading all over the Russian territory. However, the Queen was prone to suspicion and utterly against one more political and economic power on the Baltic shores. Her only endeavours were to strengthen the already existing Anglo-Russian trading connections. All efforts of the Tsar to enter into political alliance with England proved unsuccessful. In spite of frequent misunderstandings, that very period of negotiations between the two monarchs enriched the Russian language with the first words of English origin. At that time a number of English tradesmen and merchants settled in Moscow where they came into direct contact with Russian life and habits

<sup>1</sup> Sir Paul Harvey, "The Oxford Companion to English Literature", Oxford 1955, p. 152

and the Russians had a chance to see, perhaps for the first time, the English customs and new products unknown in Russia. Although it is impossible to find written evidence to prove that any English words were accepted by the Russians as a result of the intercourse between the English and the natives, we can presume that the process of linguistic borrowing might have been induced by personal contacts no matter how limited they were.

There existed another path of penetration of English words into Russian. The Russian emissaries Fjodor Andrejevič Pisemskij, Neudača Hovralov, Grigorij Ivanovič Mikuljin and Ivan Zenovjev left interesting data upon the England of their time, including some linguistic "curios". In their detailed reports about the country they had visited, they used a number of English loanwords. Examples: Engl. *sir* — Rus. сэр, сар, сор; Engl. *Thames* — Rus. Темис, Земись, Темзь; Engl. *mister* — Rus. мастер; Engl. *the Lord Mayor of London* — Rus. лунской лорд-мер.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, the Englishmen in Russia had to face certain difficulties. Theirs was not the only nation interested in trading with Russia. Their rivals were merchants from Holland. In addition, the Russian merchants themselves were their fierce enemies who constantly fought against the foreign monopolization of Russian trade.

In spite of all conflicts, the English in Russia continued to enlarge their sphere of interest and worked there as physicians, pharmacists, shipbuilders, weavers, carpenters, etc. They married Russian women and became professional soldiers in the Russian army.<sup>3</sup>

During the rule of Boris Godunov England gained the exclusive right to trade in Russia. Boris Godunov invited many foreign experts, scientists and tradesmen to his country; moreover, he sent some young Russians to England to learn English and Latin.

It is important to mention that English and Dutch merchants became aware of the importance of Siberia as one more field for the development of business. Several expeditions were organized to learn something more about the Siberian wilderness and its riches, their ulterior purpose

<sup>2</sup> В.М. Аристова, "Англо-русские языковые контакты", Издательство Ленинградского Университета, Ленинград, 1978, ст. 17

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, ст. 18

being the exploitation of Siberian natural resources. To prevent these and similar penetrations, the Russians prohibited the approach of foreign vessels to the mouth of the river Ob. Consequently, in 1592 the Englishman Snoops had to face the fact that his Siberian expedition turned out to be a failure.

Among the documents written by the English who visited Russia and dwelt for a certain time within her borders, some works worth mentioning are: "Book on Russia" by Giles Fletcher (1549—1611) who was sent to Russia in 1568;<sup>4</sup> and Jerome Gorsey's "Letters" and his descriptions of Muscovy.<sup>5</sup> Both writers presented a picture of political and economic conditions in 16<sup>th</sup> century Russia.

The riots and rebellions in the Russian empire at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century initiated a number of military campaigns on behalf of the most powerful European countries, among them England. English economic aims were directed towards domination in the northern parts of Russia and gaining control of the waterway along the Volga to the Caspian Sea. The plan of the expedition had been elaborately prepared by the English captain Thomas Chamberlin, who, together with John Merrick, came to Russia with the Swedish military unit of Captain Born. Jacob Show, the commander of the first regiment, landed at Arhangelsk in 1612, but their first contact with the rebellion leader Požarskij shattered the English dream of becoming the masters of the North.

Having failed as a military meddler King James the First shifted his policy to the diplomatic field by sending John Merrick and William Rossley, a representative of the Moscow Trading Company, to parley with the Tsar in 1613. The two negotiators were not even allowed to come to the Russian capital.

Nevertheless, in 1623 forty-four English merchants received a charter from the Russian Emperor to trade freely throughout the Russian territory without paying any taxes. As a reaction to these privileges in favour of the English, Russian merchants constantly expressed their dissatisfaction. Finally, in 1646 the so-called Moscow Law was issued. According to it, foreign traders were obliged to pay taxes on their goods.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Paul Harvey, "The Oxford Companion to English Literature", Oxford 1955, p. 291

<sup>5</sup> Я.Я. Зутис, О.А. Вейнштейн, Н.И. Павленко, В.Ф. Семенов, "Всемирная история", ИСЭЛ, Москва 1958, том 5, ст. 284

After the execution of the English King Charles the First the Tsar expressed his discontent towards England by banishing the English traders from his empire. Only after the Restoration did King Charles the Second succeed in regaining special privileges for the English merchants in Moscow.

But as soon as 1667 foreign traders were prohibited by a new law from trading in the territory of Russia.

The period covering the rule of Peter the Great (1672—1725) was fairly fruitful from the point of view of linguistic borrowing. About 3000 foreign words were adopted, 50% of them being English.<sup>6</sup> English terms were mostly from the area of navigation and shipbuilding, trade, English society and religion, as well as the names of some important articles unknown to Russians.

Examples: Engl. *barge* — Rus. баржа; Engl. *lord-admiral* — Rus. лорд-адмирал; Engl. *Advent* — Rus. Адвент; Engl. *capers* — Rus. каперсы.<sup>7</sup>

Although the English and Russian political interests were seldom coordinated, William the Third invited the progressive young Tsar to England. Peter the Great was the first Russian emperor to visit the English kingdom. He stayed there for three months and studied shipbuilding in English ports.

The century-old Russian quest for sovereignty over the Baltic and Black Seas, which reached its culmination during the rule of Peter the Great, was utterly discordant with the interests of England which would have to face one more naval power in the vicinity of her own and her colonies' shores. Consequently, lively diplomatic relations were an inevitable result, especially in connection with the Swedish and Turkish wars in which Russia took part at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But economic relations between England and Russia expanded even more. Import and export were in constant progress. At that time about 50 English ships landed every day at Arhangelsk. Russia imported weapons and textiles from England and exported fur, wood, and other raw materials to England.

One of the greatest plans of Peter the Great was the development of his new Baltic ports, St. Petersburg and Narva. To fulfil his aim, he offered tempting privileges to English

<sup>6</sup> В.М. Аристова, "Англо-русские языковые контакты", Издательство Ленинградского Университета, Ленинград, 1978, ст. 17

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, ст. 71

traders who would land in these ports. In his further attempts to arouse his slumbering empire, withdrawn into its traditional shell, the young Tsar succeeded in getting permission from the English Government to invite to his country a number of skilled English tradesmen, among them a few shipbuilders. Furthermore, a number of young Russians went on to English ships to be trained in naval skills. There is no doubt that the English shipbuilders and young Russian sailors enriched Russian naval and shipbuilding terminology.

Examples: Engl. *sloop* — Rus. шлюпка; Engl. *rudder* — Rus. рудер, родер; Engl. *quarter-deck* — Rus. квартер-дек.<sup>8</sup>

To prolong the exclusive right to tobacco trading throughout the Russian territory, ratified by Peter the Great during his stay in England in 1698, the English Tobacco Company sent its experts in tobacco manufacturing, Peter Marshall and his wife, to supervise the first tobacco factory in Moscow.

In 1715 George the First and Peter the Great signed a contract according to which the united fleet of England, Russia, Denmark and Holland should accompany the merchant ships on their way to St. Petersburg and some other Baltic ports to protect them against the Swedish vessels which constantly disturbed peaceful navigation.

The friendly policy came to an end when the Tsar started sympathising with James Stuart who plotted against George the First and wanted to usurp his throne. Moreover, many Jacobite refugees found political asylum in Russia and were even offered special positions at the Russian court. To express his discontent the English King sent his emisary James Jafferis to Russia in 1719. James Jafferis' mission was to demand that all English subjects serving in the Russian army and the craftsmen working in shipbuilding return to their native country. What is more, the King even ordered the passage of a law against any Englishman who would refuse to come back to England.

As for the Russian subjects who were sent to school to England, they were asked to leave the country immediately. The Tsar reacted to this proclamation with an act of interdiction. The English traders who found themselves in the Russian territory at that time were forbidden to leave the country until the Russian subjects had finished their training in England.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, ct. 71

After a year of diplomatic negotiations and several attempts by England to destroy the Russian fleet in the Baltic Sea, the Russian consul Bestužev was ordered to leave London without delay.

Diplomatic relations, re-established after 1730 during the rule of Anna Ivanovna, were once again a new stimulus for the development of the Anglo-Russian trade.

It is interesting to mention that exactly at that period a group of Cossacks crossed the frozen sea on hoarseback from Kamchatka to the American continent. They might be called the heralds of the first Russian expedition, under the command of captain Solohov, which reached Alaska about 1750. In 1797 the Russians founded the first United American-Russian Trading Company and seized possession of the American territory up to the borders of the American Colonies under British rule. Furthermore, the same Company established several colonies in California.

The interests and foreign policies of England and Russia during the rule of Catharine the Great in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were the very picture of the former aspirations of the two countries. The English endeavoured to protect their trading interests in Russia and to prevent the growth of Russian power on land and sea, while Russia, being an underdeveloped country as compared with other European kingdoms at that time, left no stone unturned to win over Britain to help her improve the economic situation. Frequent peasant rebellions compelled the Russian nobility to improve agriculture and apply new agro-technical measures. Some prominent English agronomists were taken as their models.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Napoleonic Wars played an important role in the Russian political and economic orientation. Owing to the situation in Europe, Russia herself being occupied by Napoleon in 1812, the contacts between the English and the Russians were practically non-existent. Only after Napoleon's defeat, and with the development of the new middle-class and its interests, did England gain ground in Russia once more. The English took an important part in the development of the Russian cotton industry. Russia was one of the most important importers of cotton yarn from England. In 1842 the English raised the embargo allowing the export of cotton-gins and other textile machines to other countries. With the new models of machines and the introduction of modern technology in the textile industry some new terms were taken over by the Russian language.

The names of machines: Engl. *spinning jenny* — Rus. дженни; Engl. *mule-machine* — Rus. мюль, мюль-машина.

The names of cloth: Engl. *velvet* — Rus. вельвет; Engl. *jersey* — Rus. джерси, джерсэ; Engl. *poplin* — Rus. поплин.<sup>9</sup>

Some prominent Russian economists were under the strong influence of English economic theories of that time. Н. Turgenjev, one of the greatest economists in Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, discussed the welfare in England in his book "Опыт теории налогов".

Apart from her economic influence, England was present in everyday Russian life of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In Moscow and St. Petersburg the nobility established famous English clubs exactly imitating the popular clubs of London. English dishes and drinks were served at prominent restaurants.

Examples: Engl. *beefsteak* — Rus. бифштекс, бифстек; Engl. *oyster* — Rus. устрицы; Engl. *ginger beer* — Rus. джидджербир; Engl. *porter* — Rus. портер.<sup>10</sup>

British sports became popular with Russian high society: Examples: Engl. *lawn-tennis* — Rus. лаун-теннис; Engl. *golf* — Rus. гольф;<sup>11</sup>

Young Russian noblemen imitated the behaviour and fashions of English dandies.

Examples: Engl. *dandy* — Rus. денди; Engl. *dandyism* — Rus. дендизм; Engl. *breeches* — Rus. бриджи; Egl. *stick* — Rus. стик, стек.<sup>12</sup>

Lord Byron became a symbol of romanticism among the Russian romanticists of the thirties. Russian ladies were devoted readers of Richardson and Sterne, the Bronte sisters and Jane Austen. The greatest Russian poets and writers like Tolstoj, Turgenjev and Dostojevskij were enthusiastic followers of Dickens and his contemporaries.

Here are some examples of English loan words taken from 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian literature:

In his "Evgenij Onjegin" Puškin compares his hero with both a dandy and Childe Harold:

Вот мой Онегин на свободе  
Острижен по последней моде  
Как *dandy* лондонский одет . . .<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, ст. 71

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, ст. 71

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, ст. 71

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, ст. 71

<sup>13</sup> А.С. Пушкин, "Евгений Онегин", ОГИЗ, Москва-Ленинград 1947, ст. 6



Он к жизни вовсе охладнел  
Как *Child Harold* угрюмый . . .<sup>14</sup>

In the same poem Onjegin often visits some restaurants where English food was served:

Друзья и дружба надоели  
Затем что не всегда же мог  
*beef-steaks* и страсбургский пирог . . .<sup>15</sup>

Вошел: и пробка в потолок,  
Вина кометы бризнул поток  
Пред ним *roast-beef* окровавленный . . .<sup>16</sup>

It is interesting that Puškin used original English words in his text, while the examples from Tolstoj, Turgenjev and Dostojevskij already show the phonological and morphological adoption of English loan words.

В начале марта старый граф Илья Андреич Ростов был озабочен устройством обеда в Английском клубе для приема князя Багратиона.<sup>17</sup>

Может ли бить хоть какой-нибудь клочок, хоть какой нибудь отрывок души в этом живом бифштексе?<sup>18</sup>

Вронский раньше обыкновенного пришел съесть бифстек в общую залу . . .<sup>19</sup>

Прескучная игра, — сказал Колосов о теннисе, . . .<sup>20</sup>

Дружинин корчит европейца. Как ошибается бедняк! Он труп русского гвардейца, одетый в английский пиджак.<sup>21</sup>

In 1854 the Crimean War broke out and consequently led to a certain dose of animosity between the two countries.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, ст. 20

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, ст. 20

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, ст. 10

<sup>17</sup> Л.Н. Толстой, "Война и мир", Государственное издательство художественной литературы, Москва 1957, ст. 388

<sup>18</sup> Ф.М. Достоевский, "Собранные сочинения", Москва 1956—1958, том 2, ст. 498

<sup>19</sup> Л.Н. Толстой, "Анна Каренина", Тульское книжное издательство, 1958, ст. 152

<sup>20</sup> Л.Н. Толстой, "Воскресение", ГИХЛ, Москва 1946, ст. 95

<sup>21</sup> И.С. Тургенев, "Собранные сочинения", Москва 1954—1958, том X, ст. 102

England and France formed a coalition to help Turkey to fight the feudal Russia. Tsar Nicholas the First was confronted with the inevitable situation of a loser. The modern army of the Coalition easily defeated the Russian army.

After the Crimean War Alexander the Second abolished serfdom in 1861.

Only a few years later in 1867, the Russian Government sold its American possessions to the United States of America, thus losing some very important economic and strategic areas.

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is characterized by a rapid expansion of industrial capitalism in the West European countries. As for Russia, she was limping behind her European neighbours as an underdeveloped country from the economic and technical point of view. Because of her natural riches, which she was unable to exploit herself, Russia used to be a promised land for European big business investments. That was one more reason why the connections between England and Russia became stronger. Many business companies were established, such as "The Russian Mining Corporation limited" "Lena Goldfields", "Siberian Proprietary Mines", etc. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the securities were only formally held in Russian banks but they were actually in British hands.

Considering such a situation in detail, a logical conclusion would be that those business interests led to direct contacts between the representatives of British trade and Russian businessmen. If we also take into account the appeal of Britain as a country of highly developed culture, it is no wonder that the Russians who belonged to higher social strata were learning English both out of fashion and because of their business interests. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was considered fashionable to add a certain sophisticated charm to everyday conversation by using foreign words, or even whole sentences. Sometimes the result was a mixture of Russian, French, German and English.

Examples: А вы куда едете, милорд? ... Первое дело быть спокойным перед ездой. ... *All right*, — улыбаясь отвечал Вронский.<sup>22</sup>

*Wuncht man Dochots, so hat man auch Klopots*, — сказал Васенка Весловский, потруднивая над немцем. — *J'adore l'allemand*, — обратился он опять с той же улыбкой к Анне.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Л.Н. Толстой, "Анна Каренина", Тульское книжное издательство, 1958, ст. 159

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, ст. 417

By such a frequent use of foreign constructions many foreign words were adopted by the Russians and finally adapted to the Russian language system.

During the First World War Great Britain and the United States were the main suppliers of arms to Russia. But, exhausted by financial crises and constant riots of workers, peasants and even soldiers, Tsarist Russia did not live to see the defeat of Austro-Hungary and Germany. In 1917 the October Revolution broke out. The working people under the leadership of Vladimir Iljič Lenin took over the governing of the country. They established a new socialist state — the Soviet Union.

Up to the Second World War the contacts between the new state and other countries were practically limited to military interventions, as for instance the occupation of Baku and Turkestan by the English in 1918, which lasted but a short period of time, or to personal contacts with Western countries, as Majakovskij's, Jesenin's or Eisenstein's visits to the United States.

During the Second World War the English-speaking countries and Russia became united against their common enemy — Hitler. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, 1942, Great Britain and the Soviet Union signed the Anglo-Soviet Pact against Germany and for further collaboration after the war.

The political, economic and cultural contacts between the Soviet Union and the English-speaking countries have been constantly growing from year to year. English and American language and literature have become a great field of interest for the Soviet peoples. The direct contacts have been established through reciprocal visits of delegations, cultural clubs and tourist groups.

As a result of these intense exchanges of interests both languages have been enriched by many a new term. Examples: Engl. *musical* — Rus. мюзикль; Engl. *office* — Rus. оффис; Engl. *five o'clock tea* — Rus. файв-о-клок; Engl. *orlon* — Rus. орлон.<sup>24</sup>

There is no doubt that this century-long linguistic process will be continued in the future. Very often a borrowed word seems to be more useful in a language than a clumsily constructed neologism.

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<sup>24</sup> В.М. Аристова, "Англо-русские языковые контакты", Издательство Ленинградского Университета, Ленинград 1978, ст. 71

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POVIJESNA POZADINA ENGESKO-RUSKOG  
JEZIČNOG POSUĐIVANJA

Ovaj je članak u stvari historijski pristup fenomenu lingvističkog posuđivanja. Posebno su naglašeni anglo-ruski politički, kulturni i ekonomski odnosi od vladavine Ivana IV Groznog, tj. od 16. stoljeća, pa sve do današnjeg doba. Cilj je ovog članka bio da se prikaže do koje mjere su historijski događaji i međusobni odnosi između populacija koje govore različitim jezicima važni na polju lingvističkog posuđivanja. Prodiranje Engleske u područja ruske ekonomike i politike, te nastojanja Rusije da ojača veze sa naprednijom i razvijenijom zemljom kao što je bila Engleska odrazilo se, između ostalog, i na području ruske leksike. U toku stoljeća mnogo je engleskih riječi ušlo u ruski jezik i nakon određenog razdoblja fonološke, morfološke i semantičke adaptacije postalo dio svakodnevnog ruskog vokabulara.