

Research plan

“Analysis of Language Borrowing Between English, Korean and Chinese”

Mechanisms of syntactic and semantic change in Korean Language from the end of the 19th century to present: focus on problems of external borrowing.

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Korean lexicology is characterized by many foreign elements that have gradually become integral components of the language. For many centuries, Korea was politically and culturally subordinate to the cultural influence of China. As a consequence, the first wave of these “linguistic borrowings” was almost entirely Chinese and was realized through the use of Chinese written characters. These characters were actually used as a means to represent Korean phonology, as the Korean language lacked its own writing system. Chinese characters were also the essential elements which permitted the enlargement of the Korean lexicography and brought to Korean a large quantity of new words which were lacking in the language. Later, during the 19th Century, the Japanese of the Meiji Period produced a large number of new terms which were then borrowed by both Korea and China. A second phase of borrowing began in the middle of the 1950s when the United States intervened on the side of the United Nations during the Korean War (1950-53).

Summarizing the fact that affects the circumstance of borrowing and creating new words, it's the change of the society. Development of science and technology, internal and external cultural exchange and development of public culture are the primary factors leading to it. Scientific development results in creating special terms, and other cultural civilization introduced through cultural exchange creates new terms indicating this civilization. Today the strongest factor is development of public culture. In the past the public culture was spread out through journalism and mass media. However, recently it is easy to notice the words improvised produced and spread due to demolishing the boundary between the producer and consumer of public culture which is led to a variety of communication.

The Korean Language Institute (KLI) started in 1994 investigating the new words inside the Korean Language from the end of 19th century to present in The Standard Korean Dictionary.

Since then, the research has taken several steps. In 1994 and 1995, they just searched the examples and origins of the new words instead of studying them without analyzing their meanings and morphological structures. They stopped the project for a while, and then restarted it again in 2000 after The Standard Korean Dictionary was published.

In 2005, they focused new word search on picking up those words which were born in 2005. Therefore, they decided to set aside the words which were not supposed to be written on the report, but they handed them to the dictionary project team. Instead they studied those new words usages. Some of new words are used for a while, and then disappear and others are settled down.

Language borrowing is a widespread sociolinguistic phenomenon in the development of language. It is one of the most significant ways of acquiring new words and enriching the vocabulary of a language. Therefore, it's a great value to study language borrowing and try to find the intrinsic principles underlying phenomenon. Considering this, the present research proposal gives a comparatively thorough analysis of language borrowings among two of the most commonly used and studied languages in Korea at present, namely Chinese and English. This research proposal probes into language borrowings, especially lexical borrowings between those 2 languages and Korean language from different perspectives; which include a historical survey, channels of borrowings, classification and study. Within the domain of assimilation, it describes the process phonetically, morphologically, semantically and grammatically so that more underlying principles are made clear. Based on the past research, hypotheses emerge as follows:

- (i) Language borrowing is normally inducted by external factors such as political, socio-economic and cultural exchange, military conquest and colonization.
- (ii) Cultures dominate the direction of language borrowings, the inferior culture borrowing from superior culture.
- (iii) Intellectuals and media are key facilitators of language borrowings.
- (iv) Language borrowings is restricted by internal factors such as writing as writing style, phonological pattern, morphology structure and grammatical rules.
- (v) Assimilation degree of borrowings varies.
- (vi) Different loan words have different vitality.

- (vii) Loanwords normally exert a certain degree of influence on the borrowing language.

External factors are essential impetus to language borrowing, without which no language can borrow from another. The necessities of intercourse bring the speakers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those of neighboring or culturally dominant languages. The intercourse may be friendly or hostile. It may move on the humdrum plane of business and trade relations or it may consist of a borrowing or interchange of spiritual goods---art, science, religion (Sapir 1921). This is to say, language borrowing is normally under the influence of external factors such as geographical neighborhood, politics, economy, culture, military, and other activities between different countries.

Geographical neighborhood normally provides necessities and natural convenience for language borrowing. The long history of frequent and large-scale borrowing between Chinese and Japanese is a good case in point. Actually, English borrowing from French, Greek and other Indo-European languages also proved this. However, neighborhood does not necessarily mean large-scale language borrowing. There are still many other factors which contribute to language borrowing.

Political activities, including social reforms, national policy and diplomacy directly affect language borrowing. Taika Reform and the Meiji Restoration in Japan opened the door of the country and brought about peaks of Chinese borrowing and English borrowing. The reform movements in late Qing dynasty and the opening-up and reform policy in the 1980s rewarded China with adequate Japanese and English loans, which considerably enriched Chinese vocabulary stock.

Steady and powerful politics is normally accompanied with prosperity of economy and great urge for trading and exchanging with other nations. This evidently lays foundations for language borrowing. The lending histories of Chinese and English clearly showed this. Chinese had enough to donate Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese as well as English because China experienced flourishing economy and advanced level of productivity in ancient times, the major means of outputting is trade and exchange. Similarly, the dominant position of English language in modern and contemporary times is inseparable with the accumulative development of economy in English countries.

Military conquest and colonization is another important factor influencing language borrowing. The history of English best illustrates this. English itself was brought into Britain by Anglo-Saxons, the invaders, in the fifth century. It crowded out the native Celtic speech

and Cornish. In modern times, with the enrichment of English and industrial modernization of the English world, Britain began its overseas aggression and colonization around the world. Along with it is the consistent immigration and cultural invasion. Nowadays, English has become the most prestigious language on earth and primarily a donor language. Actually, the present distribution throughout the world of other major international languages---Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish is evidence of conquest and occupation, followed by adoption of the invader's language because of the benefits that accrue to speakers of the language when the dominant language has been imposed. Just as Illich (1981:34) has put it, language has always been the consort of empire, and forever shall remain its mate.

Religious activity and other non-governmental intercommunication between different nations are also promoting factors for language borrowing. For instance, old English absorbed a considerable amount of Romance and Greek loanwords when receiving Christianity; Japanese borrowed enormously from Chinese and Sanskrit mainly through monks studying and translating Buddhist scriptures and in modern history, Christian missionaries from western world played a significant role in Chinese borrowing from English. Apart from religion, frequent non-governmental interactions like literature and art exchange, international trade, studying abroad, working overseas and so on surely all contribute to borrowing between languages.

According to Sapir (1921), language influence runs heavily in one direction. The language of a people that is looked upon as a center of culture is naturally far more likely to exert an appreciable influence on other languages spoken in its vicinity than to be influenced by them. This is clearly shown in the borrowing activities between Chinese, English and Japanese. Thanks to the developed culture of ancient China, Chinese has flooded the vocabulary of Japanese and donated a considerable amount to English, but has received nothing in return. There are Kan-On(漢音), Tou-On(唐音), Sou-On(宋音) and so on in Japanese reading system because China experienced great peaks of cultural development in Han dynasty, Tang dynasty and Song dynasty. As is known to all, one of the most important purposes for Japanese diplomats to Chinese Tang dynasty was to learn Chinese Confucius theory of government centralization.

In modern history, Japanese and English successively exercised similar influence on Chinese, though on a less overwhelming scale, as a result of their advanced modern culture, especially the sophisticated technology and material culture. English is now seemingly to act as ancient Chinese in ancient Japan. For instance, the new generations of Japanese

youngsters prefer borrowing English with Katakana to using traditional Chinese loanwords with hiragana.

A point to be noted is that, within a country, the flow of language also observes this law, just as Bloomfield (1933) has put it, in all cases; it is the lower language which borrows predominantly from the upper. Obviously, “the lower language” here refers to “the culturally lower language”.

Public media and intellectuals should also be included as the external factors discussed above; we single them out because they are extremely important in language borrowing, especially in the current world. As is known to all, most new words and loanwords first appear on the media and then accepted by the public. Every day, millions of people are studying foreign languages or just entertain themselves through the internet, television, radio, newspapers and magazines. They come across the new terms and quickly “take a liking” to these alien words. Then, they will try to use them in daily life, and if possible, the loanwords will get established. English influences modern Japanese and Chinese mainly through public media.

Educated people and learned scholars are always vanguard in borrowing language. It is normally these people who finally get loanwords established. As is mentioned in 3.3.2, Japan borrowed classic Chinese mainly by sending students and learned monks and finally established them in system through scholars’ work. Similarly, in modern history, Chinese borrowed English and Japanese mainly through the work of scholars like Xu Qiguang, Liang Qichao, Wei Yuan, Yan Fu, Ling Shu and many other students sent overseas. Virtually, English itself got established in Britain and borrowed enormously from others also through the work of educated people like missionaries who were the only educated at the time. Meanwhile, tradesmen and fashionable young people are also enthusiastic users of loanwords, for they usually have special needs to communicate with members from other communities. However, they tend to use non-standard loanwords, or pidgins. For example, early Chinese loanwords like *tea*, *silk*, *litchi* and some others entered English through trading. In modern history, many English loanwords were first used and introduced into Chinese and Chinese loanwords into English by the traders in old Shanghai and southeast China.

The history of language borrowing in the world shows that borrowing activity between languages is normally restricted by internal factors like morphological form or writing style, phonological pattern and grammatical structure. These internal factors will at least influence the borrowing scale and borrowing manner. Languages of the same writing style usually

borrow more easily from each other than those of different style. For example, English can easily borrow from Latin, Greek and French in bulk but from Chinese and Japanese only in a comparatively much smaller scale, the reason is not only geographical but also linguistic, because the former group are letter languages while the latter ideographic. Modern Chinese could borrow over one thousand new terms from Japanese with ease because basically the two languages have the same writing style and the borrowed are easily assimilated. Nevertheless, it should be noted that “the ability of the so-called ‘homogeneous’ languages to receive borrowing depends not on the linguistic structures of the language, but on the politico-social position of the speakers” (Kiparsky 1938:176, cited by Thomason and Kaufman 1988).

Borrowings can be divided into completely assimilated loanwords and unassimilated loanwords. Garland Cannon(1988) and Chang Junyue(2002) advanced a theory of four gradings: the first grade is unassimilated loans, which are first loaned and usually accompanied with notes or illustrations in use, such as the Chinese loanwords *guanxi* and *open-door policy* in English; the second grade is those which are still at an early stage of phonetic, semantic and grammatical absorption, such as *Tao*, *fen* and *Peke* in English; the third grade is those already absorbed loanwords without acquiring the characteristics of the borrowing language, such as *wok*, *soy* and *yen*; the fourth grade is so-called completely assimilated loans which are included in most authoritative dictionaries of the borrowing language, such as *Cantonese*, *China* and *silk* in English. Common people normally use totally assimilated loanwords, without realizing their foreign identity.

However, the grading of language assimilation sometimes gives rise to problems. For example, Chinese borrowing *yuan* has long been accepted in English, but it does not have any inflectional change. Meanwhile, as we can see, many Chinese characters entered Japanese centuries ago, but they still keep their original sound, writing and even meaning. In this respect, they are both assimilated and unassimilated. Languages are always on the change, and loans must be considered as those words which were not in the vocabulary at one period and are in it at a subsequent one, without having been made up from the existing lexical stock of the language or invented as entirely new creations (Robins 2000). In a word, language assimilation is a long process, most loanwords will be completely assimilated one day if they are to be permanent members of the borrowing language, but in certain historical period, the state of assimilation varies.

According to Saussure (1921), any linguistic sign is subject to change because it continues through time. But what predominates in any change is the survival of earlier material. If the signified (or signal) did not exist, the signifier (or signification) would die out gradually, or at least the frequency of usage would be affected, that is, the lifespan of the signifier would be dependent on the signified. The law is also true of loanwords.

Study of loanwords shows that the vitality of some loanwords is much mightier than that of others. For example, some loanwords are frequently used at one time, but after this period, few people mentioned it. Statistics showed that political terms are typically of this type: when the political event happens or a political movement arises, loanwords about this arrive one after another and frequently appear on the media, but when the movement is over, no one will use them unless people refer to the event on special occasions. Chinese borrowings like *sanfan*, *Great Leap Forward*, *Gang of Four*, *Falun Gong* and so on in English are good examples. However, those loans tinged with unique Chinese culture get established and stay long in English. For example, words like *Confucianism*, *yin*, *yang*, *qigong*, *silk*, *tea*, *litchi* and some others all get rooted in English language. Similarly, only those typically Japanese vocabularies such as *Judo*, *Kendo*, *ninja*, *ronin*, *seppuku*, *Sumo* and *Kodak*, *Suzuki* found their chances to enter English and get established in it.

In one word, vitality of loanwords differs from one to another; those terms referring to something special of a nation usually have great vitality in another language as borrowings.

Loanwords not only enlarge the vocabulary of the borrowing language, but also enrich the expressive power of native words and influence the phonological pattern and grammatical structure of the borrowing language.

Firstly, loanwords invariably enlarge the lexical stock of the borrowing language. Borrowing is one of the most frequent ways of acquiring new words, and speakers of all languages do it (Trask 2000:18). As we have seen, more than 50 percent of English vocabularies are loaned; it has borrowed up to 500 thousand words from other languages, including 1,488 Chinese loanwords. Between 5,000 and 10,000 Chinese characters are used in Japanese while Chinese borrowed more than 1,000 neologies from Japan in return. What's more significant is that hundreds of thousands of English words entered Chinese, Japanese and other languages as international loanwords. All these figures clearly show us how loanwords enlarge the vocabulary stock of the borrowing language.

Secondly, loanwords normally enrich the expressive power of the borrowing language. For example, Japanese loanwords “（影视）新干线” is more expressive and fashionable

than “(影视)专栏” in native Chinese; “(咖啡)屋” and “(西饼)屋” are more eye-catching and more favored by young people than “(咖啡)厅” and “(西饼)店”. Similarly, Japanese returning loanwords “karaoke”, “romaji” and some others also enriched the expressive power of English language.

Thirdly, loanwords may affect the phonological structure of the borrowing language. For example, at the early stage of Japanese borrowing from Chinese, Japanese allowed only vowel and consonant-vowel syllables to enter, such as “古(ko)”, “美(mi)”, “多(ta)”, while under the influence of complex syllabic structure of ancient Chinese, with the passage of time, Sino-Japanese loans contained syllable types other than vowel or consonant-vowel, such as “神(shin)”, “平(byoo)” and “强(kyoo)” and so on. Chinese had a significant impact on Japanese phonotactics. As the Japanese language changed over time, the new syllable types began to appear in native Japanese, too. Interestingly, modern Chinese became disyllabic and polysyllabic under the influence of borrowing from Japanese and English. After the 8th century, Chinese syllabic pattern got simplified and became dominantly monosyllabic gradually. The increasing existence of numerous homonyms demands complication of Chinese syllable. Most loanwords and loan translations are disyllabic or polysyllabic, and they undoubtedly facilitated the process of the complication.

Loanwords may also lead to the semantic change of native words. Many semantic changes are related to the physical situations of the speakers of a given language. By far the most important effect on the semantic component of language is brought about by the influence of other language or dialects (Lehmann 2001:264). Changes in meaning under the influence of a foreign language are known as extensions. For example, when many Japanese loanwords with the same writing as Chinese Characters were loaned back into Chinese, the semantic range and semantic value of native Chinese terms changed, such as the semantic extension of “屋”, from “屋子” to “精品屋” and “花屋”, and the relegation of “部”, from “外交部” to “女生部” and “营业部”. Sometimes, the semantic meanings of native words get shifted under the influence of borrowings. For instance, Old English *eorl* (earl) meant “brave warrior”; the present meaning was taken over from Old Norse, where the word indicated a rank of nobility.

Lastly, language borrowing may also influence the grammatical structure of the borrowing language. When a large number of words of one grammatical class are taken from a single source language, and if that language is itself an object of study, grammatical

inflections such as word formation, and means of expressing and so on may be borrowed as well. For example, Japanese absorbed Indo-European suffixes such as “-ness”, “-hood”, “-fication”, “-ization”, “-tic” and “-al” and created corresponding endings such as “---性”, “---度”, “---化” and “---的”, which were also borrowed into Chinese and became indispensable means of Chinese lexical formation.

Language is not only the most significant tool for human communication, but also the carrier of human civilization and reflection of social reality. Therefore, with the development of human society and the expansion of political, economic and cultural exchanges among different nations, language borrowings have become a very common phenomenon in language development. Languages like cultures are rarely sufficient to themselves. The necessities of intercourse bring the speakers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those neighboring or culturally dominant languages (Sapir 2001:159). At present there are about 6000 different languages on our planet, and every one of them has a vocabulary containing many thousands of words. Whenever and wherever there are contacts of any sort between the speakers of different languages, speakers will make use of words from others languages to refer the thing, processes and the ways of behavior, organization or thinking for which words or phrases were not available or convenient in their own language hitherto (Robins 1996 : 3564). Everybody is in a position to learn some of the words used by the neighbor's words and take those words over into their own language (Trask 2000: 18). These words are termed borrowings or loanwords. Loanwords may cover every aspect of human life, including politics, economy military culture art science religion and so on.

Large scale of language borrowing took place both historically and currently. There were many examples of this world history. For instance, Chinese vocabulary had entered into Japanese and Korean languages and was exported to other languages for centuries, especially in Han Dynasty and Tang Dynasty. In Modern history, Japanese returned Chinese with a considerably large amount of Japanese characters as a result of the former's successful reformation and powerful economy. In Western Europe, English borrowed an immense amount of French words after the Norman Conquest and many Greek and Latin due to their cultural prestige. Actually, the history of English can be called a history of language borrowing. Statistics show that English has already borrowed up to 500 thousand words from others languages including 1488 Chinese borrowings. Nowadays, English language has

become the biggest donor language in the world. With the rapid development of social economy, borrowing is increasing unprecedentedly between different languages.

Languages borrowing not only enriches the vocabulary stock of borrowing language and makes up for its lexical gap, but also people of different nations to better understand each other, especially about their cultures. Meanwhile borrowing activity is a rather complicated process. Scholars have persistently contributed to the study of language borrowing. As the father of the modern linguistics, Saussure clearly pointed out the existence of languages intercourse and language importations in his linguistics lectures. Sapir (1921) expounded how language influences each others with borrowing theory. Bloomfield (1935) spent 3 chapters demonstrating language borrowing in this great work "Language". Hockett(1958). Hall (1960), Robins (1964) Trask (1996) and many others linguist discussed borrowing respectively. Chinese scholars such as Wang Li (1957) Chen Yuan (1983) Zhang Yongyan (1982) Wang Rongpei (1986) Cen Qixiang (1990) Shi Youwei (2000) Donnson Chen (1992), Chang Junye (1997) and some others have also made great efforts in relevant studies. Most research is either too general or too specific. For example, early researchers usually illustrated borrowing in theory whereas modern and contemporary scholars prefer to describe the facts with statistical figures. Few of them integrated theories and facts rather thoroughly and comparatively, not to mention taking the inter-borrowing activities between three languages as an object of study at the same time.

This research proposal attempts to explore language borrowing in a more thorough and systematic way expound theories on languages borrowing, with the intention to confirm some hypotheses and make some improvements in some aspects. A deep analysis of language borrowing between English and Chinese, and Korean on each kind of borrowing activity will be studied from the perspective of a historical survey, channels of borrowing, classification study and assimilation analysis.

Finally, this study examines attempts to moderate the overexposure to English lexicology, which the language spoken in South Korea is currently facing. Contrary to appearances and perceived notions, we see that the Chinese language and its writing system are returning to the forefront of language borrowing. Despite what the language purists of North and South Korea may wish, it cannot be said that Chinese language borrowings are a thing of the distant past.