

ENGLISH LOANWORDS IN AMERICAN LITHUANIAN: MORPHOLOGICAL INTEGRATION vs MORPHOLOGICAL NON-INTEGRATION

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It is commonly known that lexical items transferred from one language into another are subject to the interference of the grammatical system of the language in which they become included. A scale of effects may range from complete non-integration to full integration of alien elements on the morphological level of the recipient language.

By far the most usual tendency is that of morphological integration of loanwords¹. If transferred words are to be employed in the utterances of a new language, they must be assigned to certain lexical-grammatical classes which are distinguished in the recipient language and incorporated into the existing frameworks of their morphemic structure. This tendency is well-marked in American Lithuanian which like other immigrant languages in North America (the USA and Canada) is abounding in borrowings from American English². It should be noted that in the case of American Lithuanian its operation can be discovered rather easily, since the languages in contact show a great difference in morphological structure. Thus, the English noun *strike* introduced into American Lithuanian is declined after the typical masculine paradigm of Modern Lithuanian nouns: *straikas* (nom. sing.), *straiko* (gen. sing.), *straikui* (dat. sing.), etc. On the whole, English loan-nouns are classed with several productive nominal inflexional paradigms characteristic of Modern Lithuanian, e. g., *piknikas* (<picnic), *gėmis* (<game), *orinčius* (<orange), *maina* (<mine), *pilė* (<pill). American Lithuanians widely employ English loan-nouns to form new words on the existing domestic derivation patterns. Thus, from the English loan-noun *farmeris* (<farmer) they coin the adjective *farmeriškas* "typical of a farmer" and the verb *farmeriauti* "to be a farmer". One can come across various intranominal hybrid derivatives which also give evidence of a relatively higher degree of morphological integration (i. e. derivational integration) of imported words, e.g., *auzelė* "a small house" (: *auza* <house), *boisiukas* "a little boy" (: *boisas* <boy), *prezentėlis* "a little present"

¹ Morphological integration of loanwords has been satisfactorily described for many languages. For the most general problems of the procedure see: E. Haugen, *The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing*, — *Language*, XXVI, 1950 (2); U. Weinreich, *Languages in Contact*, New York, 1953; E. Haugen, *Bilingualism in the Americas*, New York, 1956.

² For English loanwords in American Lithuanian see: A. Margeris, *Amerikos lietuviai ir angliškųjų skolinių žodynas*, Chicago, 1956.

(: *prezentas* < *present*), *šėrininkas* "a shareholder" (: *šėras* < *share*), *čikagietis* "a Chicagoan" (: *Čikaga* < *Chicago*), *bomynas* "a place where bums live" (: *bomas* < *bum*), *paleikė* "lakeside" (: *leikas* < *lake*), etc.

The list of morphologically integrated loanwords can be easily extended by quoting items from other word-classes. In the present context it may be most profitable to mention loan-verbs which reveal the most consistent tendency aimed at morphological integration. Almost all English loan-verbs (with the exception of those few imported as interjectional imperatives) get a Lithuanian verbal suffix and, accordingly, are assigned to a certain conjugation paradigm. The sweeping majority of them are conjugated like Lithuanian verbs with the infinitive suffixes *-yti* (*-inti*), e. g., *draivyti* (< *drive*), *laikyti* (< *like*), *vašyti* (< *wash*), or *-(i)uoti*, e. g., *čekiuoti* (< *check*), *rekorduoti* (< *record*). They are also governed by the other common morphological regulations valid in the corresponding word-class of the recipient language. Thus, e.g., the English verb *watch* obtains the form of a reflexive verb *vačytis* and that of a non-reflexive verb *vačyti*. English loan-verbs, like domestic Lithuanian verbs, are used with various verbal prefixes which slightly modify their lexical meaning and at the same time morphologically class them with the verbs of perfective aspect, e.g., *prifiksiyti*, *prifiksiyti*, *sufiksiyti* (: *fiksiyti* < *fix*).

In all the enumerated examples, English loanwords have been fully integrated on the morphological level of the recipient language. Under certain circumstances, however, American Lithuanians display an indifference as to the morphological treatment of borrowed lexical items. Entire English phrases or sentences may be imported and used in Lithuanian contexts in morphologically unanalysed form, e. g., *anestigat* (< *honest to God*), *dacol* (< *that's all*), *ekskiūzmi* (< *excuse me*), *geriaut!* (< *get out*), *jūno* (< *you know*), *vacdijūs* (< *what's the use*), etc. Separate English loanwords (nouns, adjectives, etc) in the utterances of the new language may also preserve the status of morphologically non-integrated heterogenous elements, e.g., *Netra-
jyk tu su juo padaryti dyl* (< *deal*) "Don't try to make a deal with him", *Sėsk ant mano
lep* (< *lap*) "Sit down on my lap", *Tas staut* (< *stout*) *vyras yra mano bosas* "That
stout man is my boss", *Tavo duktė yra labai smart* (< *smart*) "Your daughter is very
smart". The non-integrated English lexical items stand out very strikingly against
the background of the morphemic structure of the recipient language.

Thus, we observe that the tendency aimed at the morphological integration of imported lexical items, though undoubtedly strong, is by no means all-embracing, that American Lithuanians rather often make a choice between integrating or not integrating English loanwords on the morphological level of their native language. Why is this choice possible? What factors regulate the permanently imperfect balance between these two diametrically opposed tendencies?

We are well aware that for a fully satisfactory explanation of the present problems one needs to know not only the structures of English and Lithuanian, but also external factors which interfere with the development of American Lithuanian. Commenting on the bilingual's choice between integrating or not integrating loanwords on the morphological level of the recipient language, U. Weinreich was right to consider that "the choice itself would depend not on the structures of the languages in contact, but rather on individual psychological and socio-cultural factors prevailing in the contact situation"³. The possibility of the choice, however, must be sanctioned by the recipient language system, the anti-integrating tendency must have some functional justification⁴. A key solution of our problems, therefore, is to be sought in the internal, structural condition of Lithuanian.

In view of our present-day knowledge of redundancy in language and of the part played by it in securing the communicative effectiveness of the language system functioning under abnormally difficult conditions, one cannot be surprised to find that the toleration of morphologically non-integrated loanwords may reach relatively high degrees. Redundancy is a matter of degree. The inflexional endings of the Lithuanian adjective, for instance, are totally redundant. The tendency aimed at the morphological integration of English loan-adjectives in American Lithuanian is very weak, therefore. The integrating tendency is much stronger in loan-nouns, because the inflexional endings of the noun in Lithuanian are functionally more important. It asserts itself almost fully in English loan-verbs, since this word-class in Lithuanian can perform its functions only by means of different affixes. Thus we see that the structural condition in the recipient language plays a regulative part in the co-existence of the two opposed tendencies. The probability of the choice between them varies with different word-classes: the greater its degree of grammatical redundancy, the more probable that a bilingual should behave according to the law of least effort, i.e. he wouldn't indulge in the complicated procedure of morphological integration.

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³ U. Weinreich, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁴ See: J. Vachek, *On the Integration of the Peripheral Elements into the System of Language*. — *Travaux linguistique de Prague*, 2, 1966.