

Borrowing: Loanwords in the speech community and in the grammar. By SHANA POPLACK. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xix, 223. ISBN 90780190256388. \$39.95.

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The study of borrowing in particular and of language mixing in general has a long history of research (e.g. Haugen 1950, Haspelmath & Tadmor 2009), and this history is characterized by a pervasive lack of consensus. While there seems to be general agreement that loanword borrowing constitutes the clearly preferred mixing strategy in the languages of the world, there remain many questions that the student of borrowing is confronted with.

Most of these questions are taken up in the book under review and are subjected to empirical scrutiny, based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of a staggering 43,000 tokens of other-language items in the speech of nearly 500 bilingual individuals. The framework of analysis on which the book rests is provided by variation theory, one of whose central concerns is with explaining asymmetry in linguistic form-function relations. Shana Poplack characterizes her approach as sociolinguistic in nature, aiming to reconstruct the actual process of borrowing by bilinguals in the context of their respective speech communities. Based on over thirty years of research on language-mixing strategies, she is also concerned with the status of established loanwords, contrasting them most of all with code-switches and nonce borrowings, that is, items occurring only once in a corpus.

The book is divided into twelve chapters. The introductory chapter provides information relevant for an understanding of the subject matter of the book, including a catalog of definitions of the technical terminology used. Based on a variationist perspective on language contact, Ch. 2 provides a review of this perspective and the way the author applies it to analyze language mixing.

Ch. 3 discusses the data on which the book is based, particularly P's Ottawa-Hull French Corpus, collected in the 1980s, which provides the main database of analysis. Analyses of the corpus data are then presented in the ensuing chapters, where random-sample techniques are applied in Ch. 4, while Chs. 5–7 use social network methodology. In Ch. 8, a diachronic perspective is added to deal in particular with nonce forms in bilingual production, the main topic of this chapter being how nonce borrowings may turn into loanwords.

Another central topic of the book is discussed in Ch. 9, namely the distinction between borrowing and code-switching and how the two can be separated—a topic that has received quite some attention in previous studies (see Myers-Scotton 2002:153–58 for a discussion and alternative conclusion). In some of those studies, phonetics is argued to play an important role in the integration of borrowed material, and Ch. 10 is devoted to determining the contribution of phonetic features to loanword borrowing as well as to other kinds of language mixing.

While the analysis in the preceding chapters focuses on linguistic variables, diffusion of borrowed words across the speech community in accordance with sociodemographic variables is discussed in Ch. 11, and Ch. 12 concludes the book by presenting a catalog of generalizations on loanword borrowing and how the latter can be separated from other kinds of language mixing.

The text is followed by two appendices, the first of which (Appendix A) contains detailed sociolinguistic and demographic information on the 120 speakers on which the Ottawa-Hull French Corpus is based, while the second (Appendix B) is restricted to a few bibliographical references. There is a general index but no author or language index.

The research on which the book is based has two important characteristics. One is that it relies on quantitative data, drawing on a text basis of sixteen corpora, where all data sets have been stored and annotated. The second characteristic is its crosslinguistic orientation. While the English-French contact situation in Canada accounts for the majority of the analyses presented, the book covers borrowing phenomena in thirteen language pairs, including languages from five different language families. Ch. 7 is especially rich in language data, including recipient languages such as Gulf Arabic, Tunisian Arabic, Fongbe, Igbo, Japanese, Persian, Spanish, Turkish, and Ukrainian. Special attention is paid to linguistic integration into the structure of the recipient language, which is described as the major mechanism underlying borrowing. The author observes

that the nature of integration is largely independent of extralinguistic variables like recurrence, diffusion, or community conventionalization.

The book presents a number of generalizations, some of which challenge claims made in earlier work. For example, scholarly opinion is divided on whether borrowing and code-switching are distinct processes or instantiations of a single process (e.g. Thomason 2001:136, Myers-Scotton 2002:153–58). One of the main contributions that the book makes to the study of language-contact phenomena is that the two can clearly be distinguished. The decision of a speaker to borrow or code-switch is discrete: it is made at the moment material from the donor language is accessed. If the speaker opts for borrowing, the item is imbued with the morphology and syntax of the recipient language; in established loanwords, only the grammar of the recipient language is operative. In code-switches, by contrast, the morphosyntax of the donor language is retained. Based on the quantitative methodology set out in Ch. 2, P therefore concludes that the internal constituency of borrowed words is that of the recipient language, but that of the donor language in the case of code-switches.

Another important generalization presented in the book is that both the mechanism and results of borrowing are independent of the social concomitants of the process—in short, linguistic integration is independent of social integration, as P points out in Ch. 12. Integration into the morphosyntax of the recipient language is viewed as the ‘hallmark’ of lexical borrowing, while phonetic integration is idiosyncratic and does not constitute a reliable metric for distinguishing types of language mixing. Thus, it is argued that phonetic and morphosyntactic integration are also independent of one another.

In previous research, nonce borrowings may not have received the kind of attention they deserve; after all, most of them disappear after their first mention. Yet, as P observes, they are ‘a viable analytical and theoretical category’ (213). They do not differ essentially in their linguistic features from established borrowings, but the two can be distinguished on the basis of the extralinguistic factors of recurrence and diffusion.

A number of the results presented may be somewhat unexpected, and not only for the linguist unfamiliar with language mixing. Perhaps among the most surprising results is that—contrary to what has been claimed in some earlier studies (e.g. Heath 1989)—loanwords do not originate as code-switches. And for the linguist who has been brought up to believe that language change is gradual rather than discontinuous, it may also be surprising to learn, for example, that the linguistic integration of nonce borrowings is abrupt rather than gradual.

The book has a clearly delineated topic, and the student of linguistic borrowing might wonder how the observations made relate to kinds of borrowed material not considered in the book. Such material concerns, for example, prefabricated multiword expressions like idioms but also, perhaps even more importantly, discourse markers (or pragmatic markers). Discourse markers have been argued to belong to the most frequently borrowed linguistic phenomena. For example, in American Israeli family interactions, the largest category of ‘code-mixes’ (60%) was found to be that of nouns, but the second largest category was what Olshtain and Blum-Kulka (1989:68–69) term ‘discourse fillers’, accounting for 14% of the code-mixes. And in Siberian Yupik, an Eskimo-Aleut language, discourse markers and other function words account for more than half of the total loans from the more ‘prestigious’ Chukchi language (Grant 2012:311).

What makes the borrowing of discourse markers to be of particular interest is, on the one hand, that their linguistic integration appears to be of a different nature from that of loanwords. On the other hand, borrowing of discourse markers is not uncommonly reciprocal; that is, the languages in contact may simultaneously act as donor and receiver languages. For example, Texas Chicanos often use English ‘discourse markers’ in Spanish, but they may also use Spanish discourse markers such as *pero* ‘but’ and *pues/pos* ‘well’ in English conversations (Salmons 1990:475). It is hoped that this topic will receive more attention in future research since it might contribute to a wider understanding of borrowing processes.

But, obviously, such topics are clearly beyond the scope of the present book, which is restricted to loanword borrowing, analyzed fairly comprehensively, both language-internally and crosslinguistically. With its wide range of empirically sound generalizations, the book constitutes an

indispensable source for any future research on borrowing in particular and language mixing in general.

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