

DEFINITION AND TYPES OF INTERNATIONALISMS

Ruziev Khusniddin Bakhritdinovich

*Termiz State University Teacher of the department of
English language and literature*

Abstract: This article discusses internationalisms and their main types in the English language. It explains how internationalisms originate from different languages and spread through historical and cultural contact. The study briefly outlines key periods of lexical borrowing into English. It also emphasizes the role of internationalisms in modern global communication.

Keywords: Internationalisms, loanwords, cognates, lexical borrowing, language contact, phonetic adaptation, semantic equivalence, globalization, technical terminology, linguistic influence

Internationalisms are words or linguistic units that are shared across multiple languages, often with similar meanings and forms. These words typically arise from common linguistic roots, often from languages such as Latin, Greek, or French, and have been adopted into many languages due to cultural, scientific, technological, or historical exchanges. Internationalisms are especially prominent in technical, academic, and scientific fields, where precise terminology needs to be standardized and shared across linguistic boundaries.

In the context of English, internationalisms are generally loanwords that have been integrated into the language without significant changes in meaning. The main characteristic of internationalisms is their widely recognized form and meaning in multiple languages, making them easily understood in international communication.

Types of Internationalisms

Internationalisms can be classified into several types, based on their origin, the degree of adaptation to the borrowing language, and their specific function. The main categories of internationalisms are as follows:

1. Cognates

These are words that share the same origin in multiple languages but have evolved in similar ways. They often retain their phonological form across different languages. For example, the word "telephone" in English, "téléphone" in French, and "telefono" in Italian all derive from the Greek word "telephonos" (far-sounding).

2. Loanwords

Loanwords are words borrowed directly from other languages with minimal alteration to their spelling or meaning. These terms are generally adopted into English for their

specific technical or cultural relevance. Examples include words like "ballet" from French, "café" from French, and "piano" from Italian.

3. **Neologisms and Coinages** Some internationalisms are newly created or coined terms that are adopted by multiple languages. These are typically invented to describe new inventions, concepts, or phenomena. For instance, "internet" and "software" are international terms that are used across many languages, including English, without significant modifications.

4. **Calques**

A calque (or loan translation) involves the translation of the elements of a word or phrase from one language into another. Although the overall meaning remains the same, the structure of the word may change. An example is "skyscraper" in English, which is a direct translation of the French term "gratte-ciel."

5. **Hybrid Words**

Hybrid internationalisms are combinations of elements from different languages. These words often arise in scientific and technological contexts, where different linguistic components from Latin, Greek, or other languages are combined to form a new term. An example is "biotechnology", which combines the Greek "bios" (life) and the Latin "technologia" (technology).

6. **International Phrases and Expressions**

In addition to individual words, some phrases and expressions are considered internationalisms. These phrases retain their form and meaning across languages. For example, the phrase "modus operandi" (method of operation) is used in English and many other languages with little change in structure or meaning.

This section provides a foundational understanding of internationalisms in terms of their definition and various types. Would you like to continue with the next section on the historical processes of borrowing foreign words into English?

The borrowing of foreign words into the English language is not a new phenomenon but a long-standing process that has shaped English vocabulary for centuries. English has historically been receptive to influences from other languages, especially as a result of trade, invasion, colonization, scientific development, and cultural exchange. These influences have led to the assimilation of numerous words from different linguistic traditions, which have undergone various phonetic adaptations to fit English pronunciation norms.

Old English and Latin Influence

The earliest foreign borrowings in the English language occurred during the Old English period (5th-11th centuries) through the Latin influence. The spread of Christianity in the early medieval period brought Latin into England as the language of religion and scholarship. As a result, many religious, scholarly, and legal terms were borrowed from Latin, such as "bishop" (from Latin "episcopus"), "altar" (from Latin

"altare"), and "church" (from Latin "ecclesia").

The Norman Conquest and French Influence

One of the most significant periods of borrowing in the English language occurred during the Norman Conquest of 1066. The Norman French rulers and the aristocracy introduced a significant number of French words into English, especially in the areas of law, government, and the arts. These included words like "court," "government," "parliament," "council," and "crown." The phonetic transformation of French words was sometimes more noticeable, as Old English phonology did not have sounds that corresponded directly to the French system.

The Renaissance and the Revival of Latin and Greek

During the Renaissance (14th-17th centuries), there was a renewed interest in the classical languages of Latin and Greek. This intellectual movement led to a wave of Latin and Greek borrowings into English, particularly in the fields of science, philosophy, and medicine. Words like "radius," "analysis," "universe," and "theory" were integrated into English during this period. The pronunciation of many of these internationalisms followed the phonetic patterns of Latin and Greek, though they were adapted to the sounds of English.

The Industrial Revolution and Technological Borrowings

The Industrial Revolution (18th-19th centuries) marked another significant period of borrowing, especially as technological and scientific advancements necessitated new vocabulary. Many terms related to technology, industry, and trade were borrowed from languages such as French, German, and Italian. For example, "machine," "electricity," "dynamo," and "automobile" became common English terms.

During this period, the influence of German became especially important in scientific fields, with words like "chemistry," "physics," and "biology" entering English from German. The phonetic adaptation of these terms sometimes led to modifications in spelling and pronunciation to match English phonological rules.

Modern Globalization and Contemporary Borrowings

In the 20th and 21st centuries, globalization and technological advances have contributed to the borrowing of internationalisms from many languages, reflecting the global interconnectedness in fields like business, technology, and popular culture. Words from languages like Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and Spanish have found their way into everyday English. Examples include "karaoke" (from Japanese), "sputnik" (from Russian), and "taco" (from Spanish).

Additionally, the rise of English as a global lingua franca has led to the borrowing of not only individual words but also entire expressions and cultural concepts. This is especially evident in the fields of digital technology and internet culture, where terms like "emoji," "hashtag," and "blog" have become internationally recognized.

This section provides an overview of how English has absorbed foreign words

throughout history, and the phonetic adaptations these words underwent.

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