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## Accent and Pronunciation of Foreign Language Terms in Modern Languages

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### Abstract

English has acquired an inevitable place in the world. It is not only a language rather is lingua-franca. It is the language of contact for the people of different classes, culture, region and religion. It should more effectively be called a blend of languages (mainly European languages and many others). It is well said 'kos kos par badle paani, char kos par baani', because a language reflects the cultural and regional characteristics of a particular region. In English, we find there are innumerable words that have been adopted from foreign languages and have become too familiar to be believed foreign. Many such words are taken here for the exposure with reference to their origin, pronunciation, accent and stress. The phonetic variations result in the functional variation of the words. We most of the times find it difficult to recognize them because we have taken them for granted in English. The paper focuses on the importance of accent and pronunciation of some foreign terms. It also emphasizes on the advantages of correct usage and the disadvantages of the wrong usage as well. Some words from French, German, Italian, Japanese and Arabic have been taken for reference for the study. It attempts at establishing English as the language of the global village rather than of a particular region or area.

**Keywords:** Lingua-franca, global language, regional languages, modern English

### Introduction

Words are words because they are meaningful; otherwise they were an absurd set of letters. Every word may stand for more than one meaning in different context or different situation. The variation in the meaning of the words may occur because of the change in the pronunciation of the word, for example *read*/rɪ:d/and *read*/red/: the former stands for the present form of the verb read and the second stands for the past form of the same verb but called in a different accent. Similarly, the word *compound* is pronounced as/'kɒm.paʊnd/when used as noun or adjective and is pronounced as/kəm'paʊnd/when used as a verb.

English is regarded as the richest language of the world in terms of vocabulary. Rarely any other language of the world may have such an exceptionally large number of words. The credit goes to the language's ability to borrow and absorb words from other languages. "The English language" observed Ralph Waldo Emerson, "is the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven." The English language has been enriched throughout its history by borrowings from foreign languages. A borrowing (a loan word) is a word taken over from another language and modified in phonemic shape, spelling, paradigm or meaning according to the standards of the English language. It's true that English vocabulary which is one of the most extensive

amongst the world's languages contains an immense number of words of foreign origin.

When it comes to adoption of words from foreign languages, pronunciation is a prominent factor. Most of the foreign languages, either European or any other carry n-number of differences in their genesis, grammar, usage and pronunciation. The words from different languages may have different pronunciations even if they share the same spellings. For example, *comment* is/'kɒm.ent/in English but/'kɒm.ə/in French. In English, 'comma' is/'kɒm.ə/.

English is an ocean of languages which comprises of the words of hundreds of languages of the world. A language borrows a word (and doesn't give it back, but keeps it) when it doesn't have a word of its own for something new or a new idea. The different invaders in the history of England brought about a great change in the language of people and administration; further British companies established their colonies in various parts of the world and enriched English language through borrowing. In this process, English developed as the language of the world and rather than that of one country. It donated a number of English words to different speech communities of the world and received from their languages as well. Since the receiver and the donor languages were the Non-native languages to the speakers of the other countries that caused them difficulty at the pronunciation of the borrowed words in native accent,

therefore the pronunciation of those words was either adapted as per the requirement of the native language or was adopted as it is. Further, the attempt is being made to provide evidence to support this argument.

Approximately half of English vocabulary came from Norman French because of the conquest in 1066. French is the language that had most influence on the vocabulary of English; it also influenced its spelling. After the Norman invasion, English was neglected by the Latin-writing and French-speaking authorities. Northern French became the official language in England. There are several semantic groups of French borrowings: government terms: *to govern, to administer, assembly*; words connected with feudalism: *peasant, servant, money*; words connected with jury: *plaintiff, judge, fine*; words connected with art, fashion, food: *pleasure, appetite, beauty, figure, etc.* Early French borrowings were fully assimilated; the opposite tendency is to be discerned in the later French borrowings. During the 17th century there was a change in the character of the borrowed words. English took lots of words to do with cooking, the arts, and a more sophisticated lifestyle in general (prestige, leisure, resume). French borrowings of the period of the Norman Conquest became part of the English vocabulary.

<i>Butcher</i> /'bʊtʃ.ə r/	<i>Leisure</i> /'leɜ.ə r/
<i>Chivalry</i> /'ʃɪv. ə l.rɪ/	<i>Grammar</i> /'græm.ə r/
<i>Dungeon</i> /'dʌn.dʒ ə n/	<i>Question</i> /'kwes.tʃən/

### Words from Latin

Old English went through several waves of lexical borrowing from Latin, these loans are divided into continental and insular, vulgar and learned that they have particular phonological features and belong to particular fields of lexis, etc. While these distinctions are certainly valid for periodization and classification purposes, statistical analysis has so far been largely absent in the discussions of the Old English Latinate vocabulary. "Most of these loans, however, remain very much on the surface. They were borrowed from books by scholars, and remained, while they lasted, rather technical terms..." (1970: 314). Christian monks, and later scientists, brought in many Latin words. Some of the examples are following:

<i>Simile</i> /'sɪm.lɪ/	<i>Focus</i> /'fəʊ.kəs/
<i>Ratio</i> /'reɪ.ʃɪ.əʊ/	<i>Formula</i> /'fɔ:.mjʊ.lə/
<i>Recipe</i> /'res.ɪ.pɪ/	<i>Fungus</i> /'fʌŋ.gəs/
<i>Quantum</i> /'kwɒn.təm/	<i>Genius</i> /'dʒi:.ni.əs

### Words from Greek

Greek borrowings of the Middle English period are connected with the Great Revival of Learning and are mostly scientific words: *inertia, maximum, memorandum, superior, etc.* There are some classical borrowings in Modern English as well: *aspirin, iodine, atom, calorie, acid, etc.* There are words formed with the help of Latin and Greek morphemes (roots or affixes): *tele, auto, etc.* Greek was most useful to provide words for ideas, medicine, drama, and government.

<i>Psalm</i> /'sa:m/	<i>phobia</i> /'fəʊ.bi.ə/
<i>pseudonym</i> /'su:.də.nɪm/	<i>photo</i> /'fəʊ.təʊ/
<i>psychiatry</i> /'saɪ'kaɪə.trɪ/	<i>photosynthesis</i> /'fəʊ.təʊ'sɪnt.θə.sɪs/
<i>psychology</i> /'saɪ'kɒl.ə.dʒɪ/	<i>phrase</i> /'freɪz/
<i>telegram</i> /'tel.ɪ.græm/	<i>physics</i> /'fɪz.ɪks/

<i>telephone</i> /'tel.ɪ.fəʊn/	<i>syllable</i> /'sɪl.ə.bl/
<i>pharmacy</i> /'fɑ:.mə.sɪ/	<i>sympathetic</i> /'sɪm.pə'tet.ɪk/
<i>philanthropy</i> /'fɪ'lænt.θrə.pɪ/	<i>synonym</i> /'sɪn.ə.nɪm/
<i>phlegm/flem</i>	<i>phobia</i> /'fəʊ.bi.ə/

### Words from Spanish

<i>Chocolate</i> /'tʃɒk.lət/	<i>Mosquito</i> /'mɒ'ski:təʊ/
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### Words from Arabic:

<i>Chemistry</i> /'kem.ɪ.stri/	<i>harem</i> /'ha:.ri:m/
<i>cipher</i> /'saɪ.fə r/	<i>mafia</i> /'mæf.i.ə/
<i>coffee</i> /'kɒf.i/	<i>safari</i> /'sɑ:.ri/
<i>cotton</i> /'kɒt. ə n/	<i>tariff</i> /'tær.ɪf/
<i>crimson</i> /'krɪm.z ə n/	<i>zero</i> .

### Words from Russian

<i>Cosmonaut</i> /'kɒz.mə.nɔ:t/	<i>kalashnikov</i> /'kə'læʃ.nɪ.kɒf/
<i>Intelligentsia</i> /'di.m.tel.ɪ'dʒen t.si.ə/	<i>tsar</i> /'zɑ: r/

### Words from German

<i>Kindergarten</i> /'km.də.gɑ:.t ə n/	<i>aspirin</i> /'æs.pɪ.rɪn/
<i>Alzheimer's</i> /'æltz.hai.məz/	<i>blitz</i> /'blɪts/

### Words from Chinese

<i>Ketchup</i> /'ketʃ.ʌp/	<i>yen</i> /'jen/
<i>Wanton</i> /'wɒn.tən/	<i>Zen</i> /'zen/

### Words from Japanese

<i>Bonsai</i> /'bɒn.sai/	<i>Sudoku</i> /'sʊ'dʊk.u:/
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### Words from Italian

<i>Artisan</i> /'ɑ:.tɪ.zæn/	<i>façade</i> /'fə'sɑ:d/
<i>balcony</i> /'bæl.kə.nɪ/	<i>figurine</i> /'fɪg.ə'ri:n/
<i>bronze</i> /'brɒnz/	<i>fresco</i> /'fres.kəʊ/
<i>cameo</i> /'kæm.i.əʊ/	<i>gallery</i> /'gæl. ə r.ɪ/
<i>caricature</i> /'kær.ɪ.kə.tʃʊə r/	<i>graffiti</i> /'græf'i:ti/
<i>carpet</i> /'kɑ:.pɪt/	<i>grotesque</i> /'grɒt 'tesk/
<i>cartoon</i> /'kɑ:'tu:n/	<i>indigo</i> /'ɪn.dɪ.gəʊ/
<i>dilettante</i> /'dɪl.ə'tæn.tɪ/	<i>Madonna</i> /'mɑ'dɒ.nə/
<i>dome</i> /'dəʊm/	<i>magenta</i> /'mæ'dʒen.tə/

### From Indian

India is the cradle of the first civilization of the world founded in the banks of river Indus in the southern India. The inhabitants of this region spoke a variety of languages descending from indo-European family of languages. These were collectively called Dravidian languages. The languages spoken in the Northern India flourished from the Indo-Aryan Sanskrit group of the Indo-Iranian branch. With a culture and heritage as variegated and rich as India, the English language absorbed as many as around five hundred words during their reign in India. The Oxford English Dictionary currently has 700 words of Indian origin. For example:

<i>Avatar</i> /'æv.ə.ta: r/	<i>jungle</i> /'dʒʌŋ.gl/
<i>bandanna</i> /'bændən.ə/	<i>karma</i> /'kɑ:.mə/
<i>Brahmin</i> /'brɑ:.mɪn/	<i>khaki</i> /'kɑ:.ki/
<i>bungalow</i> /'bʌŋ.g ə l.əʊ/	<i>mugger</i> /'mʌg.ə r/

<i>cheetah</i> , /'tʃi:.tə/	<i>pundit</i> , /'pʌn.dɪt/
<i>chutney</i> , /'tʃʌt.ni/	<i>pajamas</i> , /pɪ'dʒɑ:.məz/
<i>cot</i> , /kɒt/	<i>sentry</i> , /'sen.tri/
<i>cushy</i> , /'kʊʃ.i/	<i>shampoo</i> , /ʃæm'pu:/
<i>guru</i> , /'gʊr.u:/	<i>toady</i>

### Words from Korean

*Kimchi, taekwondo*, /,taɪ'kwɒn.dəʊ/      *Hyundai, Samsung*

English has taken over words from most of the other languages with which it has had contacts: over 120 languages are on record as sources of the English vocabulary; from Japanese come *karate, judo, hara-kiri, kimono*; from Turkish, *yogurt, kiosk, tulip*; from Eskimo, *kayak, anorak*; from Yiddish, *gay, knish, latke, schmuck*. From Italian come words connected with music and the plastic arts. German expressions in English have been coined either by tourists bringing back words for new things they saw or by philosophers or historians describing German concepts or experiences (*kindergarten, blitz, hamburger, delicatessen, waltz, seminar*). The borrowings from other languages usually relate to things, which English speakers experienced for the first time abroad (Portuguese: *marmalade, cobra*; Spanish: *junta, siesta, patio, mosquito*; Dutch: *dock, leak, pump, yacht, easel, cruise*; Finish: *sauna*; Russian: *tsar, balalaika*).

Words are still entering English. Sometimes people know they are loan words. Other times, they do not. Here are some phrases from modern French that can still be recognized as French: *a la carte, a la mode, adieu, chic, chauffeur, chassis, debut, RSVP, resume, premiere, vis-à-vis, bon voyage, genre, avant-garde, bon fire, rapport, café, critique, bureau, bourgeois, liaison* and many more.

### Conclusion

The process of accepting the words from different languages into English has been so liberal and flexible that many foreign language terms have become native to English language users by now. Though, for many, pronunciation has been borrowed into English as that exists in their native language and for many others it has been adapted by Anglicizing the accent. For a few slight modifications have been done in their aspiration and for some others it may just be an addition of omission of a vowel to its spelling. Consequently, we find new varieties of English with the upcoming times and try to accommodate new terminology as per need. To encourage English to maintain its stature as a global language and to establish it as the world's most suitable lingua franca we have to keep this flexibility up but at the same time we have to maintain its originality by following the Received Pronunciation (RP) as standard. With the utmost ease of grabbing the world into small devices, with due thanks to revolution in information and communication technology, we have intertwined multiple cultures and languages into one and are able to use the newly emerged language varieties as standard varieties themselves. Most likely, it can be said that we have come to a state that we create a new pidgin every day and the next day it becomes as familiar as a creole to its users

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