

The English Lexicon: The Evolution of Old to Borrowed

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Abstract. *The English mined is a melange, but one that is constantly reshaping and evolving, whether through internal changes or external external transform, in this case borrowings from Turkic. This is a historical study of the mapping of Turkic on English, with a survey of Turkic loanwords as reflections of the diversity of English. This paper employs a historical linguistic approach to review the sociocultural and historical determinants, which were contributing for the adoption of Turkic lexicon into English.*

Key words: Internal changes, External transform, Loanwords, Sociocultural, Adoption, Turkic lexicon, Globalization, Ottoman Empire.

Introduction. English, often lauded for its adaptability and global reach, is a language built from centuries of historical, cultural, and linguistic interactions. One may first see globalization as the broadening, deepening, and quickening of global connectivity in all spheres of modern social life [1]. Its Germanic roots have been greatly enriched by lexical borrowings from a wide range of languages over time [2]. Among these influences, Turkic languages such as Turkish, Azeri, and Uzbek have contributed significantly to the English lexicon, particularly in the realms of culture, military, trade, and intellectual pursuits. These borrowings became increasingly prominent during the Renaissance and the post-Norman Conquest period, as the English-speaking world engaged with the expanding Ottoman Empire and other Turkic-speaking regions.

The process of lexical borrowing reflects not only the necessity to fill lexical gaps but also sociopolitical and economic shifts in English-speaking societies. Lexical borrowing is a linguistic process where a word or phrase from one language is incorporated into another [3]. The complex interplay of cultural exchanges through trade, military conquest, and diplomacy helped integrate Turkic words into English. While Turkic loanwords may have entered English in varying degrees over time, their presence reveals the fluid nature of language evolution and the continuous expansion of the English vocabulary to accommodate new concepts, especially as global interactions intensified. Borrowed words can be adapted to fit the phonological, grammatical, and semantic structure of the borrowing language, or they can retain their original form and meaning [4]. This paper aims to explore how Turkic borrowings have shaped the English lexicon and reflect historical transformations such as the rise of the Ottoman Empire, the Norman Conquest, and the expansion of trade along the Silk Road.

Methodology. This study uses a combination of historical linguistic analysis, comparative methods, and corpus-based research to examine the integration of Turkic loanwords into English. A corpus of English texts from various periods, including medieval and Renaissance literature, is analyzed for the presence of Turkic-derived terms. These terms are categorized based on their historical context, examining the socio-political events that facilitated their introduction. In addition to examining

literary and historical sources, secondary scholarly texts and linguistic studies are referenced to provide broader context to the linguistic phenomena under study.

Results. The results elucidate the importance of borrowing in lexical development, filling lexical gaps, and capturing sociopolitical and economic changes such as the influence of the Ottoman Empire, the Norman Conquest and trade via the Silk Road. In addition, this study aims to analyse the difficulties of classification of borrowing, especially differentiation between fully integrated words and recent loans. Lexical borrowing is an important aspect of English as a global lingua franca, which will help you make sense of a lot of terminology found in English. The findings suggest that the integration of Turkic words into English reflects both direct and indirect interactions between English-speaking peoples and the Turkic world, particularly through trade and political contacts during the Ottoman Empire's expansion. Key terms borrowed during the Norman Conquest and Renaissance periods include:

1. **Caftan** – Derived from Turkish *kaftan*, referring to a type of coat or robe, influenced by Ottoman culture and later adopted into English.
2. **Khan** – From Turkish *khan*, meaning ruler or leader, introduced through Central Asian or Mongol influence.
3. **Horde** – From Turkish *ordu*, referring to a military camp or large group, later associated with nomadic groups after Mongol and Turkic invasions.
4. **Mongol** – From Turkish and Central Asian contexts, this term referred to the Mongol people and was popularized after the Mongol Empire's expansion.
5. **Tartar** – From the Turkic *Tatar*, referring to the people of the Volga region, often used in medieval Europe to describe nomadic groups of Mongol and Turkic origin.

During the Renaissance, increased contact with the Ottoman Empire brought additional Turkic terms, particularly related to trade, social structures, and material culture. Notable terms include:

1. **Café** – Derived from Turkish *kahve*, referring to a coffeehouse, which became popular in Europe during the Renaissance.
2. **Bazar** – From Turkish *bazar*, originating from Persian *bāzār*, referring to a marketplace that became central to trade between the Ottoman Empire and Europe.
3. **Harem** – From Turkish *haremlik*, referring to the private quarters of women in an Ottoman household, a term that entered English due to fascination with Ottoman culture.

These borrowed terms reflect the significant influence of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the wider cultural and intellectual exchanges of the Renaissance. The terms absorbed during this period underscore the role of cultural diplomacy and the growing interest in Eastern practices and commodities.

Discussion. Globalization and English are intimately linked [5]. Mainly, the integration of Turkic loanwords into English during the Renaissance and the Norman Conquest underscores the fluid nature of language contact. The terms discussed above not only illustrate the practical needs of expanding vocabularies but also highlight the cultural and economic exchanges that shaped the development of the English language. English borrowed terms from Turkic languages as a way of accommodating new concepts related to trade, military, and cultural phenomena, reflecting broader historical movements such as the expansion of the Ottoman Empire and the Silk Road trade [6].

The challenges of categorizing borrowings into fully integrated versus recent loanwords are significant. The process of linguistic assimilation of loanwords is particularly distinct within a bilingual context [7]. Some terms, like *caftan* and *khan*, have been fully assimilated into English and are used with little awareness of their foreign origins. Others, such as *café* and *bazaar*, retain strong associations with their cultural and historical contexts and may be considered recent borrowings. This distinction highlights the ongoing process of lexical adaptation in English, as some terms are seamlessly integrated, while others maintain traces of their origins. Therefore, the processes of

borrowing and adaptation facilitate the exchange of culture and the enhancement of mutual comprehension by enabling speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds to exchange vocabulary, concepts, and ideologies. Such interactions play a crucial role in dismantling cultural divides and fostering greater intercultural awareness [8].

Conclusion. The English lexicon is a testament to the adaptability and inclusivity of the language [9]. The incorporation of Turkic loanwords throughout English history demonstrates how external linguistic influences, such as trade and cultural exchange, contribute to the richness and diversity of English. The study of lexical borrowings, particularly from Turkic languages, provides valuable insights into the historical and cultural transformations that have shaped the language and continues to inform its development today. As a global lingua franca [10], English continues to evolve through its engagement with a wide range of languages and cultures [11]. Future research should explore underexplored linguistic influences, such as Indigenous contributions and the impact of digital communication on modern borrowing trends.

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