This finding seems to agree with other studies (English borrowings in different languages of the world) in which most borrowed words from English are in this domain. On the other hand, the absence of borrowings from certain categories like journalism, language and literature seems to suggest that perhaps in these domains, the Burmese language is able to meet the lexical needs of Burmese society and therefore has no need for borrowed words.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate English lexical borrowings in Burmese, specifically the type and manner of borrowing as well as the spheres of human activity that gave rise to such borrowings. In order to investigate the problem, English lexical borrowings extracted from a Burmese monolingual dictionary were analyzed using Haugen's classification framework. The findings of this study established the main types of lexical borrowing, the predominant manner of loanword borrowing, as well as specific patterns of phonemic adaptation that the English words underwent in the process of integration into the Burmese language. In addition the findings established the domains of human activity that furnishes the most borrowings. This chapter draws conclusions on the type and manner of borrowing and the domains of human activity. It also discusses the significance and implications of the study as well as makes suggestions for further research.

5.1   Summary of Findings

Here the findings from collection of data, the findings from types and manner of borrowing, the findings from various patterns of adaptations and the findings from grouping of words in related domains of human activities will be discussed.

5.1.1 Corpus

The corpus of English lexical borrowings comprised a total of 512 words. (See Appendix C). Of these 512 items, 510 words were nouns forming 99.62% of the total number of borrowed words, with only one verb and one adjective. Here the researcher likes to repeat what was mentioned in 4.0 that this predominance of nouns rather than any other word class concurs with Min Latt's (1966) statement that "Burmese does not usually accept loans as verbs or attributes, every word borrowed is almost always a noun" (p. 223). This finding is also in line with what Orwell (1967) stated about English loans. He highlighted that with very few exceptions loans do not function as verbs in Burmese and further stressed that this applies not only to loans from English but also to loans from any other source, even Pali.

5.1.2 Type of Borrowing

The findings of this study concur with the studies of Haugen (1953, 1972) and Heah (1989) in that there are three main types of borrowings (loanwords, loanblends and loanshifts) in the corpus of this study. As loanwords formed the largest category of borrowings (86.91% or 445 words) loanwords are the most common type of English borrowed words assimilated into the Burmese language and officially accepted as Burmese words. This seems to place emphasis on the morphemic importation of the borrowed word rather than a blend or a shift of the borrowed word. It is possible that phonemic substitution presents an easier process of assimilation therefore resulting in the larger number of loanwords. Such a finding is in line with the works of Haugen (1953, 1972) and Heah (1989) which state that loanwords are words which are most easily borrowed.

In this study, the findings reveal that after loanwords, loanblends is the second largest category with 64 words (12.50%) followed by 3 words in the loanshifts category (0.59%) of the borrowings in the corpus. For these two categories, the researcher's findings are not similar to Heah's study. In Heah's study, the second largest category of borrowings was loanshifts, followed by loanblends. The higher frequency for loanblends in this study could have occurred because the manner of borrowing for loanblends and loanshifts differ. As loanblends result from a process that combines importation and substitution, this may be an easier spontaneous process for borrowed words being assimilated into the

language than the process of substituting native words to designate new concepts, that is, the process of loanshifts. Heah's study involved both spontaneous and planned development of the lexicon for Bahasa Malaysia which could explain the higher incidence of loanshifts in that particular study. As the English lexical borrowings of this study were not the result of a planned development of the Burmese lexicon, the English words passed spontaneously into Burmese when they were used by people who were monolinguals, unfamiliar with English, and who modified the phonemic shape of these words to fit the phonological patterns of the native language. This is in line with Trager (1972) who pointed out that when borrowing takes place there is always some departure from the original, in phonology, in morphology and in semiology. Such a process results in loanblends rather than loanshifts. This process explains the higher frequency of loanblends in the study.

5.1.2 Manner of Borrowing

Among the different ways in which the borrowed words have been assimilated, the most common is the manner of partial substitution which accounts for 246 words or 48.05% of the borrowed words in the corpus. This is due to the fact that when the words are borrowed into Burmese they have to undergo some kind of modification in terms of sound as Burmese has phonological features quite different from the source language. Such partial substitution of sounds in

loanwords offers the simplest process of assimilation resulting in this being the most common manner of borrowing.

From the findings, loan translations have the least number of borrowed words. They account for only 3 words or 0.59% of borrowed words in the corpus. These are words which express concepts on the basis of the English models, that is, only the meaning of the word is taken and not the word. A possible reason for the low incidence in this manner of borrowing is that when adapting English or other foreign phonemic material, there may be difficulty in finding precise words from the Burmese lexical stock to embody the meaning of the borrowed word or as is sometimes the case, the newly-created word may be too long to say in Burmese, resulting in the small number of loan translations. This can be understood in the case of the word 'television'. Even though the Burmese have translated the word into Burmese as *ɤkyfjrifohjum;* /φ←√/μφ□ν/τ℘ν /τ♣℘:/ { *ɤkyfjrif* /φ←√/μφ□ν/ meaning, image-see 'vision' and /τ℘ν/ /τ♣℘:/ meaning, sound-hear 'tele'} but because of the length of the word, people prefer to use the shorter form television τε/λ□/β□:/│ν/ορ just 'tv' instead. Such preferences for shorter forms of English borrowed words could also explain the extremely small number of loan translations in this study.

5.1.2   Patterns of Phonological Adaptations

Among the borrowed English words described in the corpus, loanwords have adapted most easily to the Burmese sound system. As most loanwords correspond closely to the source in terms of consonant and vowel sounds, there has been an easy adaptation of sounds between Burmese and English in the integration of the loanwords. This can be clearly seen in none substituted and partial substituted loanwords. Here the English vowel sounds, /ɪ/,/□/,/∴/,/—/,/ɛ/,/α/,/⌐/,/□/,/□/,/←/,/ǀ/,/ν/,/℘/ and diphthongs /ε□/,/α□/,/⌐□/,/α←/,/∴←/ /ε∴/,/o←/ are easily adapted in the Burmese system. The vowels in the English word (none substituted word) barley /∩β□:λ□/ is adapted to the vowels in the Burmese word *ℋᵐᵥ𝒟* /β□/λ□/. In partially substituted words also the same phenomena can be experienced. In the word cartel /κ□:τελ/ *uᵐw,f* /κ□/τε̲/, even though there is a phonemic change in the sound, the vowels are retained. In the same way, English diphthongs are also retained as in the words:

polo /π∴←/λ∴←/ *ydk̆vdk̆* /π∴←/λ∴←, banjo /β—νδǀ∴←/ *bif8dsK̆* /β□ν/δǀ∴←/ . Pronouncing these words will not be of significant difficulty for Burmese people, since the vowels and diphthongs correspond well enough in both languages. Therefore we can conclude that when the phonemic shape of Burmese words correspond closely with the English phonemic shape, the English word is easily borrowed.

Nevertheless, phonological adaptations of English loans in Burmese show some significant phonological differences between these two languages. The absence of certain sounds such as /f/, /v/ and /r/ sounds in Burmese highlight the differences between the two languages. With the absence of such sounds in Burmese, they are replaced with /π‖/ *z* and /β/ 𝒜 and /φ/ *ɤ* respectively as in words such as (film) /φ□λμ/ - *zvif*/π‖α/λιν/, /φ/ is replaced by /π‖/; (visa) /ϖι:ζ∴/- 𝒜𝒟𝒵ₘ /βι:/ζ□:/, /ϖ/ is replaced by /β/ and (radar)/ρε□δ□:(ρ)/-*aɤ′g*/φ∴□/δ□/, /ρ/ is replaced by/φ/. Therefore when sounds like these in English do not exist in Burmese, they are replaced with other sounds in Burmese which are closest to the original sounds.

Another important difference between English and Burmese is the final consonant sound. Final consonant sounds of the borrowed words were found to be dropped or replaced with weaker sounds or glottal checks. Final consonants sounds /c/, /d/, /k/, /p/, /t/ are replaced with glottal stops / √/. In the words like (tonic), (salad), (workshop), (block), (carat), the final consonant sounds are replaced with /√/ sound and become/τ⌐:/ν□√/, /σ∴/λ℘√/,/ω←/♣⌐:√/, /β∴/λ∴←√/,/κ∴/ρ—√/. The collapse of these final consonant sounds to glottal checks is a dominant feature of the borrowed words in this study.

5.1.3   English Borrowings in Thematic Domains

The majority of English borrowings are terms associated with science, medicine, people, clothing, food, things, law and politics. The highest number of borrowed words is in the science and technology domain, followed by people and things domains. As these domains deal with the developing aspects of human circumstances and therefore the reality of change in society and lifestyle, many words had to be borrowed to meet the lexical demands of these domains.

Despite the fact that the education and economy domains are two important domains of human activity that greatly influence change in the world, they had the least of borrowed words. The low frequency of words in the education domain however could possibly be understood in the context of history. During the English occupation and after independence, the Burmese education system was mainly in English and so the need to borrow English words into Burmese did not arise as educational needs were fulfilled in English. As for the low incidence of borrowed words in the economy domain, it can be explained by an understanding of the Burmese economy as a system that has hardly changed for the past forty years and therefore there is little reason to adopt new words in this domain.

In this study, there is a domain that consists of specific terms used in artillery, which reflects the military influence on Burma. During the Second World War many words that were associated with army posts like 'captain' 'sergeant' (an officer in the army), 'operator' (a person who operates wireless machine), 'doctor' (an army doctor) and military equipment such as 'tank', 'bulldozer',

'jeep', 'machine-gun', 'torpedo', 'bazooka' and 'rifle' were transferred into Burmese. Apart from word contributions in the military domain, the British Army also contributed tremendously to Burmese in terms of lexical transfer in other domains. They built roads, railways and constructed buildings, resulting in words like 'contactor' 'shunting' and 'sleepers'. Many famous hospitals were built, fully equipped with operation theatres and machines for public use. These resulted in Burmese being exposed to Western forms of medical treatment and words like 'liniment', 'penicillin' and 'vitamin'. The existence of such borrowings reflect the importance of using a diachronic approach to study the transfer of words from English into Burmese.

5.1.4 Results of Borrowings

A possible result of borrowing English words into the Burmese language can be understood in terms of the accuracy and effectiveness of the borrowed words. These can express more accurately and effectively concepts previously foreign to Burmese society. This is the case with the use of English measurements (pounds, pints, gallon, miles, meter etc) as opposed to more traditional Burmese weights and measurement system such as 'one basket /τ□/δαυ:ν/, /τ□/χηιν:/', and 'one palm or one elbow length /τ□/τηω□/,/τ□/το←ν/'.

Another result is the possible decrease in use of native equivalents. Native equivalents in meaning to English models such as television and crane are found

to be long words. As in the case of the word 'crane' in English to the native equivalent word /κ←∣/τ\ν/κ←∣/τ♣℘/μ□←:ν/ 'an arm that loads and unloads goods', it would be easier to use a shorter and precise word that conceptualizes the machine called a 'crane'.

5.2   Significance and Implications of the Study

English borrowings have certainly brought new developments and changes in the Burmese language. This phenomenon of lexical borrowing might be regarded as an intrusion of foreign words into the Burmese language and thus a process that is not acceptable. However, this study has shown that the borrowed words form a very small, though significant part of the Burmese lexicon and contributed significantly to the lexical expansion of certain domains in Burmese society. Study of the development of the Burmese language has also shown that despite being exposed to the language of their rulers, not just the English, the Burmese language has been resilient enough to maintain the distinctive features that make the language a Burmese one and yet absorb lexical loans needed. It is in borrowing from other languages that the Burmese language has remained relevant to the needs of its people.

Research on type and manner of borrowings in the Burmese language has been given little focus. This study has provided insights into the type of English lexical

borrowings and the manner in which they have been borrowed. This knowledge has added to the literature of research on lexical borrowings, specifically English borrowings in the Burmese language. The findings from this research will be useful to language planners and future researchers of the Burmese language in determining the most effective type and manner of borrowing that could be implemented in the transfer of words.

In the area of science and technology, there were borrowings to cope with the demands of scientific and technological development. Given the current rapid development in this domain, especially in information technology, there seems to be a need to deliberately borrow words from the English language as other languages have done and introduce them formally into school or university curriculums.

This study has shown that by using the IPA method, words borrowed from English can be transcribed as they sound. In using this method of transcription, the researcher has not only added one more method to the existing methods of transcribing Burmese words but also shown that this could be an instrument for further research in similar studies between Burmese and other languages which have different writing systems.

5.3   Suggestions for Further Research

The findings of this study suggest that there is an extensive area of research still to be explored on English borrowings in the Burmese language. Today, the Burmese people have opened their doors to other countries and English has once again become an important medium of communication for them. Since the two languages are in more frequent contact, the impact of one language on the other would change. Therefore it is important to continue research on the impact of English on Burmese as Burmese is now absorbing more English loans than in the past. It is important that systematic research be in place to analyze the English words that are entering the language and which eventually may make their way into official Burmese.

Greater emphasis should be given on research into borrowings in spoken discourse in Myanmar. Words are easily borrowed in spoken discourse but do take a long time to become officially accepted as Burmese words. Contact with English often begins with the spoken form and then become institutionalized in the written form in order to be registered in dictionaries. As pronunciation of borrowed words differ between bilinguals and monolinguals, research into the differences between the two types of speakers would also be significant in understanding the process of assimilation.

5.4 Conclusion

Research is an ongoing process to study any language and this study has revealed that there is immense scope and opportunity to improve the study of loans. Linguistic theories combined with such scientific research on borrowings would inevitably benefit the study of language maintenance and growth of the Burmese language, ensuring its place as a modern language of the world.

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