***Yafimchik K.V.***

**French influence on English**

        The development of a certain language has a long history. It's inevitable that different languages influence and penetrate each other in their formation and development. English is a typical representative of this kind of language. As a cosmopolitan language, English has been greatly influenced by various languages, especially by French.

The [Norman](http://www.historyonthenet.com/Normans/normansmain.htm) invasion of England in [1066](http://battle1066.com/) had a major impact not only on the country, but also on the English language. [William the Conqueror](http://www.historyonthenet.com/Normans/williamconqueror.htm) and his merry band of Normans brought with them Norman French, which became the language of the court, government and the upper class for the next three centuries. English continued to be used by ordinary people, and Latin was the language of the church.

During the period when Norman French was the dominant language, English was rarely used in writing, and started to change in many ways. Before the conquest English had a much more complex grammar, however 70 or 80 years later, the grammar became much simpler. This change is known as the transformation from Old English to Middle English. At the same time Norman French became Anglo-Norman as it was itself affected by English. More pairs of similar words arose. (Table 1)

Table 1. French-English bilinguism

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| French | English |
| close | shut |
| reply | answer |
| odour | smell |
| annual | yearly |
| demand | ask |
| chamber | room |
| desire | wish |
| power | might |
| ire | wrath / anger |

Many words were borrowed from Norman French. These can be grouped into several types:

legal terms ("adultery", "slander"),

military words ("surrender", "occupy"),

names of meats ("bacon", "venison"),

words from the royal court ("chivalry", "majesty").

the non-metric unit of volume (the "gallon") is Norman French. There are many other words.

The Normans introduced the QU spelling for words containing KW (*"question").*

More than 10,000 French words found their way into English – words associated with government, law, art, literature, food, and many other aspects of life. About three quarters of these words are still used, and words derived directly or indirectly from French now account for more than a third of English vocabulary. In fact English speakers know around 15,000 French words, even before they start learning the language.

Quite a lot of words of French origin used in English sit alongside the native English ones, and in some cases there are words of Latin and/or Greek origin with similar meanings. Beef (from French *boeuf*) is meat from a cow (from Old English *cu*), a type of bovine (from Latin *bovinus* via French *bovin*). A king (from Old English *cyning*) can be kingly, royal (from French *roial*) and regal (from Latin *regalis*). The new military words which came into use such as *manoruvre, bivouac, corps, terrain, and enfilade* have become well established. Other military terms adopted after or just prior to the Restoration include: *cartouche*, *brigade*, *platoon,* *mêlée*, *envoy*, and *aide-de-camp*. Loans belonging to specialized registers such as the military ones were borrowed out of necessity.

While Fr. loans did contribute to many specialized registers as demonstrated above, social loans such as *repartee*, *liaison*, *naïve*, *class*, *décor*, *rapport*, *malapropos*, *métier*, *faux* *pas*, *beau*, *verve*, *ménage*; and cultural loans such as *rôle*, *crayon*, *soup*, *cabaret*, *cravat*, *memoirs*, *champagne*, *ballet*, *nom*-*de*-*plume*, *pool*, *denim*, *attic*, *mousseline* and *vinaigrette* constitute the majority of loans. By cultural I mean loans which would fit into the registers of arts, literature, dress, games and dancing, and food.

In the eighteenth century, food and cooking continued to attract Fr. loans (e.g. *casserole*, *croquette*, *ragout*, *hors* *d’* *oeuvre*, *liqueur*); so do literature, music, and art (*critique*, *belles* *letters*, *connoisseur*, *vaudeveille*, *dénouement*, *précis*, *brochure*)

In some cases words with the same or similar meanings were borrowed from both Norman French and Parisian French at different times. For example *warden* comes from Norman French, while *guardian* comes from Parisian French.

The pronunciation of English changed to some extent under the influence of French, as did the spelling. For example, the Old English spellings cw, sc and c became qu, sh and ch, so we now write *queen* rather than cwen, *ship* rather than scip, and *should* rather than scolde.

English grammar did take on a few French structures, such as putting adjectives after nouns in some expressions - attorney general, secretary general, surgeon general. Aside from borrowing and word formation, French considerably influenced English phrasing. The loan translations range from polite turns of speech, such as *at your service, do me the favour, to engage somebody in a quarrel, to make (*later: *pay*) *a visit,* to idiomatic phrases like *by occasion, in detail, in favour of, in the last resort, in particular, to the contrary.*

Though the number of French loans in the modern period is relatively minor in comparison to Middle English, the contribution is most important. The French Loans were primarily borrowed to provide richness to the language. Whilst it was arguable during the Restoration whether the loans were corrupting or enriching the language, today there is no doubt or disputable grounds to argue that the loans did nothing but enrich the English language.

The borrowing of vocabulary is rapprochement of nations on the ground of economic, political and cultural connections. The bright example of it can be numerous French borrowings to English language.

Attempts to continue borrowings in the 20th century were not a success because the language became more independent.

**Table 2. French borrowings**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Word** | **Meaning** | **Word** | **Meaning** | **Word** | **Meaning** |
| asset | enough | rape | take by force | lease | leave |
| bail | to take charge | remedy | to heal | leisure | allowed |
| bailiff | carrier | renown | to make famous | lever | to raise |
| butcher | seller of goat flesh | reprieve | send back | liable | may be bound |
| chivalry | horseman | retail | piece cut off | libel | little book |
| comfort | strengthen | salary | salt | liberty | free |
| crime | judgment | scavenger | tax collector | liquorice | sweet root |
| curfew | cover fire | scullery | maker of dishes | noun | name |
| elope | run away | shop | cobbler's stall | nurse | nourish |
| embezzle | ravage | squirrel | little shadow tail | occupy | seize |
| enemy | non friend | stubble | grain stalks | odour | smell |
| fashion | make | subsidy | support | parliament | speaking |
| gallon | jug | survive | over live | pedigree | crane's foot |
| grammar | art of letters | tally | mark on a stick | platter | big plate |
| grease | fat | tax | to charge | pocket | small bag |
| gutter | drop | toil | stir | prison | lay hold of |
| injury | wrong | usher | door keeper | profound | deep |

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