

ANNE-LINE GRAEDLER. Morphological, semantic and functional aspects of English lexical borrowings in Norwegian. *Acta Humaniora*, No. 40. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget AS (Scandinavian University Press), 1998. Pp. xxi + 368.

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Graedler's book is an important and substantial contribution to the area of English influence on the Norwegian language. The author, an associate professor at the Department for British and American Studies at the University of Oslo, completed a dissertation on the topic, which she defended in 1996. The present expanded and improved version stemming from 1998 has, in addition to the text, 63 tables, two figures and four appendices. It is well written and almost free of errors.

This study comes at an opportune time: American and British culture have had a pervasive influence far beyond the borders of the U.S. and the British Isles through their export of pop music, TV programs, films, high tech products, sports and now a World Wide Web that is largely English-language based. It is virtually impossible for a Norwegian not to be exposed to the English language on a daily basis. As Graedler points out, there has been contact between Norwegian and English for centuries; however, since WW II the extent of that contact has grown. Lexical elements are now borrowed that are not simply cultural novelties. Although many scholars such as Aasta Stene, Einar Haugen and Alf Hellevik have studied the Norwegian borrowings from English, Graedler is the first to have worked with an extensive database of loans.

The strength of her study rests to a large extent on the quality of that database. There are over 17,000 examples of approximately 3,760 different words. One third of the examples come from theses done in the 1960s and are taken from newspapers. The remaining two-thirds date from 1988 and 1994 and are primarily from newspapers but include some examples from novels, journals, magazines and catalogues. There are even a few examples taken from spoken Norwegian. One could quibble that the database is too restricted, that there are not enough examples from the spoken language, from television and radio or from the less conservative younger generation. Nevertheless, the material Graedler has assembled is, I feel, fairly representative of the current situation.

Her approach to the material is very thorough and can well serve as a model for future studies of the influence of a dominant language on other languages. There are three main sections to the study: introduction; morphological integration; and meaning and function. In the introduction the author discusses her aim, which is to find out how well English lexical elements are integrated into Norwegian. She surveys English influence on Norwegian from the Viking Age to the present and the scholarly literature discussing it. She briefly takes up the attitudes of various groups toward borrowing. In the last part of the introduction Graedler goes over the theoretical and methodological framework for her study. Here she discusses what borrowing is, how she defines a loanword, the material in the database, the methods she uses to describe and analyze the data, and the integration of the loanwords.

The section on morphological integration is divided into four parts. The first part looks at the inflection of borrowed verbs and adjectives, which comprise 6% and 8% of the corpus respectively. It turns out that borrowed verbs are mainly inflected according to the Norwegian Class 1 pattern (*å kaste* 'to throw'; *kaster* 'throw(s)'; *kastet* 'threw'; *kastet* 'thrown'), e.g. *Han er dresset opp...* 'He is dressed up...' With regard to adjectives, integration is indicated by agreement with nouns, especially in attributive position, and by inflection for comparison. Graedler refutes earlier claims that borrowed English adjectives are not generally well integrated, showing that monosyllabic adjectives in particular are well integrated. One difference between borrowed verbs and adjectives is that marking for tense is relevant for the meaning of a verb, and therefore obligatory, whereas the agreement of an adjective with a noun is a redundant feature, and hence not as regular.

Borrowed nouns make up the bulk of the database examples, some 83%. Norwegian nouns are inflected for definiteness and plurality. 42% of the indefinite plural forms in the database use the most common Norwegian endings, *-er/-e* or no plural marker, with gender and syllabicity as major factors determining the choice of plural ending. The use of the English plural *-s*, which Graedler says may carry plural function in contemporary Norwegian, depends on how long the noun has been in the language, whether it has Norwegian counterparts, and to what extent the spelling has been adapted to Norwegian patterns. The assignment of grammatical gender to borrowed nouns leads to a predominance of common

gender. The author has a set of ordered rules for assigning gender to nouns: 1) semantic assignment; 2) morphological assignment; and 3) assignment by analogy. These rules take care of roughly 74% of the nouns in the database.

The next chapter looks at word-formation processes that words already borrowed into Norwegian may undergo. Most common are combinations of Norwegian affixes with English words. Borrowed verbs produce derived adjectives with the addition of present and past participle endings, and they produce action and agent nouns by adding the suffixes *-ing* and *-er*, respectively. The latter two endings are the same in Norwegian and English, which leads to a problem in classification that Graedler takes up. Borrowed nouns are highly productively combined with Norwegian adjectival endings. More than a fourth of the words in the database are compounds that are not originally compounds in English. Most common are those with the English element first. The author shows that the type and order of the constituents correlates with the function of the process of compounding. With E + N compounds users can avoid integration of the foreign element, whereas with N + E compounds the English element coming last can be seen as a sign of integration.

In the section on meaning and semantic integration of English loanwords, Graedler looks at meaning changes in the English loanwords and their semantic or lexical integration into Norwegian. Why do some loanwords change meaning and others do not? Why are words with already extant Norwegian equivalents borrowed? She finds that some things are very predictable 'such as the fact that most loanwords are used in a much narrower sense in Norwegian than in English [e.g., *light* meaning low in calories], and the fact that a majority of loanwords are used to fill semantic gaps in the Norwegian vocabulary [*Alt innen rock, pop, blues...* 'Everything within rock, pop, blues...']'. Graedler suggests that nouns and verbs are more stable whereas adjectives tend to change more in that they are dependent on other elements in the clause.

In the next chapter Graedler looks at 'the function of loanwords in relation to the language users'. A nice table illustrates the correspondences between communicative function, stylistic effect, and motive for borrowing of English loanwords into Norwegian. For example, if one focuses on the referent, the function is predominantly referential, the stylistic effect is technical, professional, authoritative, objective, precise, and the motive is to introduce new

things and explain the meaning of new Norwegian terms. Graedler argues that 'characteristics of the group of English lexical borrowings as a whole...and the fact that they appear as foreign (English), and hence, may signal prestige, are also important factors in assessing their function and effect in discourse'.

Graedler ends with a summary of results and a conclusion. She claims that the present situation in Norway is similar to that of a linguistic minority in relation to a majority language community. One is reminded of the Sámi language's relation to Norwegian itself: language contact is a phenomenon of the real world whereby languages change and even disappear as a result. She writes that 'Many of the insights gained from the present study are neither particularly unexpected nor very spectacular. However, a main aim of the study has been to present empirical data in an area where, earlier, many claims have been made on the basis of purely intuitive judgements'. Here she has definitely succeeded. Finally, she writes that it is her hope that '[the study's] shortcomings may inspire others to continue the work in an area that holds, and will continue to hold, the interest of professionals and laymen alike'. In my view, there are few shortcomings with the study under review. This is a first rate piece of work that lays the groundwork for future studies not only on the English language's influence on Norwegian but on language contact situations in general, and it raises a number of interesting questions, especially in the area of meaning and semantic integration of loanwords.

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