

The Role of Loanwords in the Lexical Description of English for Architecture:

a Corpus-based Study

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Abstract

Within professional languages, the lexicon has been a recurring and central topic due to its representative function and also because it embodies the cornerstone for the construction of technicality. The different devices for coining new words in English may be classified into syntagmatic neology, semantic neology and loanword neology. Loanword neology is a suitable means for filling lexical gaps also in professional and academic languages and it deviates from the common syntagmatic devices, such as word-formation, in more than one respect, one of the most noteworthy being, as pointed out by Hope (1963:39), that it does not involve the formation of a term “ex-nihilo”. The borrowed word has already proved to be suitable for a specific lexical gap in another language at the time it is adopted, that is, it has revealed itself as efficient; such a pragmatic motivation behind the coinage suits the linguistic behavior of professional languages in general, and English for architecture in particular. The discourse of architecture exhibits an interdisciplinary character partly due to its nature which combines both technical and humanist aspects, a peculiarity that is also reflected when creating new terms. Aspects to be addressed in this study include the drive behind the phenomenon of loanword neology together with the core sources for borrowing in English for architecture. The two main groups of loanwords: *necessity loanwords* (*collage* or *Art Nouveau*) and *luxury loanwords* (*patio* or *schloss*) levels of technicality, the use of loanwords as a *gate-keeping* device and the semantic profile of borrowed terms will also be discussed. This approach will be achievable thanks to the analysis of the material obtained by means of a self-compiled corpus of 500.000 words of real, relevant, and up-to-date linguistic materials, specifically designed for the lexical description of English for Architecture according to objective criteria out of recognized sources from the contemporary world of international architecture such as *AIA*

Journal, Architecture Magazine, Architectural Review, RIBA Journal, among others. A comprehensive examination of these loanwords will lead to a better understanding and a more detailed description of the English for architecture.

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