

things expansion of the vocabulary, creation of new words and greater complexity, but without inflectional morphology and with a minimum of derivational morphology. That is also how learners normally cope with new words.

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Romance words in English: From history to pedagogy

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1. English and French: A common lexical heritage

Is English a Romance language? Such was the somewhat bold question put by J.M. Gachelin in an article published in 1990. It is however a justifiable question when one considers the number of French words which swamped the English language following the Norman Conquest. Norman French became the dominant language of the upper classes and as a result, many thousands of French words infiltrated the English language, affecting permanent change upon the language of administration, law, arts and sciences, fashion and not least, gastronomy.

Over the centuries, English has also acquired a great number of Latin words. Some were borrowed in the Old English period and during the Middle Ages but the majority were introduced in the 16th and 17th century at the time of the revival of classical learning. The role of French in the process of classicization is described by Gachelin (1990:9) as follows: "French acted as the Trojan horse of Latinity in English, the sluice gate through which Latin was able to pour into English on a scale without any equivalent in any other Germanic language".

The combined import of French and Latin words created a new stratum in the English vocabulary, which one might call the Romance stratum, using "Romance" as an umbrella term covering all Latin-derived words, all those borrowed directly from Latin as well as those coming from French or other Romance language. The new Romance stratum was added to the existing Germanic stock, giving rise to a great number of quasi-synonymous Romance-Germanic doublets, such as *aid/help*, *descend/go down*, *signify/mean*, *obtain/get*, pairs which differ stylistically, the Romance word typically being more learned or literary than the Germanic word. These doublets, or "bisociate pairs" in McArthur's (1990:16) terminology, reveal a major split in the English vocabulary between the Romance stratum which, though it contains more words, is predominantly made up of non-core or subject-core words,¹ and the Germanic stratum which contains an overwhelming majority of high frequency core words. The richness of the English vocabulary is further increased by the existence of numerous Franco-Latin doublets. Gachelin (ibid:11) gives

the following examples: *abridge/abbreviate*, *frail/fragile*, *royal/regal*, *restraint/restriction*, *poor/pauper*, etc.²

Lexical borrowings from French have continued without interruption up to the present day. According to Algeo (1991:4) French is still the most prolific source of borrowings in English. As a consequence of these centuries of lexical exchanges, English is what Lipka (1990:7) calls "a unique mixture of Germanic and Romance elements" or, to use Gachelin's (ibid:9) metaphorical formulation, a "balanced blend of the North Sea and the Mediterranean", a feature which undoubtedly contributes to its success as an international language. So although one might not wish to go as far as to call English a Romance language, one could certainly call it the most Romance-like of the Germanic languages.

One important result of the common background of the English and French languages is that they share a great many cognates.³ This is not only due to the infiltration of French into the English language alluded to above. There has also been extensive borrowing from English into French, a phenomenon which peaked in the 19th century but which, to the despair of French purists, is still much in evidence today.

2. Diverging patterns of semantic evolution

Once borrowed, words start to live a life of their own in the borrowing language, while the words in the donor language continue to evolve independently. It is these diverging patterns of semantic evolution which account for the existence of deceptive cognates, or false friends, which cause considerable difficulty for the English- or French-speaker attempting to learn or use "the other language". These difficulties will be illustrated and discussed in due course.

By way of a prelude, however, it is useful to trace the evolution of some of these deceptive cognates,⁴ and to identify how their meanings came to diverge.

The meanings of some pairs of words have developed so differently that they have become totally deceptive cognates, or historically related words whose "conceptual meanings totally diverge" (Van Roey 1990:116). The pair *fabrique/fabric* is a good example of this total divergence. Its evolution is traced in Figure 1, which for clarity's sake includes only those meanings of *fabrique/fabric* which are of direct relevance to the contrastive analysis. The meanings in bold are still extant today; the others are no longer used.

The French word *fabrique* was borrowed from Latin in the 13th century and the English word *fabric* was either directly borrowed from Latin or through the medium of French. The only current meaning of the word in French, the meaning of *factory*, emerged in the 17th century and was taken into English in the same century. So at that time, the two words were "good friends", which is often the case in the history of false friends. The meaning of 'factory' then

Latin

fabrica: workshop, art, building, act of working

Medieval Latin

fabrica: construction and maintenance of a church and its buildings

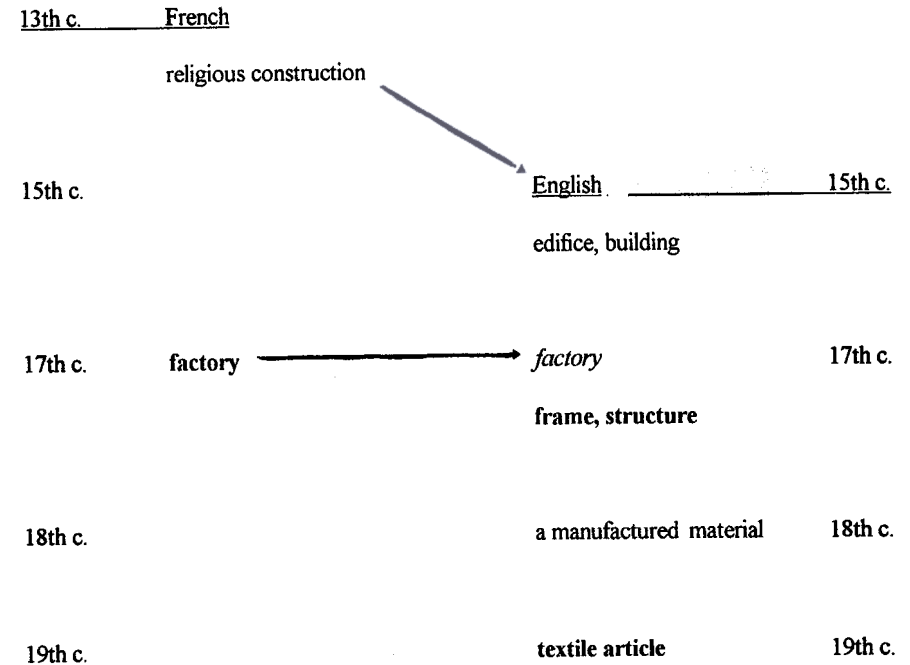


Figure 1. Semantic evolution of the cognate pair *fabrique/fabric*.

disappeared in English, but only after it had given rise to two extensions of meaning: the figurative meaning of 'frame, structure', as in *the fabric of Russian society*,⁵ and one metonymic meaning of 'a manufactured material' which was later narrowed down to refer to textiles, as in *a wide range of furnishing fabrics*.

Figure 2 traces the evolution of *expertise/expertise*, another pair of false friends which were once good friends. In this case, the two French meanings of the word *expertise*, 'skillfulness' and 'expert's valuation', were borrowed by English, but the meaning that survived in English, namely 'skillfulness, expertness', did not survive in French, while the meaning that survived in French, 'expert's valuation', died out in English. These words are interesting in another

Latin

expertus: well-tried, proven, who has shown one's ability

14th c. French

experience, skillfulness

18th c.

judgment made
by experts;
expert's valuation

English

19th c.

skillfulness, expertness

expert opinion; expert's valuation

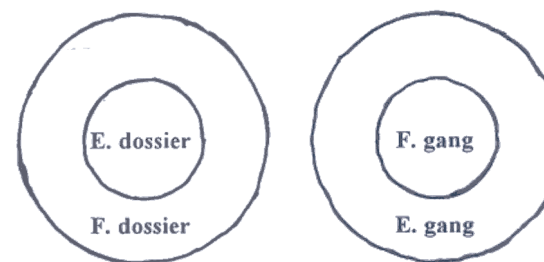
20th c.

expertness, skillfulness

Figure 2. Semantic evolution of the cognate pair *expertise/expertise*.

respect, as they are evidence that the semantic exchanges between English and French are still active today. Even though it is only recorded in the least conservative French dictionaries, the originally French meaning of 'skillfulness, expertness' is now making a comeback in French under the influence of English. This pair of cognates is thus gradually shifting from the category of totally deceptive to 'partially deceptive' cognates.

Partially deceptive cognates are cognates which share at least one meaning and they greatly outnumber totally deceptive cognates. Following Van Roey (1990:116) they can be subdivided into two main categories: inclusion and overlapping. In the case of inclusion (see Figure 3) the semantic space of one cognate is included in that of the other: either all the meanings of the English cognate are included in those of the French cognate (type 1) or the opposite situation holds (type 2).



Type 1 : F > E

Type 2 : E > F

Figure 3. Partially deceptive cognates—Inclusion.

As it is usually the English word that is borrowed from French rather than the opposite, the first type of inclusion prevails. The second category of overlapping (Figure 4) occurs when there is a common semantic space but when there are also specific extensions of meaning for both cognates.

The pair *fatal/fatal*, for instance, share the meaning of 'having a very bad effect' (meaning 1), as in *the devaluation of the dollar was fatal to the firm*, but *fatal* in French can also mean 'inevitable' (meaning 2F) and English *fatal* can also mean 'resulting in someone's death' (meaning 2E).

Figure 5 depicts the evolution of one pair of partially deceptive Inclusion cognates, *dossier/dossier*.

From its birth in the 13th century the French word *dossier* underwent a series of extensions of meaning. In the 17th century the meanings of 'collection of documents' and the legal meaning of 'brief' were added to the original meaning of 'back of a seat'. In the 19th century two more meanings were added: 'folder, file' and 'problem, issue'. English borrowed the word in the 19th century in only one meaning, that of 'collection of documents'. This pair of words illustrates the most common type of partially deceptive cognate, where the French word is more polysemous than its English equivalent. One

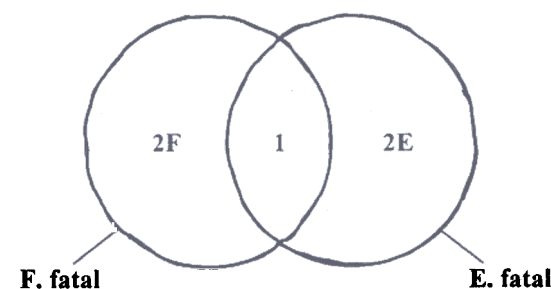


Figure 4. Partially deceptive cognates—Overlapping.

Latin*dorsum*: back (of men or animals)13th c. French

back of a seat

17th c. collection of documents

(law) brief

19th c. folder, file

English 19th c.

collection of documents

problem, issue

Figure 5. Semantic evolution of the cognate pair *dossier/dossier*.

thing which does not appear in Figure 5 is that the meaning of the English word *dossier* is much more restricted than the corresponding French meaning. While the French word refers to any collection of documents, the English word is used more specifically to refer to confidential information. Such nuances of meaning further increase the difficulty of partially deceptive cognates since even the so-called “common” meanings are rarely identical.

Amidst all these deceptive cognates, there are some good ones, but as Granger (1993a:45–50) demonstrates, the proportion of good cognates is much lower than some linguists have claimed. The bulk of good cognates is made up of monosemous words which are usually technical or specialized. They are borrowed in that one meaning and do not undergo any further semantic development. English sports terms borrowed by French and French culinary terms taken over into English are typical examples.

3. Cognates and second language acquisition

The existence of French/English cognate pairs naturally plays a role in the acquisition of the foreign language for a speaker of English or French. But is the role a positive or a negative one?

3.1 Positive and negative transfer

As Carroll (1992:94) rightly points out, cognates⁶ “present a certain paradox for learning theory: on the one hand, they appear to facilitate learning, i.e. unknown words which form cognate-pairs with known words appear to be easier to recognize, represent and deploy than new words which do not. On the other hand, cognate-pairing also appears to hinder long-term learning in that the so-called “false cognates” (*les faux amis*) cause erroneous production, may lead to misrepresentation of the meaning of the input, and may be difficult to overcome”.

The facilitating effect of cognates has been convincingly demonstrated by Ringbom’s (1987) investigation of the English of Swedish-speaking Finns and Finnish-speaking Finns. In his view, Swedes get better results than Finns because English and Swedish are related languages while English and Finnish are not. So when Swedish learners start building up their receptive competence in English, they can rely on a high number of cognates, a definite advantage over Finnish learners. Other studies, such as Moss’s (1992), have demonstrated that students’ reading efficiency is adversely affected by a low level of cognate recognition. She proposes that practice in cognate recognition should become a regular part of the reading class through the use of structured exercises that will help students to become aware of patterns of cognate equivalence.

It should be noted however that most of the evidence supporting the facilitating effect of cognates is derived from reception—mainly reading comprehension—data. It is by no means certain that this positive effect is found in the same proportions in production data. Back in 1965, Mackey pointed out that “If {a learner}...is learning simply to understand the language, the greater the similarity between the first language and the second, the easier the latter will be to understand. In using the language, however, it is the similarity that may cause interference by the misuse of such things as deceptive cognates” (p.109). Indeed, numerous studies based on production data, such as compositions and translations, have provided evidence that cognates have a negative effect. In his book on language transfer, Odlin points to the difficulty of “false friends” and more particularly to the category referred to here as “partially deceptive cognates”. He writes: “one of the most common problems in second language acquisition is when there is only a partial semantic identity of cognates” (1989:79). However, some linguists have recently downplayed the negative effect of cognates. Hammer & Monod (1976:16), for instance, claim that “In-

correct use of deceptive cognates is probably the least enduring type of interference between two languages". The idea underlying this claim is that the amount of interlingual interference, i.e. interference from the mother tongue, tends to decrease as the proficiency of the learner increases.

Meara (1993:283–285) highlights another potential problem related to the use of cognates in second language acquisition, particularly relevant in the case of English and French or English and Spanish. Since "Romance words in English tend to be low frequency items used in formal situations", a French or Spanish learner of English who relies too heavily on cognates will "speak in a register which might be at best inappropriate or at worst offensive and ridiculous". According to Van Roey (1990:123) French learners of English will, when faced with Germanic-Romance doublets such as *help/aid*, "quite naturally tend to use the item that is evoked by the French cognate".

Such intuitions need to be empirically substantiated, however, if more is to be discovered about actual difficulties with cognates. It was decided to put some of these intuitions to the test, by investigating cognate use in a large database of English written by French learners of English. This data was taken from the *International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE)*, a computerized corpus of writing by learners of English from 10 mother tongue backgrounds compiled at the University of Louvain (see Granger 1993b, 1994, 1996). The corpus consists almost exclusively of argumentative essay writing. The learners represented are all EFL, not ESL learners, i.e. they have learned English in a non-English speaking environment. Their level of proficiency is advanced, which in this case is a purely external criterion: all the students are students of English in their 3rd/4th year at university. Comparisons with native English are conducted using a control corpus of similar native speaker writing.

Using this data, the following hypotheses, based on the intuitions of some of the researchers cited above, were tested:

- 1) French-speaking learners of English have a tendency to overuse Romance words to the detriment of Germanic words.
- 2) The use of deceptive cognates is the least enduring type of interference.

3.2 The frequency of Romance vs. Germanic words

To assess the frequency of Germanic and Romance words, two 10,000 word corpora of essays were used, one written by French learners and one by native speakers, all on the same topic. An etymological label—Germanic or Romance⁷—was manually assigned to all words (except proper names).

The results which appear in Table 1 showed a big difference between the native speakers (NS) and the French learners (NNS), but not in the predicted direction: the French learners used a significantly higher number of Germanic words than the NS, not Romance ones as predicted.

Table 1. Frequency of Germanic and Romance words in NS and NNS corpora

	NS	NNS
Germanic tokens	6,734	7,264***
Romance tokens	3,173	2,961***
Total tokens	9,907	10,225

***: highly significant ($p < 0.005$)

This first investigation was somewhat crude, failing to differentiate between grammatical words and lexical words, for instance, and the results are thus difficult to interpret. A second, more refined, investigation focussing on lexical verbs was thus undertaken. As the data was word category tagged,⁸ it was possible to automatically retrieve from the two corpora all the words that bore the category tag V, i.e. all verbs except auxiliaries.

The results in Table 2 confirm those from the first investigation. The French learners use significantly more Germanic verb tokens than the NS and significantly fewer Romance verb tokens, an overuse which cannot be explained away by a higher number of verb types as figures for the two groups were nearly identical: 108 vs. 109.⁹

The next step was to examine qualitative differences in the actual lexical verbs used by the two groups. Using the frequency information in the latest edition of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE)*, the verbs were subdivided into four categories:

W1 verbs	among the 1,000 most frequent words in writing in English
W2 verbs	among the 2,000 most frequent words in writing in English
W3 verbs	among the 3,000 most frequent words in writing in English
W4 verbs	not among the 3,000 most frequent words in writing in English and therefore bear no label in <i>LDOCE</i> .

The combined etymological and frequency figures are represented in Table 3. The same information is represented in graph form in Figure 6.

Table 2. Frequency of Germanic and Romance lexical verbs in NS and NNS corpora

	NS	NNS
Germanic verb tokens	390 (43.7%)	494*** (58.5%)
Romance verb tokens	503 (56.3%)	350*** (41.5%)
Total tokens	893	844

***: highly significant ($p < 0.005$)

Table 3. Lexical verbs in the NS and NNS corpora classified by etymology and frequency bands in *LDOCE* (1995)

	NS	NNS
W1 tokens	569 (63.7%)	601 (71.2%)
W1 ROM	244 (27.3%)	177 (20.9%)
W1 GERM	325 (36.4%)	424 (50.2%)
W2 tokens	85 (9.5%)	91 (10.8%)
W2 ROM	73 (8.1%)	63 (7.4%)
W2 GERM	12 (1.3%)	28 (3.3%)
W3 tokens	80 (8.9%)	66 (7.8%)
W3 ROM	67 (7.5%)	45 (5.3%)
W3 GERM	13 (1.4%)	21 (2.4%)
W4 tokens	159 (17.8%)	86 (10.2%)
W4 ROM	119 (13.3%)	65 (7.7%)
W4 GERM	40 (4.4%)	21 (2.4%)
Number of tokens	893 (100%)	844 (100%)
Number of words	10,491	10,687

It is quite obvious that the overall overuse of Germanic verbs is due to a significant overuse of the most frequent Germanic verbs, i.e. W1 verbs like *think, take, put, find*, etc. These make up 50% of the verb tokens in the learner corpus as compared with just over a third in the native corpus and here again there is no significant difference in the number of verb types in the two groups (61 vs. 69).¹⁰

These results contradicted the first hypothesis. French learners do not seem to overuse Romance words to the detriment of Germanic words. However, one should bear in mind that formal essay writing is the register least likely to show a difference between the two groups. An investigation of spoken data might well confirm the hypothesis. Focussing on another word category such as nouns, for instance, or on a different level of proficiency, might also give a very different picture.

However, the fact remains that learners overuse high frequency Germanic verbs and this in itself is very interesting because it contradicts a view held by some linguists according to which learners avoid using such verbs. In connection with what he calls "delexical verbs", Sinclair (1991:79) writes that "many learners avoid the common words as much as possible, and especially where they make up idiomatic phrases. Instead of using them, they rely on larger, rarer, and clumsier words which make their language sound stilted and awkward".

But there is in fact a lot of support for the notion that overuse of high frequency Germanic verbs is a universal feature of advanced interlanguage. In

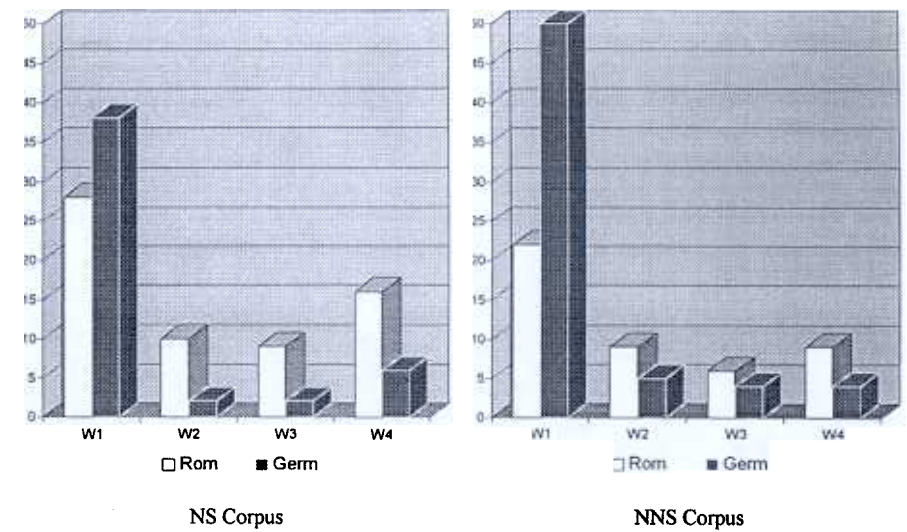


Figure 6. Distribution of lexical verbs in the NS and NNS corpora classified by etymology and frequency bands in *LDOCE* (1995).

an investigation of Norwegian learners, Hasselgren (1994: 250) notes that "core words—learnt early, widely usable, and above all safe (because they do not show up as errors) are hugely overused, even among learners sufficiently advanced to have been weaned off them". Results based on the Swedish component of the ICLE corpus point in the same direction. Källkvist (1993:36) finds that Swedish learners "relied more on these monosyllabic, high-coverage verbs than the native speakers did". She suggests two possible interpretations for this overuse: a universal interpretation—stemming from learners' tendency to use simplified lexis—and a contrastive interpretation—the overuse of Germanic verbs being due to transfer from the learners' Germanic mother tongue, Swedish. The fact that learners from both Germanic and Romance mother tongue backgrounds display the same patterns of overuse supports the first simplification interpretation.¹¹

3.3 Deceptive cognates in the writing of advanced French learners

The first hypothesis having been tested and found not to hold true at least for the data from the ICLE corpus, the second hypothesis was put to the test:

- 2) The use of deceptive cognates is the least enduring type of interference.

This investigation was carried out on a part of the French learner corpus which had been fully tagged for errors. Using a 50,000 word sample, all lexical errors affecting single words (i.e. excluding erroneous phrases and idioms) were au-

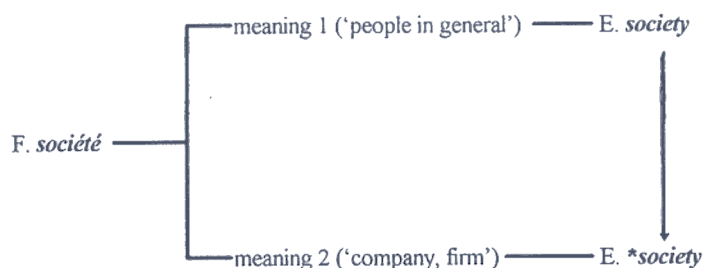
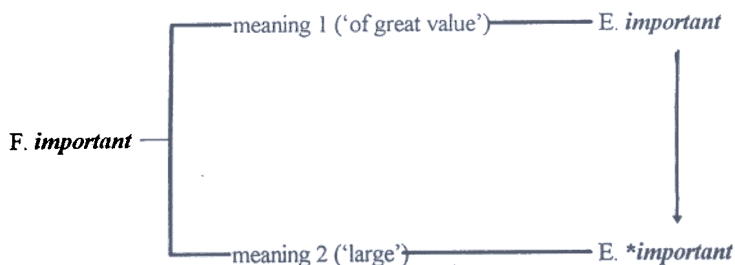


Figure 7. Errors due to partial semantic identity.

tomatically retrieved. Out of a total number of 750 lexical errors, as many as 260, i.e. approximately one third, could be analysed as "false friends", a figure which it is impossible to verify due to the impossibility of knowing for sure whether the learner has been influenced by the French cognate. However, to a French-speaking corrector, the influence is obvious in the majority of cases.

Although the corpus contains some instances of totally deceptive cognates (such as *to achieve* used in the meaning of *achever* (= finish), *to suppress* used in the meaning of *supprimer* (= do away with) or *to pretend* used in the meaning of *prétendre* (= claim), the overwhelming majority of errors affect partially deceptive cognates. The typical route followed by the French learners is represented in Figure 7.

Relying on the equivalence of F. *important* and E. *important* in the meaning 'of great value', French learners mistakenly infer equivalence in the other meaning of 'large', which leads to the type of error illustrated in sentence 1. For the cognate pair *société/society*, it is the equivalence in the meaning of 'people in general' which is carried over to the other meaning of *société*, namely the meaning of 'company', thus producing the error illustrated in sentence 2. Examples 3–12 can be explained in the same way.

- (1) Their population is as important as the rest of Europe (E: *large*; F: *important*).
- (2) Most of our firms are already in the hands of foreign societies (E: *companies*; F: *sociétés*).
- (3) The economic objective required a unique currency (E: *single/common*; F: *unique*).
- (4) Therefore we will see the number of cultural manifestations increase (E: *events*; F: *manifestations*).
- (5) The governments of each country have voted laws (E: *passed*; F: *voté*).
- (6) Nowadays the European Community counts twelve countries (E: *consists of*; F: *compte*).
- (7) As a matter of fact, all kinds of organisms come into being in the EC (E: *bodies*; F: *organismes*).
- (8) Many writers, among which the sociologist Moscovice, considers the explosion of the first nuclear bomb on Hiroshima to be a turning point in the mentalities (E: *ways of thinking*; F: *mentalités*).
- (9) University researchers will have to be formed in the same way (E: *trained*; F: *formés*).
- (10) Managers of enterprises are in favour of Europe 92 (E: *companies*; F: *entreprises*).
- (11) It is probably this spirit that has already led to concrete realizations such as the use of the ECU or else the creation of the European Parliament (E: *achievements*; F: *réalisations*).
- (12) They are proud of their country, of its history and particularities (E: *national characteristics*; F: *particularités*).

The corpus also contains numerous examples of stylistic false friends, quasi-synonymous cognate pairs which belong to different registers of language, the English cognate being as a rule more formal or technical or it may simply be much less common than its French counterpart. Sentences 13–22 below contain a few representative examples:

- (13) The first step each one has to make towards this new nation is to forget his rivalries (...) to ameliorate every situation (E: *improve*; F: *améliorer*).
- (14) Here we can mention a citation of Jacques Delors (E: *quote*; F: *citation*).
- (15) There are several events which prove this affirmation (E: *claim*; F: *affirmation*).
- (16) ...that they would have destroyed the occidental union (E: *Western*; F: *occidentale*).
- (17) Enterprises will go and settle in countries where labour is cheap. The dimension of the enterprise is essential (E: *size*; F: *dimension*).
- (18) Every European will be able to travel from one country to another with great facility (E: *ease*; F: *facilité*).

- (19) ...in order to maintain pacific relationships within Europe (E: *peaceful*; F: *pacifique*).
- (20) The suppression of frontiers seems a great idea (E: *borders*; F: *frontières*).
- (21) Europe 1992 favours the persons who have studied (E: *people*; F: *personnes*).
- (22) It is in this respect that the denomination 'Common Market' gets its full significance (E: *term*; F: *dénomination*).

When these words were analysed in a larger sample of writing, they were found not only to have a high error rate but also to be significantly overused. The stylistically inappropriate *persons*, for example, occurred 60 times in a 300,000 word corpus of learner writing and only 18 times in a similar-sized corpus of native English writing.

The same was also true of those words with which the learners had conceptual difficulties. *Mentalities* was a case in point, occurring 84 times in the 300,000 word sample and only 3 times in the NS corpus.

When one compares the words used by the learners with the words they should have used, one is struck by the fact that in most cases the choice does not involve a Germanic word and a Romance word, but two Romance words (such as *realization/achievement*, *frontier/border*, *vote/pass*, etc.). This partly explains why the learners do not display a higher proportion of Romance words than the NS.

This corpus investigation into cognate use in French learner writing revealed ample evidence of lexical transfer from the Romance background in the form of conceptual and stylistic false friends. The fact that the learners are advanced challenges the second hypothesis based on Hammer & Monod's claim that deceptive cognates are "probably the least enduring type of interference between two languages". Both investigations show the dangers of relying on intuitions about language use.

4. Conclusion

There is no doubt that the strong Romance influences exerted on the English language over the centuries have made it a richer language. From the foreign language learner's perspective however, it seems as though it has also made it more difficult to master, creating lexical choices which they make at their peril.

This investigation has revealed that, contrary to expectations, French learners do not overuse Romance words to the detriment of Germanic words (at least in formal writing); on the contrary, they seem to overuse Germanic words. There is some evidence that this may be due to a simplification tendency which encourages them to rely on a small number of "all-purpose"

Germanic words, although one cannot totally disregard the possibility that it is their awareness of the dangers of the Romance influence that warns them away from Romance words. As for the Romance words they choose to use, even at an advanced proficiency level, they are heavily tainted with false friends. Given these persistent lexical difficulties, it seems essential that greater attention be paid to false friends in reference tools designed for non-native speakers of English, and more particularly in learners' dictionaries.

For obvious commercial reasons, today's learners' dictionaries are aimed at all learners of English, irrespective of their mother tongue. At the same time, investigations of computer learner corpora have provided access to large databases of authentic learner errors and it seems that many of these—especially lexical errors—are specific to each mother tongue background. A bilingualised learners' dictionary would therefore be a much more useful tool than the current fully monolingual ones. In such a dictionary learners of a particular mother tongue—French in this case—would be warned against errors that they are particularly prone to make in areas such as spelling, grammar and, of course, lexis. Such warning notes are already present in the only bilingualised dictionary of French I know of, the Canadian dictionary *Password—English Dictionary for Speakers of French*. Unfortunately, this dictionary only points to common grammatical and spelling errors and ignores lexical errors such as false friends.

In addition to improved general tools of this kind, there will always be a need for more specialized tools, a need which gave rise to the *French/English Dictionary of Faux Amis* (Van Roey, Granger & Swallow 1991).

Paper tools will probably always be in demand, but with the growing success of electronic tools, there is also scope for electronic versions which could be used interactively within the user's word-processing environment.

Faux Amis have been shown to be a source of difficulty for learners even at a relatively advanced level, but if learners are provided with precision learning aids of the kind outlined above, they will be able to master these difficulties more effectively.

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Notes

1. Besides **core** words which are neutral with respect to field, medium, formality and connotation (e.g. *skin*, *thin*, *drunk*), Carter & McCarthy (1988:172) distinguish **subject-core** words, which are restricted to a particular field of discourse (e.g. *epidermis* vs. *skin*) and **non-core** items, which carry emotional or evaluative connotations or are restricted to formal or informal registers (e.g. *intoxicated/inebriated* vs. *drunk* or *svelte* vs. *thin*).

2. McArthur (1990:16) illustrates yet another type of lexical phenomenon in English, that of "trisociation" which combines Germanic, Romance and Greek forms of similar meaning (e.g. *big, magn, mega(lo)* as in *bigheaded, magnitude, megalomania*).
3. Following Van Roey (1985:161) I use the term "cognates" to refer to "historically related words (including borrowings)".
4. A full treatment of these words and many others can be found in three MA Dissertations (Measure 1991, Compère 1991, Cuisenaire 1992) written within the framework of contrastive research into the semantic evolution of English-French cognates conducted at the University of Louvain in the years 1990–92.
5. All the phrases and sentences illustrating the pairs of deceptive cognates are taken from the *Dictionary of Faux Amis Français-Anglais English-French* (Van Roey, Granger & Swallow 1991).
6. Working within a psycholinguistic framework Carroll rejects definitions of cognates based on etymology. In her view cognates should be characterized in processing terms, i.e. as "lexical items from different languages which are identified by bilinguals as somehow being 'the same thing'".
7. The few words of Greek origin in the corpus were added to the Romance category.
8. The ICLE corpus has been tagged using the TOSCA Tagger for ICE, PC version 1.1 developed at the University of Nijmegen by Professor Jan Aarts.
9. All the automatically retrieved verb forms were manually checked. This disambiguation revealed a 6% error rate in the NS corpus and 8% in the NNS corpus. A comparison of our results before and after disambiguation showed that this had no significant bearing on results.
10. Although Germanic verbs like *say, go, make, take* and Romance verbs like *accept, affect, consider, exist* have the same W1 label in *LDOCE*, frequency figures derived from the British National Corpus (BNC) show that the former generally have a higher frequency than the latter. The 30 most frequent lexical verbs in the BNC, for example, only contain 3 Romance verbs (*try, use* and *provide*).
11. Another factor which may well play a part in the case of French learners is avoidance. Many French learners, especially advanced ones, are conscious of the treacherousness of English-French cognates and may therefore tend to underuse some Romance words. Lightbown & Libben's (1984) study contains some evidence pointing in this direction. However, confirmation of the role actually played by avoidance will only come if production data is supplemented with data derived from psycholinguistic experiments such as think aloud tasks, which give direct access to learners' problem-solving strategies.

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