

Epactonyms / Epactonimi / Epactonymes / Epactónimos: A New Terminology for “Loanwords” and “Linguistic Borrowings”

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Abstract

A new terminology for the so called *loanwords* is proposed.

Keywords: *epactonyms* - loanwords - linguistic terminology - history of words - foreign languages

Si propone una nuova terminologia relativa ai cosiddetti *prestiti* linguistici.

Parole chiave: *epactonimi* - prestiti linguistici - terminologia linguistica - storia delle parole - lingue straniere

Current linguistic terminology refers to words borrowed from a donor language and incorporated into a recipient language as *loanwords*. This is a curious definition, as borrowings are generally supposed to be paid back. As Ballester [2013: 54] states, «languages do not loan, banks loan; languages copy».

One could better speak of *presents*, as new words usually enrich (and don't impoverish!) the language that receive them. Nevertheless the language that receives new words typically takes them without a precise will of the donor language, and this is not actually the case of presents.

We propose here a new term (that we used also in DESLI), starting from Greek *epaktós* 'imported, taken from outside', that is to say *epactonyms* (Italian *epactonimi*, French *epactonymes*, Spanish *epactónimos*). The correspondent verb could be *to adopt* (It. *adottare*, Fr. *adopter*, Sp. *adoptar*).

In this new terminology the English word *money* would not be «a *loan borrowed* from Italian (*moneta*)», but «an *epactonym adopted* from Italian (*moneta*)».

REFERENCES

- Ballester, X. [2013], *40 Antídotos contra los venenos de la lingüística tradicional*, Lugo, Axac, 2013.
DESLI = M. Alinei - F. Benozzo, *Dizionario etimologico semantico della lingua italiana*, Bologna, Pendragon, 2015.