What a Multilingual Loanword Dictionary can be used for: Searching the *Dizionario di italianismi in francese, inglese, Tedesco* (DIFIT)

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Abstract

The paper outlines the structure and practical use of the *Dizionario di italianismi in francese, inglese, tedesco* (DIFIT), a dictionary registering Italian loanwords in three languages published in print and currently being prepared for digital reedition. This specialized lexicographical resource focuses on language contact resulting in synchronic and diachronic lexical transfer from the Italian language to French, English and German. Italian as a culturally extremely rich and diverse source for borrowings has extensively influenced other languages in different historic phases all along the past centuries. The DIFIT reflects this rich European heritage of borrowings in a maximal variety of lexical fields. Major methodological aspects in and prior to editing the dictionary included the delimitation and exploration of the source material and deciding on depth of historical coverage as well as defining the information programme of the microstructure. At the same time, limitations of the general lexicographical documentation on both Italian and the three recipient *languages presented particular challenges. The poster displays results of some first quantitative research on* linguistic aspects of the borrowed elements in DIFIT and gives an outlook on the ongoing project of digitizing the lexicographical data by means of an online database documenting the linguistic impact of Italian as a global donor language (*Osservatorio degli italianismi nel mondo*/OIM, hosted by the Accademia della Crusca).

Keywords: Multilingual Lexicography; Specialized Dictionaries; Online Lexicography; Language contact; History of the Italian/French/English/German Lexicon

"Il faudrait encore, assurément, repérer, cartographier la diffusion de la langue italienne
elle-même, cet élément insistant de toute culture européenne." (Braudel 1989: 15)

1   Introduction

This paper intends to give an overview of the structure and possible applications for linguistic research of the *Dizionario di italianismi in francese, inglese, tedesco* (DIFIT), published in print in 2008 by the Accademia della Crusca and currently being released online as part of a larger project (*Osservatorio degli italianismi nel mondo* / OIM). As a specialized lexicographic resource it focuses on language contact between Italian and three major European languages, French, English, German, whose lexical outcomes are presented in both synchronic and diachronic perspective.[1] The lexicographic metalanguage of the DIFIT is Italian, but the dictionary is in itself multilingual in so far as it registers lexical transfer from the donor language Italian to the three languages mentioned, the respective loan items following the lemmatization of their Italian source words (etyma).

Literary Italian (based on the Tuscan variety) along with many of its dialectal varieties stands out as a culturally extremely rich and diverse source for borrowings. While its extensive lexical influence on the other three European languages in different historic phases all along the past six centuries has been noted in a host of studies, the somewhat scattered lexicographical documentation is brought together for the first time in a reference work spanning more than one target language. By taking into account a variety of lexical fields, the DIFIT aims at reflecting the rich European heritage of borrowings which becomes evident in parallel loans and lexical interrelations within the French, English and German vocabularies.

A borrowing (It. *prestito*, G. *Entlehnung*) is seen here as the result of the imitation of a foreign linguistic pattern by a speech community (cf. Gusmani 1986, Pinnavaia 2001), meaning elements like the following:

(1) it. *ciao* (→ present in Fr., Eng., G.)

(2) it. *dolce far niente* (→ Eng., G.)

(3) it. *–issimo* suffix (→ e.g. Fr. *Affairissimo*)

(4) it. *eppur si muove!* → (Fr., Eng., in G. loan translation: *Und sie bewegt sich doch!*)

(DIFIT-OIM[2]: s.vv.)

The loan items present in the lexicon of a language can be single words like *ciao* (1), multiword expressions as (2) *dolce far niente*, or sometimes formatives as the Italianizing suffix with superlative meaning *–issimo* (cf. Fr. *affairissimo*, or G. *Transportissimo*, cf. Stammerjohann 2010)[3], as well as phrases (pro-

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1   For details of the macro- and microstructural makeup of the print dictionary cf. Heinz (2008).

2   Data from the DIFIT corpus available in digitized form via the OIM are labelled here as DIFIT-OIM. These are searchable at www.italianismi.org.

3   Cf. also examples in Austrian and Swiss German advertisements such as *Vielfaltissimo* (denominal derivation), *Perfektissimo* (deadjectival), *Verwöhnissimo* (deverbal) based on a product name consisting of a hybrid formation (*Caf-* 'coffee' + *-issimo*). Such productive formatives based on loan items are described as „induzione" by Gusmani (1986: 155).

verbial and idiomatic expressions) like „eppur si muove!" (4) in French and English, rendered in German by the loan translation *Und sie bewegt sich doch!*[4]

At present the DIFIT lists 8951 Italianisms and 4660 Italian etyma (242 of which are without prior attestation elsewhere). Following a concise presentation of the dictionary and its digital counterpart, some examples of how the dictionary data can be used for linguistic analyses will be outlined in this paper.

2 Language contact and lexicographical documentation: DIFIT and OIM

From the metalexicographical point of view informing the classification proposed by Wiegand (2001), the DIFIT can be described as representative of the type of the „aktives polylaterales Sprachkontaktwörterbuch" (‚active, polylateral dictionary of language contact'); it is active insofar as its lemmatization sets out from the etyma and polylateral in its registering loanwords of one donor language in several recipient languages. Moreover, it is, as mentioned at the beginning, monolingual as to the metalanguage, Italian, while being multilingual as regards its set of recipient languages (French, English, German). The general scope of the dictionary is stated in the Introduction:

[I]l presente *Dizionario* [...] vuole offrire più che una semplice somma dei dati finora raccolti e acclarati. Il suo **scopo** è più specifico, è quello di **mettere a confronto l'incidenza dell'italiano sul francese, l'inglese e il tedesco**, le tre lingue che sono al centro dello spazio europeo e sono a più stretto contatto tra loro, con l'intento di **ricostruire le trafile di penetrazione e la diversa sorte delle parole italiane** in questo circuito. (DIFIT: XI; emphasis added)

In summary, the intention of this work vis-à-vis specialized repertories and studies centred on Italianisms present in single languages, on whose results the DIFIT draws, is to offer more than a simple listing of data yet collected and examined. Its intention is more specifically "mettere a confronto l'incidenza dell'italiano sul francese, l'inglese e il tedesco', i.e. 'compare the impact of Italian on French, English, and German', three languages situated centrally in a European communicative space and in close contact among each other, in order to reconstruct the mechanisms of lexical interpenetration and the 'variable fate of Italian words in this [historical and cultural] circuit'. By design it presupposes a certain depth of diachronic coverage both in the macrostructural preselection and in the microstructural organization of its entries.

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4   Examples drawn from DIFIT-OIM.

The DIFIT is currently being expanded within the OIM project. The *Osservatorio degli italianismi nel mondo*, an international collaboration hosted by the Accademia della Crusca, has two main purposes:

(a) making available and editing the data collected in the DIFIT in an online database;

(b) extending the contact languages beyond the three major European languages French, English and German documented in the DIFIT, aiming at the lexicographical description of the impact of Italian as a source language e.g. in Spanish, Polish, Japanese etc.

Hence the goal of this collaborative effort is a linguistic 'observatory' for Italian loanwords in the world's languages.

3 The contribution of a loanword dictionary to linguistic analyses

The OIM database[5] offers various search options. Besides a free search option ("ricerca libera") complex searches in the list of etyma ("ricerca negli etimi") are made possible by applying and combining the following criteria:

- Italian etyma (+ variants)
- grammatical categories (etymon)
- year of first attestation (etymon) with optional delimitation of time span
- archaic / obsolete / without lexicographical attestation
- domain of use / lexical field (etymon)
- dialectal origin (etymon)
- register
- recipient language (by year or range of years + one, two or all of the recipient languages)

The sources documenting the etyma can be displayed in a window with the full bibliographical reference by moving the cursor to the respective abbreviation. The "ricerca negli italianismi" (search Italianisms) option allows for complex search paths with the following set of criteria:

- Italianisms (+ variants)
- grammatical categories
- recipient language

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5   The database was designed and implemented as part of the electronic resources of the Accademia della Crusca by Marco Biffi with the help of Giovanni Salucci and Maurizio Rago, while the task of populating the database by digitizing and adapting the DIFIT data for the new online user inferface is the work of Gesine Seymer.

- year of first attestation with optional delimitation of time span
- archaic / obsolete / without lexicographical attestation
- domain of use / semantic field
- dialectal use
- register
- type of borrowing:
  - integral
  - partial (calque: formal / partial / semantic)
  - direct
  - indirect (with mediating language)
  - pseudo-borrowing[6]
  - borrowings whose (Italian) origin is doubtful or unclear (e.g. contradictory etymological information in authoritative sources)

Here too, sources for the Italianisms can be displayed with the full bibliographical reference by moving the cursor to the abbreviation.

In what follows, three exemplary fields of application are sketched out in order to show how the DIFIT data can be used for linguistic research, yielding some first results related to a number of research questions especially in contact linguistics.[7] These are namely the word formation types in the multiword lemmata identified in the DIFIT corpus, the typology of the borrowings and, as a further outlook, the visualization of the results of language contact in the OIMap project.

4 Language contact and word formation

Of the 4660 lemmata listed in the DIFIT, 4161 are single words, while 499 (more than 10%) are classified as *locuzioni*, multiword expressions including complex syntagmatic units or phrases as *con spirito* and lexicalized compounds like *pesce spada*. A semiautomatic count with manual classification of the formation types yields the following percentages:

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6   Also *pseudo-loan* (It. *pseudo-prestito*, G. *Scheinentlehnung* alongside other terms), cf. Winter-Froemel (2011: 44-45), „Bildungen wie dt. *Picobello* [...], die aus einer anderen Sprache (hier dem Italienischen [...]) direkt entlehnt zu sein scheinen, die sich aber in der vermeintlichen AS [Ausgangssprache] in dieser Form als nicht existent erweisen." (45)

7   The relevance of studying loanwords for the enterprise of general linguistics and linguistic typology becomes evident when using resources like the World Loanword Database (WOLD, Haspelmath/Tadmor 2009), which analyzes lexical borrowability based on a restricted set of core vocabulary meanings (1460) in 41 (mainly non-Indo-European) recipient languages; Italian is present among the 369 donor languages, though only with a small number of loanwords (86 entries in the database, some having an identical source word).

Formation	Examples	%
N + Adj	*salto mortale, sinfonia concertante, opera comica*	33,3
Prep + N	*a battuta, a conto, con spirito*	29,7
Adj + N	*dolce vita, sacra conversazione, onorata società*	15,8
N + Prep + N	*giorno di respiro, lira da gamba, zuppa di pesce*	13,5
N + N	*pesce spada, pensione baby*	4,0
[N + N]	*acquamarina, acquatinta, autostrada*	3,6

Table 1: Distribution and formation type of multiword expressions in DIFIT-OIM.

In a further step these data (as well as the overall database) can be analyzed with regard to the single recipient languages in order to compare how processes of loan integration may display a language specific dynamics.

5 Typology of borrowings

Categorizing and quantifying the diverse types existing alongside classical loanwords (such as formal or semantic calques, rare pseudo-borrowings together with hybrid formations etc.) gives a general picture of the impact of formal and semantic processes on the diachronic evolution and synchronic stratification of the lexicon in the recipient languages.

Figure 1: Different loan outcomes in the recipient languages (DIFIT-OIM, s.v. 'generalissimo').

As a lemma like *generalissimo* (Fig. 1) shows, the loan formations resulting from even a single etymon may be characterized by a variety of outcomes. Here French has a formal calque, English a pseudo-borrowing based on an Italian structural model, whereas the German *Generalissimus* is identified as a hybrid combining an Italian base with a Latin(ate) ending.

Typology of borrowings	%
Direct borrowing (loanword)	94,5
Formal calque (loan translation)	3,3
Partial calque	0,8
Semantic calque	1,3
Pseudo-Italianism	0,1

Table 2: Distribution of various types of borrowings registered in DIFIT-OIM.

Table 2 gives the percentages of different types of borrowings. Clearly direct borrowings (loanwords in a strict sense) are by far the most common type among the Italianisms registered in DIFIT, while the most frequent type of calque is the word for word rendering of a foreign model with the means of the recipient language known as loan translation (e.g. It. *monte di pietà* → Fr. *mont-de-piété*), followed by partial calque (It. *fare fiasco* → G. *Fiasko machen*) and semantic calque (It. *futurista* → Eng. *futurist*). Pseudo-Italianisms like Eng. *generalissima* or Fr./Eng./G. *tutti-frutti* (with various meanings) are extremely rare (0,1%) in the DIFIT documentation.

Furthermore, thematic indices based on the different sectors of the lexicon that have contributed Italianisms can be created with the OIM search engine. Thanks to functions permitting combined search criteria it becomes then possible to list the results by chronology and/or target language.[8]

# 6   Visualizing the areal distribution of Italianisms: OIMap

As a further outlook, we will briefly describe an instrument for visualizing the areal distribution (and dynamics) of Italianisms by means of a mapping tool currently being developed under the name of OIMap.[9] In fact, while lists of borrowed lexical items in a dictionary or database provide multi-faceted information in a very dense manner, new insights into the geographic distribution and the dynamic tendencies of contact relationships between languages can be gained through maps.

Drawing upon a free software tool for digital cartography (http://batchgeo.com), OIMap intends to show the geographic direction of language contact. Moreover, the dialectal origin of borrowed elements can be obtained (other than manually) by using refined search options. Thereby dialect varieties having contributed a relatively high number of loanwords to the lexicon of one, two or all three of the extant recipient languages can be singled out, and as in the case of Venetian (or, with a comparatively lower number of lexical items, Genoese) a clearer picture of the areal dynamics emerges. In Fig.

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8   The ‚ups and downs' of Italian lexical influence in the three languages taken into account by DIFIT are illustrated by Stammerjohann/Seymer (2007: 51), with the availability of the OIM search engine the raw data for even more fine-grained analyses can be elicited as described in 3.3.

9   OIMap is designed for the cartographic representation of language contact dynamics based on the DIFIT data (project situated at the University of Salzburg under the direction of M. Heinz).

3 an arrow indicates the main direction of borrowings where an absolute (Genoese: 7 out of 9) or relative (Venetian: 15 out of 45) majority of loan elements 'migrates' exclusively towards one language (French and German respectively).
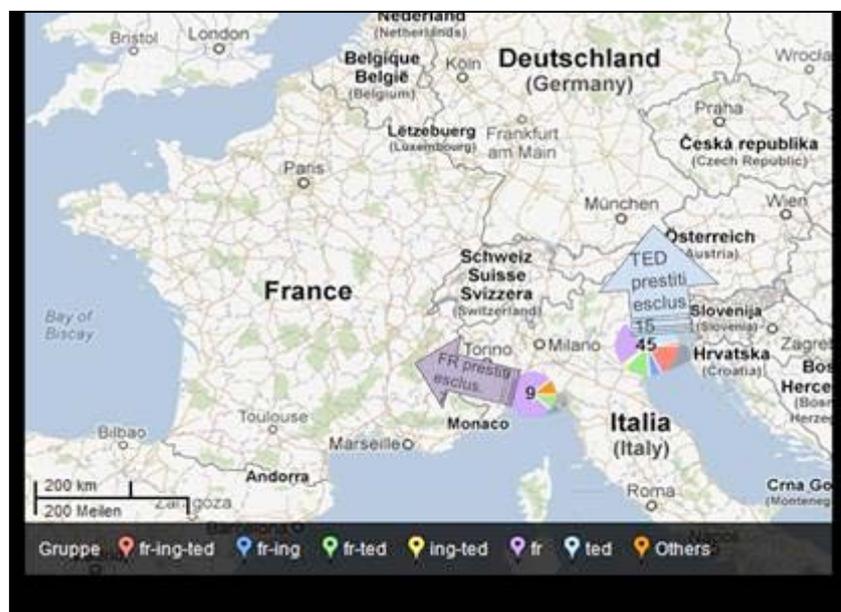
Figure 3: OIMap – Areal dynamics of Genoese and Venetian borrowings
(FR = French, TED = German).

As the OIM database is developed further and the number of recipient languages grows,[10] an interface with the cartographic tool OIMap becomes possible, resulting in a world map[11] of lexical 'migration' setting out from Italian and its varieties.

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10   For quite a number of languages electronic lists of Italianisms are at hand, though unpublished and in different formats, so integrating the existing material into the OIM database may soon result in substantial progress as for the documentation of Italian lexical influence.

11   Such a map could provide more detailed cartographic and lexical information than the useful but rather plain one figuring on the WOLD website (Haspelmath/Tadmor 2009).

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