

Source-Language Classification of Loanwords in German: A Typological Approach to English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic Influences

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Abstract

This article classifies selected German loanwords according to their source language and typological features, focusing on English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic influences. Drawing on established frameworks in loanword typology and language-contact theory, the study approaches borrowed vocabulary not as isolated foreign elements but as linguistic evidence of historical contact and cultural exchange. A qualitative, comparative design is used to examine representative loanwords from each source-language group in terms of semantic field, historical period, cultural function, and degree of integration into the German linguistic system. The analysis shows that each donor language contributed to German vocabulary in a distinct way: Latin shaped religious, educational, scientific, and administrative terminology and is very highly integrated; French influenced vocabulary connected with fashion, cuisine, diplomacy, and cultural prestige; English dominates modern fields such as technology, business, media, sport, and youth culture; Slavic languages contributed regional and everyday vocabulary through geographical proximity and settlement history; and Turkic languages, though fewer in number, provided culturally significant terms linked to Ottoman history and Turkish migration. The findings confirm that loanwords should be analysed not only by etymological origin but also by semantic domain, period of borrowing, and level of adaptation, since older borrowings tend to be more fully integrated than recent ones. A source-language classification therefore reveals the historical and social layers of German vocabulary and demonstrates that lexical borrowing is systematically shaped by prestige, contact, and cultural need rather than occurring at random.

Keywords: loanwords, German, language contact, loanword typology, borrowing, source-language classification, lexical integration

Introduction

German is a language whose lexical structure has been shaped by centuries of contact with other languages, cultures, political systems, religious institutions, scientific traditions, and migration processes. Like many major European languages, German has developed not in isolation but through continuous interaction with neighboring and prestige languages. As a result,

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its vocabulary contains a significant number of loanwords that reflect different historical layers of contact. Among the most important source languages are Latin, French, English, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages. These donor languages entered German vocabulary through different channels, including religion, education, administration, trade, military contact, diplomacy, migration, science, technology, and popular culture.

Latin represents one of the oldest and most influential sources of loanwords in German. Many Latin borrowings entered German through Roman contact, Christianity, medieval education, law, and later scientific terminology. French influence became especially important in the medieval and early modern periods, particularly in the domains of court culture, fashion, cuisine, diplomacy, military organization, and administration. English, by contrast, has become highly influential in modern and contemporary German, especially in technology, business, media, youth culture, sports, and globalization-related vocabulary. Slavic loanwords reflect long-term regional and historical contact, especially in eastern and central European contexts. Turkic loanwords are fewer in number but culturally significant, appearing in areas such as food, military history, Ottoman-related cultural vocabulary, and modern migration contexts.

Loanwords are not merely foreign words inserted into a language. They become part of the recipient language through processes of phonological, morphological, semantic, and sociocultural adaptation. In German, borrowed nouns are assigned grammatical gender, capitalized according to German orthographic conventions, and integrated into German plural and case systems. Some loanwords remain visibly foreign, while others become so fully integrated that speakers may no longer perceive them as borrowed. Therefore, the study of loanwords requires more than a historical listing of word origins; it also requires attention to typological features such as source language, semantic field, degree of adaptation, period of borrowing, and cultural function.

This article aims to classify selected German loanwords according to their source language and typological features, focusing on English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic influences. The study approaches loanwords as linguistic evidence of historical contact and cultural exchange. It examines how different source languages contributed to German vocabulary in distinct ways and how borrowed words were adapted into the German linguistic system.

Although German loanwords have often been discussed from historical and etymological perspectives, they are less frequently compared through a typological source-language classification across several language families and contact situations. This creates a research gap: while individual donor languages such as English, Latin, or French have received considerable scholarly attention, a comparative typological analysis of multiple source-language groups can provide a broader understanding of how German has absorbed and organized borrowed vocabulary over time. By comparing English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic loanwords, this article seeks to show that borrowing patterns differ according to historical period, cultural prestige, semantic domain, and degree of linguistic integration.



2. Research Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this article is to analyze and classify loanwords in German according to their source languages and typological characteristics. The study focuses on selected loanwords from English, French, Latin, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages in order to compare their semantic, phonological, morphological, and cultural features.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify selected German loanwords of English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic origin.
2. To classify these loanwords according to semantic fields such as technology, religion, education, cuisine, fashion, administration, geography, migration, and cultural life.
3. To examine the phonological and morphological adaptation of loanwords in German, including pronunciation, spelling, gender assignment, noun capitalization, and plural formation.
4. To compare the historical and cultural reasons for borrowing from each source language.
5. To demonstrate how different source languages have contributed differently to the development of German vocabulary.

Through these objectives, the article aims to move beyond a simple etymological description and offer a comparative typological framework for understanding loanwords in German.

3. Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Which source languages have contributed significantly to German vocabulary?
2. What semantic fields are most commonly associated with English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic loanwords in German?
3. How are loanwords phonologically and morphologically adapted into German?
4. What historical and sociocultural factors explain the borrowing of words from these source languages?
5. Do different source languages show different borrowing patterns in German?

These research questions allow the article to examine both the linguistic form and the cultural function of loanwords. They also make it possible to compare borrowing patterns across different historical periods and contact situations.



4. Literature Review

4.1. *Loanwords and Borrowing*

Loanwords are lexical items that have been transferred from one language into another as a result of language contact. In borrowing studies, the language from which a word is taken is usually called the donor language or source language, while the language that receives the word is called the recipient language. In the present study, German is treated as the recipient language, while English, French, Latin, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages are examined as source languages.

Borrowing is one of the most common results of language contact. Haugen (1950) defines borrowing as the attempted reproduction of linguistic patterns from one language into another. Later studies have shown that borrowing can involve not only individual words but also phrases, meanings, structures, and patterns of usage (Weinreich, 2011; Thomason & Kaufman, 1988; Matras, 2009). However, lexical borrowing remains one of the most visible and easily identifiable forms of contact-induced change.

A loanword differs from a calque. A loanword is borrowed as a lexical form, although it may be adapted phonologically or morphologically. A calque, or loan translation, occurs when the meaning or structure of a foreign expression is translated into the recipient language using native elements. For example, instead of importing the original foreign form, the recipient language translates its components. This distinction is important because not all foreign influence appears as direct lexical borrowing.

Adaptation refers to the process by which a borrowed word is adjusted to the linguistic system of the recipient language. In German, this may include assigning grammatical gender, adapting pronunciation, changing spelling, forming plurals according to German patterns, and integrating the word into syntactic structures. Integration refers to the degree to which a borrowed item becomes accepted and normalized within the recipient language. Some loanwords remain marked as foreign, while others become fully integrated into everyday vocabulary. Haspelmath (2009) emphasizes that lexical borrowing should be studied not only in terms of origin but also in terms of borrowability, semantic domains, and cross-linguistic patterns.

4.2. *German as a Contact Language*

German has historically interacted with many languages, and these interactions have shaped its vocabulary in important ways. Latin influence began early through contact with the Roman world and expanded through Christianity, education, scholarship, law, and science. Words connected with religion, schooling, administration, and academic life often reflect Latin influence. Many Latin-derived words are now deeply integrated into German and are not always perceived by speakers as foreign.

French influence became especially significant in periods when French culture had strong prestige in Europe. French borrowings entered German through aristocratic culture, diplomacy,



fashion, cuisine, art, literature, military terminology, and administration. Many French loanwords in German are associated with refinement, cultural prestige, and elite social life. Some have retained a foreign appearance or pronunciation, while others have been adapted more fully into German.

English influence is especially visible in modern German. Since the twentieth century, and particularly after the Second World War, English has become a major donor language in fields such as technology, business, science, advertising, popular culture, media, sport, and youth communication. Studies on Anglicisms in German show that English words are often used not only for naming new objects and concepts but also for stylistic purposes, such as expressing modernity, international identity, innovation, or informality (Carstensen & Busse, 1993–1996; Onysko, 2007; Schaefer, 2021a, 2024).

Slavic influence in German is connected with geographical proximity, settlement history, trade, political contact, and regional multilingualism. Slavic loanwords are especially relevant in areas of eastern and central Europe where German-speaking and Slavic-speaking communities were historically in contact. Some Slavic-origin words entered standard German, while others remained regional, dialectal, or historically marked.

Turkic influence in German is more limited in quantity but important from a cultural and historical perspective. Some Turkic-related vocabulary entered German through Ottoman Turkish and wider European contact with the Ottoman world, especially in military, administrative, and cultural contexts. In modern German, Turkish influence is also connected with migration, especially the presence of Turkish-speaking communities in Germany. As a result, certain Turkish-origin words, particularly in food and urban culture, have become visible in contemporary German usage.

4.3. Typological Approach to Loanword Classification

A typological approach to loanword classification examines borrowed words according to systematic categories rather than treating them only as isolated lexical items. In this approach, loanwords are classified according to source language, semantic field, historical period, phonological adaptation, morphological integration, and cultural function. This makes it possible to compare different groups of loanwords and identify broader borrowing patterns.

The Loanword Typology approach developed by Haspelmath and Tadmor (2009) is especially useful for this type of analysis because it emphasizes cross-linguistic comparison and semantic classification. It shows that some semantic fields are more likely to contain loanwords than others. For example, technology, religion, administration, education, food, fashion, and cultural life often show high levels of lexical borrowing because they are closely connected with cultural exchange and social change.

In the context of German, a typological classification can reveal important differences between donor languages. Latin loanwords are often associated with religion, education, law, and



science. French loanwords are strongly connected with fashion, cuisine, diplomacy, and court culture. English loanwords are commonly linked to technology, business, media, sport, and youth culture. Slavic loanwords often reflect regional contact, geography, food, and everyday cultural exchange. Turkic loanwords are associated with food, historical-cultural vocabulary, Ottoman-related terms, and migration contexts.

This article therefore does not simply list German loanwords. Instead, it classifies them according to the following criteria:

- source language;
- semantic field;
- period of borrowing;
- phonological adaptation;
- morphological integration;
- cultural function.

By applying these criteria, the study aims to show that loanwords in German are not random lexical additions. They reflect patterned relationships between language, history, society, and culture. A typological approach allows the analysis to demonstrate how different source languages entered German through different channels and how their contributions vary in function, frequency, and degree of integration.

5. Methodology

5.1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive and comparative typological research design. The descriptive aspect of the study focuses on identifying and explaining selected German loanwords according to their source languages, meanings, and forms of linguistic adaptation. The comparative aspect allows the study to examine similarities and differences among loanwords of English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic origin. The typological aspect is used to classify the selected loanwords according to systematic linguistic and cultural criteria, such as source language, semantic field, period of borrowing, phonological adaptation, morphological integration, and cultural function.

The study is qualitative because it does not aim to measure the total number of loanwords in German statistically. Instead, it aims to analyze representative examples and interpret the historical, linguistic, and cultural patterns behind their use. This approach is suitable for examining how different donor languages contributed to German vocabulary and how borrowed words became integrated into the German linguistic system.



5.2. Data Sources

The data for the study are selected from reliable lexical, etymological, and academic sources dealing with German vocabulary and language contact. The main data sources include German dictionaries, etymological dictionaries, historical German lexicons, corpus-based examples, and scholarly studies on loanwords and borrowing.

German dictionaries are used to identify the current form, gender, plural form, and usage of selected loanwords. Etymological dictionaries are used to determine the origin of each word and to trace the possible route through which it entered German. Historical lexicons are useful for identifying older layers of borrowing, especially Latin, French, and Slavic elements. Corpus-based sources such as DWDS and Duden examples are used to observe how selected loanwords appear in actual German usage. Academic studies on German loanwords, Anglicisms, language contact, and loanword typology provide the theoretical and analytical background for the classification.

The combination of these sources makes it possible to examine loanwords from both linguistic and historical perspectives. It also helps avoid relying only on modern surface forms, since some German words may have passed through intermediary languages before becoming part of German vocabulary.

5.3. Data Sample

The study analyzes a selected sample of German loanwords from five source-language groups: English, French, Latin, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages. The sample is designed to be representative rather than exhaustive. The purpose is not to list all loanwords in German but to compare typical patterns of borrowing from different donor languages.

The proposed sample consists of approximately 110 loanwords. The distribution of the sample is as follows:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Suggested sample size</i>
English	25
French	25
Latin	25
Slavic languages	20
Turkic languages	15

The larger sample sizes for English, French, and Latin reflect their strong and well-documented influence on German vocabulary. Slavic and Turkic loanwords are represented by smaller samples because their influence is more selective and often connected with specific historical, regional, or cultural contexts. However, both groups are included because they demonstrate important forms of contact beyond the more commonly discussed Latin, French, and English influences.



The selected loanwords are chosen according to three main principles. First, the word must be used in German or recorded in reliable German lexical sources. Second, its source language or etymological origin must be identifiable through dictionaries or academic studies. Third, the word should represent a meaningful semantic or cultural field, such as technology, education, religion, cuisine, fashion, administration, geography, migration, or cultural life.

5.4. Classification Criteria

Each loanword is analyzed according to a set of typological classification criteria. These criteria make it possible to compare the selected words systematically across the five source-language groups.

The classification includes the following categories:

Category	Description	Example
German word	The current German form of the loanword	Computer
Source language	The language from which the word entered German	English
Original form	The original or earlier form in the donor language	computer
Semantic field	The area of meaning or use	Technology
Adaptation	The way the word is adjusted to German spelling, pronunciation, or grammar	capitalized as a German noun
Gender	The grammatical gender assigned in German	der Computer
Plural form	The plural form used in German	die Computer
Period/type of borrowing	The historical or sociocultural context of borrowing	modern/global English

These categories help reveal how loanwords behave after entering German. For example, the English loanword *Computer* is written with a capital letter because all German nouns are capitalized. It is assigned masculine gender as *der Computer*, and its plural form is usually *die Computer*, showing zero plural marking in standard usage. This demonstrates that even when a word is borrowed from another language, it becomes subject to German grammatical rules.

5.5. Analytical Procedure

The analysis is carried out in several stages. First, selected German loanwords are collected from dictionaries, etymological sources, corpus examples, and academic studies. Second, each word is assigned to one of the five source-language groups: English, French, Latin, Slavic, or Turkic. Third, the words are classified according to their semantic fields. Fourth, their phonological and morphological adaptation into German is examined. This includes changes in spelling, pronunciation, gender assignment, capitalization, and plural formation.

After the individual classification is completed, the loanwords are compared across source-language groups. This comparative stage examines whether different donor languages are associated with different semantic fields and different degrees of integration. For example, Latin loanwords are expected to appear frequently in education, religion, law, and science, while



English loanwords are expected to be strongly represented in technology, business, media, and youth culture. French loanwords are likely to appear in cuisine, fashion, diplomacy, and cultural life. Slavic loanwords may be connected with regional vocabulary, food, geography, and historical contact. Turkic loanwords may be associated with food, Ottoman-related cultural terms, and migration contexts.

Finally, the results are interpreted in relation to historical and sociocultural factors. This makes it possible to explain not only what words were borrowed, but also why they were borrowed and how they became integrated into German.

5.6. Scope and Limitations

The study is limited to selected loanwords from five source-language groups: English, French, Latin, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages. It does not attempt to analyze all foreign elements in German vocabulary. Other important donor languages, such as Italian, Greek, Dutch, Hebrew, Arabic, and Yiddish, are outside the scope of the present article.

Another limitation is that some German loanwords have complex etymological histories. A word may originate in one language but enter German through another intermediary language. For example, some Turkic-related words may have passed through French, Italian, or other European languages before becoming part of German. Similarly, many Latin-based words entered German through scholarly, religious, or French-mediated channels. Therefore, source-language classification must be treated carefully and supported by etymological evidence.

Despite these limitations, the selected sample provides a useful basis for comparing different borrowing patterns in German. The methodology allows the study to identify general tendencies in source-language influence, semantic distribution, and linguistic adaptation.

6. Main Analysis Structure

6.1. English Loanwords in German

English influence on German vocabulary is especially visible from the twentieth century onward and has become even stronger in the twenty-first century. This influence is closely connected with globalization, technological development, business communication, popular culture, advertising, sport, digital media, and youth language. While earlier periods of German lexical borrowing were strongly shaped by Latin and French, contemporary German shows a high number of English-derived words, especially in modern professional and technological domains.

English loanwords in German often enter the language together with new objects, concepts, professions, and cultural practices. Words such as *Computer*, *Internet*, *Software*, and *Laptop* are connected with technology and digital life. Business-related English borrowings include *Manager*, *Marketing*, and *Job*. In youth culture and everyday communication, words such as *cool*, *Party*, and *Team* are widely used. In the field of sport, English influence can be seen in



words such as *Trainer* and in calqued or semi-translated forms such as *Fußball*, which reflects the English model *football* but is formed from German elements.

The main semantic fields of English loanwords in German include technology, business, media, youth culture, sport, advertising, and global communication. This distribution shows that English influence is especially strong in areas associated with modernity, innovation, internationalization, and popular culture.

Typologically, English loanwords often preserve much of their original spelling and phonological form, especially in recent borrowings. However, once they enter German, they are adapted to the grammatical structure of the recipient language. Nouns are capitalized according to German orthographic rules, assigned grammatical gender, and integrated into German plural formation. For example, *der Computer* is masculine and has the plural form *die Computer*. *Das Team* is neuter and may form the plural *die Teams*. *Die Party* is feminine and commonly forms the plural *die Partys*. These examples show that English loanwords may remain visually recognizable as English, but they are grammatically integrated into German.

German word	Source language	Semantic field	German adaptation
der Computer	English	technology	noun capitalization, masculine gender, plural: Computer
das Internet	English	technology/media	neuter gender, German noun capitalization
die Software	English	technology	feminine gender, often used as a mass noun
der Laptop	English	technology	masculine gender, plural: Laptops
der Manager	English	business	masculine gender, plural: Manager
das Marketing	English	business	neuter gender, abstract noun use
der Job	English	work/business	masculine gender, plural: Jobs
cool	English	youth culture/style	used as an adjective, partly integrated in informal German
die Party	English	youth culture/social life	feminine gender, plural: Partys
das Team	English	society/sport	neuter gender, plural: Teams
der Trainer	English	sport/profession	masculine gender, plural: Trainer

English loanwords therefore demonstrate a modern and highly productive borrowing pattern. They are strongly connected with contemporary global culture and often function not only as names for new concepts but also as stylistic markers of modernity, internationalism, and informality.

6.2. French Loanwords in German

French has played an important role in the development of German vocabulary, especially from the medieval period through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its influence is closely connected with court culture, aristocratic life, diplomacy, fashion, cuisine, military organization,



administration, literature, and intellectual life. At different stages of European history, French functioned as a prestige language, and this prestige encouraged the borrowing of many French words into German.

French loanwords are especially common in semantic fields connected with social refinement and cultural prestige. In fashion, German contains words such as *die Mode*, *die Bluse*, and *das Kostüm*. In cuisine and dining culture, French influence can be seen in words such as *das Restaurant*, *das Menü*, and *das Omelett*. In cultural and artistic domains, words such as *das Ballett* and *der Roman* reflect French or French-mediated influence. In administration and diplomacy, German uses words such as *das Büro*, *die Adresse*, and *die Armee*.

Unlike many recent English borrowings, French loanwords often show a higher degree of phonological and orthographic adaptation, especially if they entered German earlier. Some words, such as *Mode* and *Adresse*, are fully integrated into German and may not feel strongly foreign to modern speakers. Others, such as *Restaurant* or *Menü*, still retain visible French features in spelling or pronunciation. The spelling of *Büro* shows German orthographic adaptation from French *bureau*, while *Armee* has become part of standard German military and administrative vocabulary.

German word	Source language	Semantic field	German adaptation
die Mode	French	fashion	fully integrated, feminine gender
die Bluse	French	fashion/clothing	adapted spelling and feminine gender
das Kostüm	French	fashion/culture	neuter gender, German capitalization
das Restaurant	French	food/culture	partly adapted pronunciation, neuter gender
das Menü	French	cuisine	adapted spelling with German umlaut
das Omelett	French	cuisine	adapted spelling and neuter gender
das Ballett	French/Italian-mediated	art/culture	neuter gender, adapted spelling
der Roman	French	literature	masculine gender, fully integrated
das Büro	French	administration/workplace	spelling adapted from <i>bureau</i>
die Adresse	French	administration/communication	feminine gender, fully integrated
die Armee	French	military/administration	feminine gender, standard military term

French loanwords show that lexical borrowing is closely connected with social prestige and cultural authority. Many French-derived words in German do not simply name objects; they also reflect historical patterns of elite culture, diplomacy, fashion, and refinement. Their relatively



high degree of integration demonstrates that borrowed words may become stable components of the recipient language over time.

6.3. Latin Loanwords in German

Latin is one of the oldest and most influential sources of loanwords in German. Its influence began through contact between Germanic-speaking communities and the Roman world and continued through Christianity, medieval education, scholarship, law, administration, and science. Latin also served for centuries as the language of religion, learning, medicine, philosophy, law, and academic communication in Europe. For this reason, many Latin-derived words in German belong to formal, institutional, religious, and scholarly domains.

Latin influence is particularly visible in words connected with religion, education, science, law, and administration. Religious vocabulary includes words such as *die Kirche*, *das Kloster*, and *der Priester*, although some of these have Greek roots and entered German through Latin or ecclesiastical channels. Educational vocabulary includes *die Schule*, *die Universität*, and *der Student*. Scientific and academic vocabulary includes words such as *die Natur*, *die Medizin*, and *das Labor*. Legal and administrative vocabulary includes *das Dokument*, *das Formular*, and *der Minister*.

German word	Source language	Semantic field	German adaptation
die Kirche	Greek/Latin-mediated	religion	old ecclesiastical borrowing, fully integrated
das Kloster	Latin	religion	neuter gender, old borrowing
der Priester	Greek/Latin-mediated	religion	masculine gender, fully integrated
die Schule	Latin/Greek-mediated	education	old borrowing, fully integrated
die Universität	Latin	education	feminine gender, academic vocabulary
der Student	Latin	education	masculine gender, academic vocabulary
die Natur	Latin	science/philosophy	feminine gender, formal and general use
die Medizin	Latin	science/medicine	feminine gender, institutional and professional use
das Labor	Latin	science	neuter gender, shortened scientific term
das Dokument	Latin	administration/law	neuter gender, formal register
das Formular	Latin	administration	neuter gender, bureaucratic vocabulary
der Minister	Latin	administration/politics	masculine gender, institutional vocabulary

Typologically, Latin loanwords are often deeply integrated into German. Many of them entered the language centuries ago and have undergone considerable phonological and morphological adaptation. As a result, they may not be perceived as foreign by contemporary German speakers. For example, *Schule* is historically derived from Latin *schola*, itself from



Greek, but it is now a basic German word. Similarly, *Kloster* and *Priester* are old ecclesiastical borrowings that have become fully integrated into German vocabulary.

Latin loanwords demonstrate how a donor language may influence the deep structure of a recipient language's formal vocabulary. Unlike many English borrowings, which are recent and often associated with modern global culture, Latin borrowings are older and more institutionalized. They are central to the vocabulary of education, religion, law, science, and administration. Their integration into German shows the long-term impact of Latin as a European language of learning and authority.

6.4. Slavic Loanwords in German

Slavic influence on German vocabulary is connected with long-term geographical proximity, settlement history, trade, political contact, and regional multilingualism in Central and Eastern Europe. German-speaking and Slavic-speaking communities have lived in contact for many centuries, especially in regions such as eastern Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Silesia, and other borderland areas. As a result, Slavic influence is particularly visible in place names, regional vocabulary, food terms, rural life, and some words connected with geography and social organization.

Unlike Latin, French, or English, Slavic influence in German is often less associated with international prestige and more with regional and everyday contact. Some Slavic-origin words have entered standard German and are widely used, while others remain dialectal, historical, or regionally marked. This makes Slavic loanwords important for understanding contact between neighboring communities rather than only elite or institutional borrowing.

German word	Source language	Semantic field	Note
die Grenze	Slavic	geography/politics	common standard word, fully integrated
die Gurke	Slavic	food	widely used everyday word
der Quark	Slavic	food	fully integrated standard German word
der Kren	Slavic	food/regional vocabulary	regional term, especially Austrian/Bavarian usage
der Roboter	Czech/Slavic	technology/social terminology	from Czech <i>robot</i> , internationally spread
der Zobel	Slavic	animal/fur trade	older borrowing connected with trade
die Peitsche	Slavic	rural life/object	older borrowing, integrated into German

Commonly discussed Slavic loanwords in German include *die Grenze*, *die Gurke*, and *der Quark*. The word *Grenze* is connected with geography and political space and has become a standard German word. *Gurke* belongs to the semantic field of food and is widely used in everyday German. *Quark*, also connected with food, is another example of a Slavic-origin word that has become fully integrated into German. These examples show that Slavic loanwords often reflect practical domains of contact, such as food, settlement, agriculture, and local life.



Typologically, Slavic loanwords in German are often older and highly adapted. They usually follow German gender assignment and plural formation and may no longer be recognized as foreign by most speakers. However, their distribution differs from English or French borrowings. While English loanwords are concentrated in modern technological and globalized domains, and French loanwords often reflect prestige culture, Slavic loanwords are more strongly connected with local contact, food, rural life, regional exchange, and historical geography.

Slavic loanwords therefore show that borrowing is not always the result of cultural prestige. It may also arise from everyday contact between neighboring speech communities. Their presence in German demonstrates the importance of regional multilingualism and borderland interaction in the history of German vocabulary.

6.5. *Turkic Loanwords in German*

Turkic influence in German can be discussed in two main layers. The first layer consists of older borrowings connected with Ottoman Turkish, military contact, trade, diplomacy, and European representations of the Ottoman world. These words often entered German directly from Turkish or indirectly through intermediary languages such as French, Italian, or other European languages. The second layer is connected with modern Turkish migration to Germany, especially from the second half of the twentieth century onward. This modern layer is most visible in food vocabulary, urban culture, multilingual communication, and Turkish-German social contexts.

Compared with Latin, French, and English, Turkic loanwords are fewer in German. However, they are culturally significant because they reflect both historical contact with the Ottoman world and contemporary migration-based language contact. In modern German, Turkish-origin words related to food are especially visible. Words such as *der Döner*, *der Kebab*, and *der Joghurt* are widely recognized and used. Some of these words have complex etymological routes: for example, *Kebab* is associated with Turkish usage but has deeper Middle Eastern origins, while *Joghurt* entered European languages from Turkish.

Turkic-related cultural and historical terms include *der Pascha*, *der Harem*, and *der Janitschar*. These words are connected with Ottoman administrative, social, or military structures. However, several of them may have entered German through intermediary European languages, which shows the need for careful etymological classification. In a typological study, such words should be marked as direct Turkic borrowings or Turkic-origin words transmitted through another language.

Typologically, Turkic loanwords in German are selective and domain-specific. They are especially visible in food, historical-cultural vocabulary, and migration-related contexts. Modern Turkish borrowings such as *Döner* are strongly connected with everyday urban life in Germany, while older terms such as *Pascha* and *Janitschar* reflect historical relations with the Ottoman world. Some Turkic-origin words are fully integrated into German, whereas others remain culturally marked and are used mainly when referring to Turkish or Ottoman contexts.



German word	Source language	Semantic field	Adaptation
der Döner	Turkish	food/migration culture	masculine gender, German capitalization
der Kebab	Turkish/Arabic via Turkish	food	adapted spelling and pronunciation
der Joghurt	Turkish	food	masculine gender, standard German form
der Pascha	Turkish	history/culture	historical-cultural term, masculine gender
der Harem	Arabic/Turkish-mediated	history/culture	masculine gender, Oriental cultural vocabulary
der Janitschar	Turkish	military/history	historical military term
der Kaffee	Arabic/Turkish-mediated	food/drink culture	fully integrated, complex transmission route
der Dolmusch	Turkish	transport/culture	culturally specific term, adapted spelling

Turkic loanwords therefore illustrate two different borrowing patterns: historical borrowing through political and cultural contact, and modern borrowing through migration and multilingual urban life. Their inclusion in the present analysis broadens the study beyond the traditional focus on Latin, French, and English and shows that German vocabulary has also been shaped by non-Western and migration-related contact situations.

7. Comparative Typological Discussion

The comparative analysis of English, French, Latin, Slavic, and Turkic loanwords shows that each source-language group entered German through different historical channels and contributed to different areas of vocabulary. These differences demonstrate that lexical borrowing is not a random process. Instead, it is shaped by cultural prestige, political contact, religion, education, trade, migration, technological development, and everyday interaction between speech communities.

Latin represents one of the deepest and oldest layers of borrowing in German. Its influence is strongly connected with religion, education, science, law, administration, and academic culture. Many Latin-derived words entered German through Roman contact, Christianity, medieval scholarship, and later scientific development. Because many of these borrowings are old, they are often highly integrated into German phonology, morphology, and everyday usage. Words such as *Schule*, *Kloster*, *Student*, *Natur*, and *Dokument* show that Latin contributed especially to institutional and formal vocabulary.

French influence is connected mainly with cultural prestige, aristocratic life, diplomacy, fashion, cuisine, administration, and the arts. French borrowings often entered German during periods when French culture had high social and political prestige in Europe. Words such as *Mode*,



Restaurant, Menü, Büro, Adresse, and Armee reflect this influence. Compared with recent English borrowings, many French loanwords have undergone stronger adaptation and have become well integrated into German. However, some still preserve visible French features in spelling or pronunciation.

English loanwords represent the most visible modern layer of borrowing in German. Their influence is especially strong in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, particularly in the fields of technology, business, media, advertising, sport, youth culture, and global communication. Words such as *Computer, Internet, Software, Laptop, Manager, Marketing, Job, Team, and Party* reflect the role of English as a global language. English loanwords often retain much of their original spelling, but German adapts them through capitalization, gender assignment, plural formation, and syntactic integration.

Slavic loanwords show a different borrowing pattern. Their influence is not mainly connected with international prestige but with geographical proximity, settlement history, regional contact, trade, and everyday interaction. Words such as *Grenze, Gurke, and Quark* show that Slavic influence is often linked to geography, food, rural life, and regional vocabulary. Some Slavic loanwords have become part of standard German, while others remain regional or historically marked. This demonstrates that borrowing may result not only from elite cultural influence but also from practical contact between neighboring communities.

The comparison of the five source-language groups can be summarized as follows:

<i>Source language</i>	<i>Main period of influence</i>	<i>Main semantic fields</i>	<i>Degree of integration</i>
Latin	Ancient, medieval, academic	Religion, education, science, law, administration	Very high
French	Medieval period to 19th century	Fashion, diplomacy, cuisine, culture, administration	High
English	20th–21st century	Technology, business, media, pop culture, sport	Medium to high
Slavic languages	Historical and regional contact	Geography, food, settlement, rural life	High but selective
Turkic languages	Historical and modern contact	Food, culture, Ottoman history, migration	Selective

Turkic loanwords are fewer in number than Latin, French, or English loanwords, but they are culturally significant. Turkic influence in German can be seen in two main layers: older borrowings connected with Ottoman Turkish, military history, diplomacy, and Oriental cultural vocabulary, and modern borrowings connected with Turkish migration to Germany. Words such as *Döner, Kebab, Joghurt, Pascha, and Janitschar* reflect these contact situations. Some Turkic-origin words entered German directly, while others were transmitted through intermediary languages. This makes Turkic loanwords important examples of culturally marked and historically layered borrowing.



This comparison shows that each source language contributed to German vocabulary in a distinct way. Latin provided a strong foundation for religious, educational, legal, and scientific terminology. French influenced vocabulary associated with cultural prestige, diplomacy, cuisine, and fashion. English dominates many areas of modern life, especially technology, business, global media, and youth culture. Slavic languages contributed to regional and everyday vocabulary, especially in areas shaped by geographical contact. Turkic influence is smaller but visible in food, historical-cultural vocabulary, and migration-related contexts.

From a typological perspective, these differences confirm that loanwords should be analyzed not only according to their etymological origin but also according to their semantic field, cultural function, historical period, and degree of integration. A word borrowed from Latin in the medieval period and a word borrowed from English in the digital age may both be loanwords, but they represent very different types of linguistic contact. Therefore, source-language classification helps reveal the historical and social layers of German vocabulary.

8. Findings

The analysis leads to several major findings.

First, English loanwords in German are mostly modern and are strongly connected with globalization. They are especially common in technology, business, media, advertising, sport, and youth culture. English borrowings often enter German together with new concepts, products, professions, and cultural practices. They are also used stylistically to express modernity, international orientation, innovation, and informality.

Second, French loanwords are strongly associated with fashion, cuisine, diplomacy, culture, administration, and social prestige. Many French words entered German during periods when French had high cultural and political influence in Europe. These loanwords often reflect aristocratic, diplomatic, artistic, or refined social contexts. Many of them are now well integrated into German, although some still retain French spelling or pronunciation features.

Third, Latin loanwords are deeply integrated into German and are central to religion, science, education, law, and administration. Many Latin-derived words entered German through Christianity, medieval scholarship, academic institutions, and scientific discourse. Because many of these borrowings are old, they are often no longer perceived as foreign by modern German speakers. This shows that the older a loanword is, the more likely it is to become fully integrated into the recipient language.

Fourth, Slavic loanwords are often regional, historical, and connected with everyday life. Their presence in German reflects geographical proximity and long-term contact between German-speaking and Slavic-speaking communities. Unlike French and Latin borrowings, which were often linked with prestige and institutions, Slavic borrowings frequently arose from practical contact in areas such as food, geography, settlement, rural life, and local culture.



Fifth, Turkic loanwords are fewer in number but culturally significant. They reflect both historical contact with the Ottoman world and modern migration-related contact between German and Turkish-speaking communities. Food terms such as *Döner*, *Kebab*, and *Joghurt* show the visibility of Turkish influence in everyday German culture, while historical terms such as *Pascha* and *Janitschar* reflect older Ottoman-related contact.

Sixth, German adapts loanwords through several linguistic mechanisms. Borrowed nouns are capitalized according to German orthographic rules, assigned grammatical gender, and integrated into German plural formation. Some loanwords also undergo pronunciation and spelling changes. Others preserve much of their original form but still function grammatically as German words. This demonstrates that borrowing is not simple copying; it is a process of linguistic adaptation and integration.

Overall, the findings show that German loanwords differ according to source language, semantic field, historical period, and degree of integration. Latin and French borrowings are generally older and more integrated, while English borrowings are more recent and often associated with global modernity. Slavic and Turkic loanwords show the importance of regional, cultural, and migration-based contact. These patterns confirm that loanwords are valuable evidence of both linguistic development and social history.

9. Conclusion

This article has examined selected German loanwords from English, French, Latin, Slavic languages, and Turkic languages through a typological source-language classification. The analysis has shown that German vocabulary reflects multiple layers of cultural and linguistic contact. Each source language entered German through different historical circumstances and contributed to different semantic fields.

Latin had a major influence on religious, educational, scientific, legal, and administrative vocabulary. French contributed strongly to fashion, cuisine, diplomacy, culture, and elite social life. English has become the dominant modern source of loanwords in areas connected with technology, business, media, sport, youth culture, and globalization. Slavic languages influenced German through regional contact, settlement history, food vocabulary, geography, and everyday interaction. Turkic influence is more selective but culturally meaningful, especially in food vocabulary, Ottoman-related historical terms, and modern migration contexts.

The study has also shown that loanwords become part of German through processes of adaptation and integration. Borrowed words are not simply transferred from one language to another without change. In German, they are adapted through capitalization, grammatical gender, plural formation, pronunciation, spelling, and semantic use. Some loanwords remain visibly foreign, while others become fully naturalized and are no longer recognized as borrowed by ordinary speakers.



A typological classification of loanwords helps reveal not only where words come from, but also how and why they entered the language. It shows the relationship between vocabulary and broader historical forces such as religion, education, science, trade, diplomacy, cultural prestige, migration, and globalization. Therefore, the study of loanwords provides insight into both linguistic structure and cultural history.

In conclusion, German vocabulary is the result of continuous interaction with other languages and cultures. Its loanwords represent different historical periods, social relationships, and cultural influences. Loanwords in German are not merely foreign elements; they are linguistic evidence of Germany's long history of cultural contact and social change.

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