


The role of barbarisms in literary text.

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Plan :

- What is a barbarism?
- The difference between barbarisms and foreignisms
- Functions of barbarisms

What are barbarisms?

- Barbarisms -are words of foreign origin which have not entirely become assimilated into the English language.
 - They bear the appearance of a borrowing and are on the outskirts of the literary language.
 - Most of barbarisms have corresponding English synonyms: chic – stylish, bon mot – clever witty saying, ad finitum – to infinity; beau monde – high society, au revoir – goodbye
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- Broadly defined, *barbarism* refers to an incorrect use of language. More specifically, a barbarism is a word considered "improper" because it combines elements from different languages. Adjective: *barbarous*. Also known as *barbarolexis*.
- "The term '**barbarism**' is associated with unintelligibility, lack of understanding, and mis- or noncommunication. These associations can also be extracted from the etymology of barbarian: in ancient Greek, the word *barbaros* imitates the incomprehensible sounds of the language of foreign peoples, sounding like 'bar bar.' The foreign sound of the other is dismissed as noise and therefore as not worth engaging. . . . Those tagged as 'barbarians' cannot speak out and question their barbarian status because their language is not even understood or deemed worthy of understanding."
(Maria Boletsi, *Barbarism and Its Discontents*. Stanford University Press, 2013)

The difference between barbarisms and foreignisms

- It is very important stylistically to distinguish between barbarisms and foreignisms.

Barbarisms have already become facts of English language and are given in the bodies of dictionaries, while foreignisms though used for certain stylistic purposes do not belong to English vocabulary, nor are they registered by dictionaries.

Functions of barbarisms:

- To supply **local colour** as a background to the narrative, i.e. introduce language elements that reflect the environment as a background to the narrative. By local color we also mean the devices used to describe the conditions of life the customs, the morals, and the manners of a given country at a given period.
- To express a concept non-existent in English reality
- Reproduce actual manner of speech and environment of the hero
- They are used in publicist style. In fiction they sometimes help to elevate the language, because words which we do not understand have a peculiar charm.
- “Exactifying” function – to express some exact meaning (au revoir vs. good-bye).

- Barbarisms and foreign words are used in various styles of language, but are most often to be found in the style of belles-lettres and the publicistic style

□ Thank you for your
attention

