

LOANWORDS IN ENGLISH CLASSICAL MUSIC THEORY

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Abstract. *The paper deals with loanwords in English specialized vocabulary of classical music. It is one of the fields evincing the full power of linguistic borrowing, which is a powerful instrument of language change. Following a survey of the main causes of loaning, both general and field specific, and of the common patterns and problems of integration of “foreignisms”, the paper focuses on nouns as more “borrowable” than other parts of speech. They are examined both in terms of their origin and the level of integration into English as a recipient language. The paper focuses on a stock of 180 pivotal nouns in the targeted field, all loanwords mostly borrowed from Latin. Some of them are fully integrated, i.e. with anglicized plural forms, some retain their “foreignness” manifested in a foreign plural form which is used along with an anglicized variant, and some have only foreign plural forms. Considering the undeniable dominance of loanwords in the explored field and the common dilemmas regarding their pluralisation, particularly in the case of compound loans, the paper makes a detailed inventory of their plural forms upon comparing ten reliable sources: Britannica Encyclopaedia, Oxford Dictionary, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, American Heritage Dictionary, New World Dictionary, Wikipedia, Wiktionary, Random House Dictionary, Dictionary.com. The major source for etymological highlights is the Online Etymology Dictionary.*

Key words: *borrowing, loanwords, etymology, foreign plural, plural-forming patterns*

INTRODUCTION – THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

Because of the very nature of music as a global phenomenon, the language about and “around” music is and will always be some kind of a “special purpose Esperanto” shared not only by restricted, linguistically homogenous groups of specialists, but by millions of people from very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds who share an interest in

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music in different ways and at various levels. Words like tempo, maestro, orchestra, or bravura, all coming from the technical musical discourse, have become universally recognizable.

LOANWORDS

Lexical borrowing is believed to be “the commonest form of contact-induced linguistic change” (Grant 2015). Relying on a cross-linguistic survey of the lexical borrowings in forty-one languages presented in the Max Planck Institute’s World Loanword Database¹, Haspelmath and Tadmor (2009) state that “[n]o language in the sample – and probably no language in the world – is entirely devoid of loanwords.” Although the process is inevitable, some languages are rather resistant to this linguistic “osmosis”. They apply different strategies to control outside influences by imposing various inner regulations, like national spellings for loanwords, i.e. adapting foreign words to their languages, etc. Nevertheless, the process is almost impossible to control.

On the other hand, English ranks high on the scale of receptivity of loanwords, as one of the most enthusiastic and insatiable borrowers during most historical periods. More particularly, in the already mentioned World Loanword Database, English has one of the highest percentages of borrowings (42%) out of the 41 languages surveyed. Yet, unlike many continental European countries, neither Britain, nor the USA, nor any other English-speaking countries have ever attempted to restrict new loanwords, be it in the form of a national academy or any other linguistic authority.

Being that lexical borrowing is mainly contact-induced there are manifold reasons for this high receptivity of English. Among these reasons we should mention rich British history with long periods of exposure to different linguistic influences, mostly Latin, but also Scandinavian, and French, as a result of the Teutonic, Scandinavian and Norman conquests, British colonial expansion, rich commercial links in the post-colonial period based on the leading role in the Commonwealth structure, cultural, political and even military interactions in the 20th century, technological developments etc. On top of this, English as a language has high adaptability to borrowing vocabulary due to its rich phonological inventory of vowels and consonants (Hoffer 2005), including eleven phonemic vowels typical for various places and manners of articulation, and twenty-four phonemic consonants (voiceless and voiced stops, voiceless and voiced fricatives and affricates, nasals, lateral resonant, and semivowels). With poly-syllabism as a standard, and rather simple pitch and stress patterns, English handles the incoming lexicon with relative ease.

Generally speaking, any foreign word entering a different linguistic environment initially brings with itself the rules of the original language, but with the passage of time it has a tendency to get assimilated. In other words, adoption of foreign words is often followed by its adaptation that usually involves several stages. At the first stage, the word is rather haphazardly used, often italicized or quoted in writing. Some borrowed words then undergo a stage of “stabilization”, marked by a more frequent use by an increasing number of speakers. The final stage is the stage of full integration, when the loan reaches

¹ The World Loanword Database contains detailed comparable information about 58.000 words from 41 languages, contributed by 41 (teams of) specialists, and edited by Martin Haspelmath and Uri Tadmor from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

the status of full recognition and starts making its own network of figurative meanings. This process is, as a rule, followed by certain graphological, phonological, morphological and/or semantic changes of the loanwords governed by the rules of the recipient language.

Some loanwords get so completely absorbed by the recipient language that their origin is no longer recognizable to the speakers, while others retain their “foreignness” which speakers tend to be much more aware of.

Although linguistic borrowings are by no means limited to nouns, it is widely acknowledged that they are borrowed more frequently and more easily than other parts of speech. Van Hout and Muysken (1994, 42) give the following explanation: “A very important factor involves one of the primary motivations for lexical borrowing, that is, to extend the referential potential of a language. Since reference is established primarily *through nouns, these are the elements borrowed most easily.*” Taking into account their supremacy among the loanwords in the language of classical music, they are the primary target of this paper.

LOANWORDS IN THE LANGUAGE OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

Any musical score opens a door to at least two amazing worlds: one of the music it contains and the other of a totally different nature – the world of international loanwords that makes the micro-language of classical music both translingual and omnisignificant.

But for some exceptions like *dots, bars, lines, sharps* or *flats*, most of the names for the symbols contained in a musical score are loanwords from Italian, Latin, French, Greek or German. Most of them are fully integrated from the linguistic point of view, and behave as any other English word, particularly in terms of pluralisation.

Maybe there is no better way to open a discussion about the loanwords in the corpus of musical terms of classical music than to start from some kernel terms, such as *music* (German – *musik*, French – *musique*, Spanish – *la música*, Romanian – *muzică*, Turkish – *müzik*, Serbian – *muzika*), or *instrument* (German/French/Romanian/Serbian – *instrument*, Spanish – *instrumento*, Turkish – *enstrüman*), or *orchestra* (German – *orchester*, French – *orchestra*, Spanish – *orquesta*, Romanian – *orchestra*, Turkish – *orchestra*, Serbian – *orkestar*) all of them with international recognisability and all loanwords:

- *music*: mid-13c. *musike* from Old French *musique* (12c.) and directly from Latin *musica* “the art of music”, from Greek *mousike (techne)* “(art) of the Muses”, from fem. of *mousikos* “pertaining to the Muses”, from *Mousa* “Muse”;²
- *instrument*: late 13c., from Old French *instrument*, *enstrument* “means, device; musical instrument” and directly from Latin *instrumentum* “a tool, an implement”;
- *orchestra pl. orchestras*: c. 1600, from Latin *orchestra*, from Greek *orkhestra*, semicircular space where the chorus of dancers performed, with suffix *-tra* denoting place + *orkheisthai* “to dance”.

Very much in this spirit, most of the terms used in the field of classical music have a specific linguistic dimension that qualifies them as international loanwords resulting from the simple historical reality that Italy was the cradle of the major developments in the

² *Online Etymology Dictionary.*

field of music as far back in time as the 10th century (thanks to the early musical invention of the musical stave by Guido de Arezzo), and particularly in the period from the late Renaissance to the final decades of the Baroque. This directly accounts for Latin, i.e. Italian lexical hegemony in this field, reflected in the fact that the etymology of this category of terms in very many cases leads to their Latin/Italian roots. The only question is whether they came to English (or any other language for that matter) directly through Italian, i.e. Latin or through some other language.

So, most of the terms currently used to designate the known classical musical forms, are actually “internationalisms” with etymology pointing to their Italian, i.e. Latin roots:

- bagatelle [←Fr.←It.]: Fr. *bagatelle* “knick-knack, bauble, trinket” (16c.), from Italian *bagatella* “a trifle”; as “a piece of light music” attested from 1827,
- burletta, *pl.* burlettas [← It.]: It. diminutive of *burla* “joke”,
- cantata, *pl.* cantatas [← It.]: 1724, from Italian *cantata*, literally “that which is sung”, past participle of *cantare* “to sing”,
- capriccio, *pl.* capriccios, rarely: capricci [← It.]: 1690s, from Italian *capriccio* “sudden start or motion”,
- chanson [←Fr.←Lat.]: c. 1600, from French *chanson*, from Old French *chançon* “song, epic poem” (12c.), from Latin *cantionem*, nominative *cantio* “song”, from past participle stem of *canere*,
- fugue [←It.←Lat.]: 1590s, *fuge*, from Italian *fuga*, literally “flight”, also “ardor”, from Latin *fuga* “a running away, act of fleeing”, from *fugere* “to flee”,
- impromptu, *pl.* impromptus [←Fr.← Lat.]: 1660s, from French *impromptu* (1650s), from Latin *in promptu* “in readiness”,
- madrigal [←It.← Lat.]: 1580s, from Italian *madrigale*, probably from Venetian dialect *madregal* “simple/ingenuous”, from Late Latin *matricalis* “invented, original”, literally “of or from the womb”, from *matrix* (genitive *matricis*),
- mass [← Lat.]: from Vulgar Latin *missa* “eucharistic service”, literally “dismissal”, from Late Latin *missa* “dismissal”, fem. past participle of *mittere* “to let go, send”,
- nocturne [←Fr.←Lat.]: 1851, from French *nocturne*, literally “composition appropriate to the night”, noun use of Old French *nocturne* “nocturnal”, from Latin *nocturnus*,
- opera, *pl.* operas, rarely: opere [←It.←Lat.]: 1640s, from Italian *opera*, literally “a work, labor, composition”, from Latin *opera* “work, effort”, secondary (abstract) noun from *operari* “to work”, from *opus* (genitive *operis*) “a work”,
- oratorio, *pl.* oratorios [←It.←Lat.]: 1727, from Italian *oratorio* (late 16c.), from Church Latin *oratorium*, in reference to musical services in the church of the *Oratory* of St. Philip Neri in Rome, where old mystery plays were adapted to religious services,
- overture: middle English, literally, *opening*, from Anglo-French, from Vulgar Latin **opertura*, alteration of Latin *apertura*; orchestral sense first recorded in English 1660s.
- passacaglia, *pl.* passacaglias [←It.←Sp.←Lat.] 1650s, from Italian, from Spanish *pasacalle*, from *pasar* “to pass” (from Latin *passus* “step, pace”),
- prelude [← Fr.←Lat.]: 1560s, from Middle French *prélude* “notes sung or played to test the voice or instrument” (1530s), from Medieval Latin *preludium* “preliminary”,

from Latin *praeludere* “to play beforehand for practice”, from *prae-* “before” + *ludere* “to play”,

- quartet [←Fr.← Lat.]: 1773, from French *quartette*, from Italian *quartetto*, diminutive of *quarto* “fourth”, from Latin *quartus* “the fourth”, which is related to *quattuor* “four”,
- requiem [←Lat.]: c. 1300, from Latin *requiem*, accusative singular of *requies* “rest (after labor), repose”, from *re-*, intensive prefix + *quies* “quiet”.

The same applies to numerous other musical forms mentioned in the next chapter: *cabaletta*, *concerto*, *concertino*, *intermezzo*, *pasticcio*, *ricercar*, *scherzo*, *serenata*, *sonata*, *sinfonia* or *toccatà*.

Obviously, some of the names of some musical forms are loanwords with non-Latin etymology like: *allemande* [←Fr.]³, *canon* [←Lat.←Gr.]⁴, *carol* [←Fr.←Lat.←Gr.]⁵, *etude* [←Fr.]⁶, *fantasia* [←It.←Gr.]⁷, *galliard* [←Fr.]⁸, *motet* [←Fr.]⁹, *rhapsody* [←Fr.←Lat.←Gr.]¹⁰, *saraband(e)* [←Fr.←Sp.]¹¹ or *suite* [←Fr.]¹².

In the same spirit, the primacy of Italian and Latin is not so pronounced when it comes to musical instruments, as illustrated below:

- clarinet [←Fr.←Lat.]: 1768, from French *clarinette* (18c.), diminutive of *clarine* “little bell” (16c.), noun use of fem. of adjective *clarin*, from *clair*, *cler*, from Latin *clarus*,
- flute [←Fr.]: early 14c., from Old French *flaut*, *flaute* (musical) “flute” (12c.), from Old Provençal *flaut*, which is of uncertain origin,
- lute [←Fr.]: late 13c., from Old French *lut*, *leut*, from Old Provençal *laut*, a misdivision of Arabic *al-'ud*, the Arabian *lute*, literally “the wood”, where *al* is the definite article,
- oboe [←It.←Fr.]: 1724, from Italian *oboe*, from phonetic spelling of Middle French *hautbois*, from *haut* “high, loud, high-pitched” + *bois* “wood”,
- pianoforte [←It.]: 1767, from Italian, from *piano e forte* “soft and loud”, in full, *gravicembalo col piano e forte* “harpsichord with soft and loud”,
- piccolo, *pl. piccoli* [←Fr.←It.←Lat.]: 1856, piccolo flute, from French *piccolo*, from Italian *flauto piccolo* “small flute”, from *piccolo* “small”, perhaps a children's made-up word, or from *picca* “point”, or from Vulgar Latin root **pikk-* “little”, related to **piccare* “to pierce”,

³ 1775, from French *Allemande*, fem. of *allemand* “German”; as a piece of music in a suite, 1680s.

⁴ Middle English, from Old English, from Late Latin, from Latin, ruler, rule, model, standard, from Greek *kanōn*.

⁵ Carol (from Anglo-French, modification of Late Latin *choraula* choral song, from Latin, choral accompanist, from Greek *choraulēs*, from *choros* chorus + *aulein* to play a reed instrument, from *aulos*, a reed instrument.

⁶ French, literally, study, from Middle French *estude*, *estudie*, from Old French.

⁷ (*pl. fantasias*) 1724, from Italian *fantasia*, from Latin *phantasia*, from Greek *phantasia* “power of imagination; appearance, image, perception”.

⁸ From Old French *gaillard* “lively, brisk, gay, high-spirited”.

⁹ Late 14c., from Old French *motet* (13c.), diminutive of *mot* “word”.

¹⁰ 1540s, from Middle French *rhapsodie*, from Latin *rhapsodia*, from Greek *rhapsodia* “verse composition, recitation of epic poetry”, from *rhapsodos* “reciter of epic poems”, literally “one who stitches or strings songs together”, from *rhaptein* “to stitch, sew, weave”.

¹¹ From French *sarabande*, from Spanish *zarabanda*.

¹² 1670s, from French *suite*, from Old French *suite*, *sieute* “act of following, attendance” (which is an earlier borrowing of the same French word); the meaning “set of instrumental compositions” from 1680s.

- rebec [←Fr.←Ar.]: early 15c., from Middle French *rebec* (15c.), an unexplained alteration of Old French *ribabe* (13c.), ultimately from Arabic *rebab*,
- shawm [←Fr.←Lat.←Gr.]: from Old French *chalemie*, *chalemel*, from Late Latin *calamellus*, literally “a small reed”, diminutive of Latin *calamus* “reed”, from Greek *kalamos*,
- trumpet [En.←Fr.]: late 14c., from Old French *trompette* “trumpet”, diminutive of *trompe*,
- viol [←Fr.]: late 15c., *viol*, from Middle French *viole*, from Old French *viol* “stringed instrument like a fiddle”, from Old Provençal *viola*,
- violin [←It.]: 1570s, from Italian *violino*, diminutive of *viola*; the modern form of the smaller, medieval *viola da braccio*,
- violoncello, *pl.* violoncellos, rarely: violoncelli: [←It.]: 1724, from Italian *violoncello*, diminutive of *violone* “bass viol”, from *viola* + augmentative suffix *-one*,
- virginal [←Fr.← Lat.]: early 15c., from Old French *virginal* “virginal, pure” or directly from Latin *virginalis* “of a maiden, of a virgin”, from *virgin*. The keyed musical instrument so called from 1520s.

In this context, the terms presently used to designate note values are an interesting example. More specifically, English has developed two different conventions of “naming” note values as a result of different historical circumstances and linguistic interactions. The result is co-existence of two completely different sets of terms developed within the same language, both based on borrowing:

British English		American English
breve	↔	double whole note
semibreve	↔	whole note
minim	↔	half note
quaver	↔	quarter note
semiquaver	↔	sixteenth note
demisemiquaver	↔	thirty-second note
hemidemisemiquaver	↔	sixty-fourth note
semihemidemisemiquaver, quasihemidemisemiquaver	↔	one-hundred-and-twenty-eighth note

The British names for note values are rooted in an older form of musical notation, rarely used today. It is called *mensural notation* dating from the time when the terms of *Latin* origin had international currency. Their original meanings reveal that the notes which were originally perceived as short came progressively to be long, making the entire issue interesting both linguistically and musically. Thus, *breve*¹³, from Latin *breve*, means “short”, *minim*¹⁴ comes from *minimus* which means “very small”, while *quaver*¹⁵ refers to the quivering effect of very fast notes. The *crotchet*¹⁶ is named after the shape of the note, from the Old French for a “little hook”. The elements semi-, demi- and hemi- are

¹³ Mid-15c., musical notation indicating two whole notes, from Latin *breve* (adj.) “short” in space or time.

¹⁴ Mid-15c., in music, from Latin *minimus* (of time) “least, shortest, very short”.

¹⁵ Quaver (v.) – “to vibrate, tremble”, early 15c., probably a frequentative of *cwavien* “to tremble, shake” (early 13c.), which probably is related to Low German *quabbeln* “tremble”, and possibly of imitative origin. Meaning “sing in trills or quavers” first recorded 1530s.

actually notable examples of borrowings of derivative morphemes from three different languages – Latin, French and Greek respectively, while *quasi-* means “almost”. So, a hemidemisemiquaver, actually translates to “half of a half of a half of a quaver”. This “chaining” of loaned prefixes of the *same* meaning is a rather unique example in English, especially in the light of the fact that incorporation of two or more prefixes is extremely rare, making the words like *unpremeditated* or *anti-disestablishment*, highly uncommon even for the native speakers.

The American terms for note values which rest on the fractional naming convention are actually *loan translations* (so-called *calques*) of the German terms due to a simple circumstance that American orchestras in the 19th century were significantly populated by German immigrants (Spitzer 2012). Just for the sake of illustration, “within the New York Philharmonic, Germans made up nearly 40% of all musicians by 1848, increasing to 80% by 1875.... Every conductor within the NYP from 1852–1902 is identified as of German or Austrian descent”.¹⁷

Aside from musical forms, instruments, and note values, loanwords have penetrated into practically all the pores of the vocabulary of classical music. Just for the sake of illustration, the sentence: “This arrangement of intervals¹⁸ produces a major¹⁹ chord²⁰” contains only loanwords, but for “this”, “of” and “a”, just as “three” and “and” remain the only non-borrowed words in the string “*three-octave*²¹ *violin scales*²² and *arpeggios*²³”.

The dominance of loanwords is all-embracing and ranges from umbrella terms like *solfege/solfeggio*²⁴, *melody*²⁵, *harmony*²⁶, *polyphony*²⁷, *homophony*²⁸ or *counterpoint*²⁹, to more specific terms pertaining to:

- *musical performance/interpretation/notation*: clef (Middle French *clef* “key, trigger” ← Lat. *clavis* “key”), legato, *pl.* legatos (It. *legato*, literally “bound”, past participle of *legare* ← Lat. *ligare* “tie”), marcato (It. past participle of *marcare* to mark, accent, of Germanic origin), forte (from It. *forte*, literally “strong” ← Lat. *fortis* “strong”), coda, *pl.* codas (Lat. *cauda* “tail of an animal”), etc.

¹⁶ From Old French *crochet* meaning “a hook”. Figurative use in musical notation is from mid-15c., from the shape of the notes.

¹⁷ *Origins of the NY Philharmonic: German influence* (Digital Humanitists at UCLA, available at: <http://nyphilcollection.com/german.html>).

¹⁸ Early 14c., from Old French *intervalle* “interval, interim” (14c.), earlier *entreval* (13c.) and directly from Late Latin *intervallum* “a space between, an interval of time, a distance”.

¹⁹ c. 1300, from Latin *maior*, irregular comparative of *magnus* “large, great”, from Latin *maior* “an elder, adult” (musical sense attested by 1797).

²⁰ 1590s, ultimately a shortening of *accord* (or borrowed from a similar development in French) and influenced by Latin *chorda* “catgut, a string” of a musical instrument.

²¹ From Medieval Latin *octava*, from Latin *octava dies* “eighth day”, fem. of *octavus* “eighth”, from *octo*.

²² (musical sense, 1590s) from Latin *scala* “ladder, staircase”.

²³ Arpeggio, *pl.* arpeggios (rarely arpeggi) 1742, from Italian *arpeggio*, literally “harping”, from *arpeggiare* “to play upon the harp”, from *arpa* “harp”, which is of Germanic origin.

²⁴ (1774), from Italian *solfeccio*, from *sol-fa*, representing musical notes.

²⁵ From Old French *melodie* “song, tune”, from Late Latin *melodia*, from Greek *meloidia* “a singing/chanting song” from *melos* “song”.

²⁶ From Old French *harmonie*, *armonie* “harmony”, from Latin *harmonia*, from Greek *harmonia* “concord of sounds”.

²⁷ From Greek *polyphonia* “variety of sounds”.

²⁸ From French *homophonie*, from Greek *homophonia* “unison”.

²⁹ From Middle French *contrepoint*, from Medieval Latin *contrapunctus*, from Latin *contra*-counter- + Medieval Latin *punctus* “musical note”, melody.

- *vocal and instrumental pitch ranges/registers/techniques*: soprano, *pl.* sopranos, rarely: soprani (It. *soprano* literally “high”, from *sopra* “above” ← Lat. *supra*, fem. ablative singular of *super* “above”), mezzo-soprano³⁰, alto³¹, *pl.* altos, rarely alti (It. *alto* (*canto*) ← Lat. *altus* “high”), baritone (It. *baritono* ← Gr. *barytonos* “deep-sounding”), tenor (Modern French *teneur* ← Lat. *tenorem* “a course”, originally “continuance, a holding on”, from *tenere* “to hold”, falsetto, *pl.* falsettos (It. *falsetto*, dim. of *falso* “false” ← Lat. *falsus*), vibrato, *pl.* vibratos (It. *vibrato* ← Lat. *vibratus*, past participle of *vibrare* “to vibrate”), tremolo, *pl.* tremolos (It. *tremolo*, from Lat. *tremulus* “trembling”), etc.
- *movements within a larger work*: adagio (It. a contraction of *ad* “to, at” *agio* “leisure” ← vulgar Latin *adiacens*, present participle of *adiacere* “to lie at, to lie near”), allegro (It. *allegro* “brisk, cheerful” ← Lat. *alacrem* (nominative *alacer*) “lively, cheerful, brisk”, etc.

FOREIGN PLURAL OF MUSICAL TERMS

Aside from the mentioned fully integrated loanwords, the technical language of classical music contains numerous terms, or to be more precise – nouns, as a category most prone to borrowing, which have retained their “foreignness”, actualizing, among other things, the issue of pluralisation, as a usual source of confusion for both the students of English as a second language, and native speakers themselves.

Talking about English, as a language that borrows from other languages with a truly global sweep, Kenneth G. Wilson (1993), states: “...when loan words cease to seem foreign, and if their frequency of use in English increases, they very often drop the foreign plural in favour of a regular English -s. Thus at any given time we can find some loan words in divided usage, with both the foreign plural (e.g., *indices*) and the regular English plural (e.g., *indexes*) in standard use.”

Foreign plural is, as a rule of thumb, regarded as appropriate to formal, scientific, or technical writings, while the English plural remains better suited to everyday language. It is hard to believe that rock guitarists would ever say that they use *plectra* (foreign plural of *plectrum*); no doubt that they invariably use the anglicized form *plectrums*.

Pluralisation, seen from the point of contemporary English, is a rather simple process, resting – in a vast number of cases – on simple suffixation, i.e. adding an -s or -es to the root. However, when it comes to the pluralisation of foreign, i.e. non-English words, things become more complex, because the plural-forming patterns in different languages can go far away from simple suffixation (which, by itself, involves a much wider spectrum of postfixes than the ones common to the English-speaking persons’ ears). Other mechanisms can be involved: changing the suffix (-us to -i, -um to -a, -a to -ae, to mention only a few), adding or changing prefixes, adding infixes (affixes inserted in the middle of the word) or circumfixes (affixes added before and after the word at the same time), reduplicating, using a whole different word (a pattern comparable to the person – people model), changing of the tone (typical for some African languages), not to mention the problems stemming from gender-, -number, or case-sensitive plurals. It is true, though, that years ago, when English nouns had three genders, only masculine nouns (and not all)

³⁰ Italian *mezzo*, literally “middle”, from Latin *medius*.

³¹ Originally a man's high voice; now more commonly applied to the lower range of women's voices.

pluralized by adding an *-s* (or rather *-as*), while the other ways of making plural involved adding *-u*, *-a*, *-e*, or *-n*, changing the vowel, or nothing at all.

Yet, the question whether a specific non-English term in the micro-language of classical music which is whirling with loanwords pluralizes following the rules of the donor language or is subject to English rules is not always easy to answer. Dilemmas around this issue are numerous and relevant even for native speakers, not to mention that only some dictionaries offer answers.

Some loanwords have retained their plural forms from Latin and other languages, like *cantus*, *pl. cantus*, or *conductus* *pl. conductus*, but, generally, their number is limited. On the other hand the number of loanwords in the technical language of classical music which appear in English with two forms of plural – foreign and anglicized – is considerable. What follows is an inventory of 100 loanwords in the targeted field with both foreign and anglicized plural, or only foreign plural, and their etymology based on comparing ten reliable sources: *Britannica Encyclopaedia*, *Oxford Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, *American Heritage Dictionary*, *New World Dictionary*, *Wikipedia*, *Wiktionary*, *Random House Dictionary*, *Dictionary.com* and *Online Etymology Dictionary*. The loanwords listed hereafter are grouped according to donor languages, but considering the fact that most of them have a history of multiple borrowing, the language taken as a donor is the one from which the term actually entered English.

From this point of view, Italian, i.e. Latin shows very high primacy for the reasons already stated in this paper. So, the first rather large group focuses on the terms entering English from Italian (most of them with Latin origin) typical for an *-o* ending in singular which pluralize following the pattern of conversion of *-o* to *-i*, and have an *-os* ending in the anglicized plural form:

Italian (-o) : (foreign plural) **-i** (anglicized plural) **-os**

Singular	Foreign plural	Anglicized plural
arioso ³²	ariosi	ariosos
basso ³³	bassi	bassos
capotasto ³⁴	capitasti	capotastos
castrato ³⁵	castrati	castratos
clavicembalo ³⁶	clavicembali	clavicembali
concertino ³⁷	concertini	concertinos
concerto ³⁸	concerti	concertos
contralto	contralti	contraltos
crescendo ³⁹	crescendi	crescendos

³² 1742, < Italian *arioso* “like an aria”, from *aria* “melody”.

³³ From Italian, “bass, a bass voice”, from Italian *basso*, from Late Latin *bassus* “short, low”.

³⁴ From Italian, equivalent to *capo* head + *tasto* finger board, fret, literally, touch, feel, noun derivative of *tastare* – to touch lightly.

³⁵ Italian, from past participle of *castrare* “to castrate”, from Latin *castratos*.

³⁶ 1730-40; < Italian < Medieval Latin *clāvicymbalum*, equivalent to Latin *clāvi(s)* key + *cymbalum* (cymbal).

³⁷ Late 18th century: Italian, diminutive of *concerto*.

³⁸ 1595–1605, from French < Italian *concerto*; (v.) < French *concerter* < Italian *concertare* to organize, arrange by mutual agreement.

³⁹ 1776 as a musical term, from Italian *crescendo* “increasing” from Latin *crescendo*, ablative of gerund of *crescere* “to increase”.

divertimento ⁴⁰	divertimenti	divertimentos
glissando ⁴¹	glissandi	glissandos
intermezzo ⁴²	intermezzi	intermezzos
libretto ⁴³	libretti	librettos
maestro ⁴⁴	maestri	maestros
obbligato ⁴⁵	obbligati	obbligatos
ostinato ⁴⁶	ostinati (rare)	ostinatos
pasticcio ⁴⁷	pastici	pasticcios
pizzicato ⁴⁸	pizzicati	pizzicatos
portamento ⁴⁹	portamenti	portamentos
primo ⁵⁰	primi	primos
ricercar ⁵¹	ricercari	ricercars
ritornello ⁵²	ritornelli	ritornellos
ripieno ⁵³	ripieni	ripienos
rubato ⁵⁴	rubati	rubatos
scherzo ⁵⁵	scherzi	scherzos
segno ⁵⁶	segni	segnos
solfeggio ⁵⁷	solfeggi	solfeggios
staccato ⁵⁸	staccati	staccatos
stretto ⁵⁹	stretti	strettos
tempo ⁶⁰	tempi	tempos
terzetto ⁶¹	terzetti	terzettos
virtuoso ⁶²	virtuosi	virtuosos

⁴⁰ Italian, literally, diversion, from *divertire* to divert, amuse, from Latin *divertere*.

⁴¹ 1842, “a gliding from one note to the next”, an Italianized form of French *glissant*, present participle of *glisser* “to slide”.

⁴² 1782, from Italian *intermezzo* “short dramatic performance (usually light and pleasing) between the acts of a play or opera”, literally “that which is between”, from Latin *intermedius*.

⁴³ 1742, from Italian *libretto*, diminutive of *libro* “book”, from Latin *liber* (genitive *libri*) “book”.

⁴⁴ 1797, from Italian *maestro*, literally “master”, from Latin *magisterium*, accusative of *magister* “chief, head, director, teacher”, contrastive adjective (“he who is greater”) from *magis* (adv.) “more”.

⁴⁵ 1724, from Italian *obbligato*, literally “obligated”, from Latin *obligatus*, past participle of *obligare* “to bind”.

⁴⁶ 1876, from Italian *ostinato* “obstinate, persistent”.

⁴⁷ Italian, from Medieval Latin *pasticius* from Vulgar Latin **pasticius*, composed of paste from Late Latin *pasta*, “paste”.

⁴⁸ 1845, from Italian *pizzicato* “plucked”, past participle of *pizzicare* “to pluck (strings), pinch”, from *pizzare* “to prick, to sting”, from Old Italian *pizzo* “point, edge”, from Vulgar Latin **pits-*, probably of imitative origin.

⁴⁹ 1765–75, from Italian: fingering, literally, a bearing, carrying.

⁵⁰ 1785–95, from Italian: literally “first” from Latin *primus*.

⁵¹ Italian, noun use of *ricercare* “to seek”.

⁵² 1665–75, from Italian, diminutive of *ritorno* “return”.

⁵³ 1715–25, from Italian, literally “filled up”.

⁵⁴ 1883, Italian, short for *tempo rubato*, literally “robbed time”, from past participle of *rubare* “to steal, rob”.

⁵⁵ 1852, from Italian *scherzo*, literally “sport, joke”, from *scherzare* “to jest” or “joke”.

⁵⁶ 1905–10, from Italian, from Latin *signum* a sign.

⁵⁷ 1765–75, Italian, derivative of *solfeggiare*, equivalent to *solfa*.

⁵⁸ From Italian, past participle of *staccare*, to detach, short for *distaccare*, from obsolete French *destacher*, from Old French *destachier*.

⁵⁹ 1745–55, from Italian; literally, narrow; from Latin *strictus*.

⁶⁰ 1724, from Italian *tempo*, literally “time” (plural *tempi*), from Latin *tempus* “time, season, portion of time”.

⁶¹ 1590s, from Italian, diminutive of *terzo* “third”, from Latin *tertius*.

The second group, also from Italian, puts together the nouns ending in *-a*, that generally make their foreign plural forms by dropping the *-a*, and adding *-e*, while their anglicized plural has a typical *-as* ending:

Italian (-a) : (foreign plural) *-e* (anglicized plural) *-as*

Singular	Foreign plural	Anglicized plural
acciaccatura ⁶³	acciaccature	acciaccaturas
appoggiatura ⁶⁴	appoggiature	appoggiaturas
aria ⁶⁵	arie	arias
arietta ⁶⁶ (<i>alt.</i> ariette)	arriette	ariettas (<i>alt.</i> arriettes)
bergamasca	bergamasche	bergamascas
bravura ⁶⁷	bravure	bravuras
cabaletta ⁶⁸	cabalette	cabalettas
cavatina ⁶⁹	cavatine (rare)	cavatinas
diva ⁷⁰	dive	divas
fermata ⁷¹	fermate	fermatas
partita ⁷²	partite	partitas
serenata ⁷³	serenate	serenatas
scordatura ⁷⁴	scordature	scordaturas
sonata ⁷⁵	sonate	sonatas
sinfonia ⁷⁶	sinfonie	sinfonias
tessitura ⁷⁷	tessiture	tessituras
toccata ⁷⁸	toccate	toccatas

⁶² 1610s, from Italian *virtuoso*, noun use of adjective meaning “skilled”, learned, of exceptional worth”.

⁶³ From Italian *acciaccatura*, from the verb *acciaccare* (“to crush”).

⁶⁴ Italian, literally “support”.

⁶⁵ From Italian *aria*, literally “air”.

⁶⁶ 1735–45, from Italian, equivalent to *ari(a)* aria + *-etta* –ette.

⁶⁷ 1788, “piece of music requiring great skill”, from Italian *bravura* “bravery, spirit”.

⁶⁸ 1835–45, from Italian, alteration of *coboletta* stanza, diminutive of *cob(b)ola*, *cobla* stanza, couplet < Old Provençal *cobla*, from Latin *cōpula* bond.

⁶⁹ Early 19th century, from Italian, diminutive of *cavata*, artful production of sound from *cavare*, to dig out, extract from Latin, to excavate from *cavus*: see “cave”.

⁷⁰ 1883, from Italian *diva* “goddess, fine lady”, from Latin *diva* “goddess”, fem. of *divus* “divine” (one).

⁷¹ 1876, musical from Italian, literally “a stop, a pause”, from *fermare* “to fasten, to stop”, from *fermo* “strong, fastened”, from Latin *fīrmus* “strong, stable”.

⁷² Italian, from *partire* to divide, from Latin.

⁷³ French *sérénade*, from Italian *serenata*, from *sereno* “clear, calm” (of weather), from Latin *serenus* “serene”.

⁷⁴ Late 19th century, Italian, from *scordare* “be out of tune”.

⁷⁵ 1690s, from Italian *sonata* “piece of instrumental music”, literally “sounded” (i.e. “played on an instrument”, as opposed to *cantata* “sung”), fem. past participle of *sonare* “to sound”, from Latin *sonare* “to sound”.

⁷⁶ 1773, from Italian *sinfonia*, from Medieval Latin *symphonia* – “a unison of sounds, harmony”, from Greek *symphonia* “harmony, concord of sounds”, from *symphonos* “harmonious, agreeing in sound”.

⁷⁷ 1890–95, from Italian: literally “texture”, from Latin *textūra*.

⁷⁸ 1724, from Italian *toccata*, from *toccare* “to touch”, from Vulgar Latin **toccare*.

Follow several examples of the loanwords directly borrowed from Latin exemplifying two common patterns of pluralisation:

Latin (-a) : (foreign plural) **-ae** (anglicized plural) **-as**
(-um) : (foreign plural) **-a** (anglicized plural) **-ums**

Singular	Foreign plural	Anglicized plural
buccin(a) ⁷⁹	buccinae	buccin(a)s
caesura ⁸⁰	caesurae	caesuras
copula ⁸¹	copulae	copulas
lacuna ⁸²	lacunae	lacunas
plectrum ⁸³	plectra	plectrums

Generally speaking, there are several typical ways for Greek words entering English, be it directly from modern Greek (bouzouki) or from Greek writers, or indirectly by way of Latin as an intermediary, or by combining Greek elements in new ways, which is usually the case with scientific terms formed in modern times. As for their pluralisation, Greek nouns change their endings according to gender, case, and number, while retaining the root of the noun unchanged:

Singular	Foreign plural	Anglicized plural
bouzouki	bouzoukia	bouzoukis
comma	commata	commas
melisma ⁸⁴	melismata	melismas
salpinx ⁸⁵	salpinges	salpinxes
syrinx ⁸⁶	syringes	syrinxes

The number of **German** loanwords in the language of classical music is rather limited, but the review contains two examples with “double” plural:

Singular	Foreign plural	Anglicized plural
Festschrift ⁸⁷	festschriften	festschrifts
Singspiel ⁸⁸	singspiele	singspiels

⁷⁹ Latin *buccina*, *bucina*, from *bu-* (from *bov-*, *bos* head of cattle) + *-cina* (from *canere* to sing, play).

⁸⁰ 1550s, from Latin *caesura*, “metrical pause”, literally “a cutting”, from past part. stem of *caedere* “to cut down”.

⁸¹ 1640s, from Latin *copula* “that which binds, rope, band, bond”.

⁸² 1660s, from Latin *lacuna* “hole, pit”, figuratively “a gap, void, want”, diminutive of *lacus* “pond, lake, hollow, opening”.

⁸³ 1620s, from Latin *plectrum*, from Greek *plektron* “thing to strike with” (pick for a lyre, cock’s spur, spear point, etc.), from *plek-*, root of *plessein* “to strike”.

⁸⁴ 1837, from Greek *melisma* “a song, an air, a tune, melody”, from *melos* “music, song, melody; musical phrase or member”, literally “limb”.

⁸⁵ 1835–45. from Greek: trumpet.

⁸⁶ Tubular instrument, c. 1600, the thing itself known from 14c. in English, from Late Latin *syrinx*, from Greek *syrinx* “shepherd’s pipe”.

⁸⁷ 1898, from German *Festschrift*, literally “festival writing”.

⁸⁸ 1876, from German *Singspiel*, literally “a singing play”, from *singen* “to sing” + *Spiel* “a play”. Kind of performance popular in Germany late 18c.

Some non-English musical terms, though, have not developed an anglicized plural at all. Retaining only foreign plural means making plural according to the rules of the language the loanword was taken from, so accurate pluralisation of such terms requires either a good knowledge of the source language, or a very good dictionary which is not always easy to find, taking into account that this kind of problem, in most cases, occurs with highly specialized terms with a rather limited field of application.

Talking the technical language of classical music, this problem involves both simple and compound loans. Here are some of the typical simple borrowed nouns with their foreign plural forms, each followed by the indication of the language from which they entered English:

Singular	Foreign plural	Singular	Foreign plural
anacrusis [Lat.] ⁸⁹	anacruses	arsis [Lat.] ⁹⁰	arses
aulos [Gr.]	auloi	cauda [Lat.] ⁹¹	caudae
cavatina [It.]	cavatine	chalmereau [Fr.] ⁹²	chalmereaux
clavicytherium [Lat.] ⁹³	clavicytheria	fioritura [It.] ⁹⁴	fioriture
frotolla [It.]	frottole	lituus [Lat.]	litui
nomos [Gr.]	nomoi	secondo [Lat.] ⁹⁵	secondi
rondeau [Fr.] ⁹⁶	rondeaux	sordino [Lat.] ⁹⁷	sordini
thesis [Lat.] ⁹⁸	theses		

As for the compound loanwords, most of them retain only foreign plural because the attempts of making anglicized plural forms usually lead to inconsistent varieties resulting from the clashes of the rules of pluralisation of the source language and English, as it can be seen from the next table:

Singular	Foreign plural	(Anglicized plural)
aria agitata [It.]	arie agitate	
aria di portamento [It.]	arie di portamento	
aria di sorbetto [It.]	arie di sorbetto	
basso profundo [It.]	bassi profondi	bassos profundos (<i>Oxford Dictionary</i>) basso profundos (<i>Collins Dictionary</i> , <i>Wiktionary</i> , <i>Marriam-Webster</i>)
cantus firmus [Lat.]	cantus firmi canti firmi ⁹⁹	

⁸⁹ “unstressed syllable at the beginning of a verse”, 1833, Latinized from Greek *anakrousis* “a pushing back”, of a ship, “backing water”, from *anakrouein* “to push back, stop short, check”, from *ana* “back”.

⁹⁰ 1350–1400, Middle English: raising the voice < Latin < Greek, equivalent to *ar-* (stem of *airein* to raise, lift) + *-sis* *-sis*.

⁹¹ 1690–1700, from Latin: tail.

⁹² 1705–15, from French: orig., flute made from a reed, stem of a reed; Old French *chalemel* < Late Latin *calamellus* (narrow reed).

⁹³ 1505–15, clavi- from Medieval Latin *clāvis* key + *cytherium*, for Latin *citara* (*kithara*).

⁹⁴ 1835–45, from Italian, equivalent to *fiorit(o)* flowery, orig. past participle of *fiorire* to flower + *-ura* *-ure*.

⁹⁵ From Italian, dating back to 1840–50, Latin *secundus* following, next, second.

⁹⁶ 1520s, from Middle French *rondeau*, from Old French *rondel* “short poem”; metrical form of 10 or 13 lines with only two rhymes.

⁹⁷ 1795–1805, from Italian: a mute, equivalent to *sordo* (< Latin *surdus* deaf) + *-ino* *-ine*.

⁹⁸ Late 14c., “unaccented syllable or note”, from Latin *thesis* “unaccented syllable in poetry”, later (and more correctly) “stressed part of a metrical foot”, from Greek *thesis* “a proposition”, also “downbeat” (in music), originally “a setting down, a placing, an arranging; position, situation”.

collegium musicum	collegia musica	
coloratura soprano	coloratura sopranos	
concerto grosso [It.]	concerti grossi	concerto grossos (<i>Collins Dictionary</i>)
cor anglais [Fr.]		cors anglais
dramma giocoso [It.]	drammi giocosi	
dramma per musica [It.]	drammi per musica	
festa teatrale [It.]	feste teatrali	
opéra comique [Fr.]	opéras comiques	
messa di voce [It.]	messe di voce	
opera buffa [It.]	opere buffe	operas buffa (<i>Dictionary.com</i>), opera buffas (<i>Collins Dictionary</i> , <i>Dictionary.com</i>)
opera seria [It.]	opere serie	opera serias, operas seria (both: <i>Dictionary.com</i> , <i>WordReference.com</i>)
port de voix [Fr.]	ports de voix	
prima donna [It.]	prime donne	prima donnas (<i>Collins Dictionary</i> , <i>Marriam-Webster</i> , <i>Dictionary.com</i>)
primo uomo [It.]	primi uomini	
sinfonia concertante [It.]	sinfonie concertanti	
viola da braccio [It.]	viole da braccio	violas da braccio, viola da braccios (<i>Dictionary.com</i> , <i>Free Online Dictionary</i>)
viola da gamba [It.]	viole da gamba	violas da gamba (<i>Marriam-Webster</i>), viola da gambas (<i>Wiktionary</i>)
viola d'amore [It.]	viole d'amore	violas d'amore (<i>Marriam-Webster</i>)
viola da spalla [It.]	viole da spalla	

The problem is that, unlike many other languages, English rarely pluralizes both the noun and the modifier in a compound (like in *women conductors*), but only the principal, or “the most significant word”, usually the noun. However, this general rule is applied rather loosely, as the same compound often winds up with two anglicized plurals.

CONCLUSION

Loanwords are one of the most prominent traits of the technical language of classical music mirroring rather complex historical and linguistic realities and the international nature of music. The paper shows dominance of Italian/Latin as the main source language and various levels of integration of the loaned lexicon, most pronouncedly shown in their pluralisation patterns. The paper also shows that the effects of the sweeping borrowing process in this field are illustrative of the changes of the recipient language in the domain of derivational morphemes (prefixes *hemi*, *demi*, *semi*, *mezzo*, with some unique examples of their chaining), inflectional morphemes (Latin *-us*, plural *-i*), or new graphemes (*ae*).

⁹⁹ A corrupt plural form “*canti firmi*” (resulting from the grammatically incorrect treatment of *cantus* as a second-rather than a fourth-declension noun) can also be found in literature.

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POZAJMLJENICE U ENGLESKOJ KLASIČNOJ MUZIČKOJ TEORIJI

U radu se razmatraju pozajmljenice u engleskom "tehničkom" vokabularu klasične muzike, kao jedne od oblasti u kojoj lingvističke pozajmice, kao snažne poluge promena u jeziku, dolaze do maksimalnog izražaja. Nakon pregleda ključnih razloga za fenomen lingvističkog pozajmljivanja, kako na opštem planu, tako i u specifičnim oblastima, kao i uobičajenih faza u integraciji pozajmljenica, u fokusu rada su imenice kao najčešći "objekti" lingvističkih pozajmica. U radu se specifičira njihovo poreklo, ali i nivo integrisanosti, posebno u svetlu načina građenja množine. U opsegu razmatranja je 180 ključnih imenica iz istraživane oblasti, od kojih većina potiče iz latinskog. Neke su potpuno integrisane, tj. u potpunosti se povinuju engleskim pravilima građenja množine, dok su neke zadržale svoju "posebnost" koja se manifestuje u množini po pravilima izvornog jezika koja se najčešće javlja paralelno sa engleskom množinom. Imajući u vidu nespornu dominaciju pozajmljenica u istraživanoj oblasti, kao i česte dileme oko načina na koji grade množinu, posebno kada se radi o složenicama, u radu je dat pregled njihovih oblika u množini na bazi upoređivanja devet pouzdanih izvora: Britannica Encyclopaedia, Oxford Dictionary, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, American Heritage Dictionary, New World Dictionary, Wikipedia, Wiktionary, Random House Dictionary, Dictionary.com. Ključni izvor za etimološka tumačenja je Online Etymology Dictionary.

Ključne reči: *pozajmljenice, etimologija, množina imenica stranog porekla*