

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MALAY AND SPANISH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LOANWORDS FROM ENGLISH

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1.0 Introduction

English as one of the most dominant global languages has great influence on the areas of knowledge and information. In the era of technological advancement, the fact is further heightened by the acknowledgment that most English speaking countries possess technological superiority which uses and advantages are universally shared through the English language. Realizing the great impacts English has in the area of computer technology, the paper aims to seek similarities and differences between information technology English loanwords in the languages of Spanish and Malay. It is also interesting to note that even though Spain and Malaysia are two countries of different continents, both have adopted and adapted quite a high frequency of Information Technology loanwords from English.

2.0 Review of Literature

Demand for loanwords in expanding terminology in the field of Information Technology

The theories by Kay (1995; as cited in Mohideen, 2009), and Winter (1973; as cited in Mohideen, 2009) propose that loanwords may be preferred for the following reasons; they are more modern, effective and global. According to Kay, "The existence of many loanwords which have Japanese equivalents provides an alternative tone of discourse. The use of English loanwords is not only a reflection of modern Japanese culture but also helps serve it by creating a modern atmosphere." Kay adds, "With rapid international information exchange such as news reports and competition and cooperation in technology, the availability of a common vocabulary is helpful." (1995; as cited in Mohideen, 2009).

Since a dominant quantity of terminology in the field of information technology is in English, it is inevitable for other languages, such as Spanish and Malay to be influenced by the language in producing terminology in the field of information technology. Thus, in creating these terminology, loanwords have been generated through the 'borrowing' elements of English. According to Hock (1986; as cited in

Mohideen, 2009), "the term 'borrowing' refers to the adoption of individual words or even large sets of vocabulary items from another language or dialect." This process is called borrowing although the lending language does not lose its word, nor does the borrowing language return the word. A better term might be 'copying' but 'borrowing' has long been established in this sense and words that are borrowed are called loan words (Trask, 1996).

Spanish loanwords of English influence

Contact with the English language, especially from the 20th century onwards, has had as a consequence an increase in the number of words that are borrowed from English into Spanish. This process is particularly noticeable in Spanish for Specific Purposes, and, more specifically, in the case of Spanish computer language (Cabanillas et al., 2007).

3.0 Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature, comparing Spanish and Malay information technology loanwords of English influence. Specifically, this is a library research, the data of which were obtained from two main sources: a book - The Spanish language today (Stewart, 2002) and an article: A Study of English Loan Words in Selected Bahasa Melayu Newspaper Articles (Mohideen, 2009). The Spanish dictionary was also much referred to in indentifying certain patterns of English influence on Spanish IT words.

4.0 Findings

Findings revealed that the lexical items in the loan words were created based on certain features. The Spanish language loan words were of English influence according to features of affixation, abbreviation or 'clipping', the use of acronyms and alphabetisms and the creation of neologisms through borrowing from English. Meanwhile, the Malay language loan words possessed features of straightforward borrowing and assimilation, adaptation of syntactic rules of the Malay Language and calquing.

4.1 The creation of neologisms from Spanish language stock with English influence

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, neologism is a noun that means "a word or phrase which is new to the language; one which is newly coined". Neologisms in the Spanish language from English have been created in several different

manners. Among them include affixation, abbreviation or 'clipping', use of acronyms and alphabetisms, and metaphor.

4.1.1 Affixation

According to Stewart (2002), affixation is a very common approach of word formation in Spanish. There are three types of affixes, which are:

- a) Prefix
- b) Infix
- c) Suffix

Prefix is a group of letters added to an existing word. The addition alters the word's meaning. In Spanish, there are many common prefixes with most of them stem originally from English thus, overlapping the process of borrowing. However, it is argued that the prefixes are still part of the Spanish language since they have long been assimilated into it (Stewart, 2002).

In Spanish, the letter 'e-' and 'i-' are among commonly used prefixes to denote the meaning of 'internet'. Originally, they are borrowed from English to form a prefix for Spanish lexis such as that found in the word 'e-comercio'.

This is an example from an advertisement:

"Junto con la presentación del esperado nuevo iPad, en el keynote de la empresa de..."

Below are several examples of other common prefixes used to relate to computer technology.

- a) 'ciber-' is used to indicate that a word has to do with the internet, i.e. 'ciberspacio' and 'ciberchat'.
- b) 'tele-' is another common prefix in this field which represents that the 'loading' takes place remotely. An example would be 'telecargar'.
- c) 'inter-' where the prefix brings the idea of 'between'. Hence, the word 'interconector' means a device that connects between two different things.
- d) 'hiper-' represents the idea that something is done quickly, i.e. 'hipervínculo'.
- e) 'sobre-' means 'to go over', i.e. 'sobrescribir'.
- f) 're-' brings the meaning of doing something again, hence words like 're-initializer' (to reboot) is created.
- g) 'mega-' is a prefix that represents a large number, i.e. 'megabitio'.

Another type of affixation is interfix. Interfix is a morpheme inserted in a middle of readily available lexis and in the field of Information Technology, English interfixes are not as commonly used as those of prefixes and suffixes.

Suffixation on the other hand, is a group of words added to the end of an existing word to create a new one. Suffixes have formed many neologisms and there are many examples of them in Information Technology related lexis.

Below are examples of verbs and nouns produced by suffixation.

- a) *chatear* (to chat)/ *converser* (to talk; to converse)
- b) *piratear* (to be involved in piracy; to hack)/ *sabotear* (to sabotage)
- c) *cifrar* (to encode)
- d) *microprogramación* (microprogramming)

4.1.2 Abbreviation or 'Clipping'

Abbreviation or 'clipping' is when a word is shortened but the meaning is retained. The main purposes are to modernise the words and to ease the pronunciation of originally long words. Examples of abbreviation showing the concept of modernized words are such as *la mili*, *el bici*, *el taxi*; whereas for brevity, the example is such as in the word *un foto* (Stewart, 2002). Examples of modernized words in the field of Information Technology are not common since they are much borrowed and do not really originally stem from English. In cases of abbreviation for brevity on the other hand, abbreviated words in Information Technology mainly come from English.

4.1.3 Use of acronyms and alphabetisms

Acronyms and alphabetisms are quite similar to one another. Both are made of initials but in alphabetisms, each letter is separated by a period. Acronyms form neologisms when the initials are pronounced as one word. Alphabetisms on the other hand, are pronounced individually due to the existence of periods in between letters. Examples of acronyms are RAM and ROM and those of alphabetisms include I.S.D.N., M.B., P.C., and I.S.P.

It is evident that there is not a lot of computer lexis that derives from the original Spanish lexis as all of these terms above are short for English terminology.

4.1.4 Metaphor

Metaphor is when a word is used to describe something because that 'something' has similar qualities to the word used. For instance, in the sentence '*she is my angel*', the metaphor here is the word 'angel' because definitely 'she' is a human being not an angel. Since angel literally refers to the God's servant, a human who is likened to an angel normally has the traits of being very kind, very good and very

lovely. Thus, reference to an angel here is to show the importance and value that 'she' has in the speaker's life.

In the context of metaphor usage in the field of Information Technology, a good example is the word 'mouse' in English. However, it is not easy to find genuine examples of this relation in Spanish. Though the metaphor is devised in English, it has been calqued and thus, cross over to Spanish as 'un ratón'.

4.2 The creation of neologisms through borrowing from English

According to Stewart (2002), there are three methods of 'borrowing' to be considered in Spanish:

- a) Straightforward borrowing and assimilation
- b) Adapting a word to insert it into the syntax rules of the Spanish Language
- c) Calquing

4.2.1 Straightforward borrowing and assimilation

Even though there are Spanish alternatives available, English terminologies are perceived as more modern, concise and easier to pronounce. Hence, direct or straightforward borrowing becomes among the most common mechanisms.

The examples below have no Spanish alternative and are straightforwardly borrowed from English:

'emoticon', 'software', 'modem', 'hardware', 'fax' 'pixel'.

There has not been any attempt to make them sound Spanish.

Meanwhile, below are some examples of words which exist in Spanish but are still straightforwardly borrowed from English:

'e-mail', 'website', 'internet', 'byte', 'webcam', and 'monitor'.

The above terms have outdated the Spanish alternatives in a few ways. They are more modern and easier to pronounce. English terms are shorter as in the words 'e-mail' for '*correo electrónico*' or 'internet' for '*la red internet*'. Moreover, computer technology and the internet are used globally, thus, it is deemed important for users around the world to keep the terms universally similar to one another. English terms in this context, are regarded as having the trait of universality.

4.2.2 Adapting a word to insert it into the syntax rules of the Spanish Language

There are also many neologisms created and adapted from borrowed English words. These words are then modified to fit in with the rules of Spanish syntax. The examples are such as below:

'escanér', 'ciberspacio', 'megabitio', and 'computadora'

4.2.3 Semantic loan or “calquing”

Semantic loan or “calquing” is another popular form of neologism creations. Calquing involves borrowing the ‘sense’ of English words and is also known as loan translations. Stewart (2002) described a loan translation or calque as lifting lexical items, mainly metaphors, which the originals are coined in the donor language, and directly translate them into the host language.

Below are some examples of calques:

‘ratón’(mouse), ‘procesamiento de datos’ (data processing), ‘matriz de punto’ (dot matrix), ‘disco flexible’ (floppy disk), ‘autopista de información’ (information superhighway), ‘correo basura’ (spam), ‘en línea’ (online), ‘tarjeta de sonido’ (sound card), ‘verificador ortográfico’ (spelling check).

Malay loanwords of English influence

Malay, or Bahasa Melayu, refers to a group of languages that belong to the Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian family of languages. Although Malay is a language used on another side of the continent from Spanish, nevertheless, when it comes to terminology in the field of information technology, they share many similarities where both have a large influence from the English language.

At present, Bahasa Melayu has found a way to further expand its linguistic resources by being in contact with English as the latter is a language of wider communication. Furthermore, most countries which English is a native language, possess highly advanced technology and modernized systems of communication than before. This is due to the move from an agricultural to a technology-based economy. There is mass import of English loan words, particularly in the areas of science and industry (Mohideen, 2009).

From a textual analysis of English loan words in selected Bahasa Melayu newspaper articles, Mohideen (2009) discovered that the highest number (35) of loanwords derived were of technology terminology. The findings are as follows:

English Loanword	English Word	English Loanword	English Word
1) teknologi	Technology	19) slaid	Slide
2) telefon	Telephone	20) on-line	on-line
3) radio	Radio	21) CD	CD
4) kad prabayar	prepaid card	22) Internet	Internet
5) web	Web	23) Letrik	electric
6) memori	Memory	24) telekomunikasi	telecommunications
7) e-mel	e mail	25) mikrofon	Microphone

8) computer	Computer	26) kabel	Cable
9) televisyen	Television	27) protocol	Protocol
10) audio	Audio	28) mod	Mode
11) audio-video	audio-video	29) enkripsi	Encryption
12) video	Video	30) hi-fi	hi-fi
13) gajet	Gadget	31) DVD	DVD
14) kamera	Camera	32) PDA	PDA
15) TV	TV	33) Sistem Teater	Theatre System
16) satelit	Satellite	34) Portal infopks	Infopks portal
17) fon telinga	Earphone	35) aplikasi	Application
18) elektrik	Electric		

Figure 1: List of words relating to technology (Mohideen, 2009, p.68)

Based on Stewart's (2002) method of analysis of Spanish loanwords, the same can be performed on loanwords in Malay. Again, loanwords in the field of information technology can be categorized as follows:

- a) Straightforward borrowing and assimilation
- b) Adapting a word to insert it into the syntax rules of the Malay Language
- c) Calquing

4.3 Straightforward borrowing and assimilation

Direct borrowing and assimilation, without considering Malay language stock has proven to be prompted when translation deals advancement in technology. Furthermore, since Malaysia is a mere follower of these advancements, we cannot afford to be behind where information and knowledge is concerned.

The following words are common examples of loanwords, which have been directly taken from English, and assimilated into Malay without changing the spelling: 'radio', 'audio', 'web', 'hi-fi', 'video', 'internet'

4.4 Adapting a word to insert it into the syntax rules of the Malay Language

Similar to Spanish, Malay also has created loanwords through the borrowing of words from English in the field of information technology. As compared to the above words which didn't consider Malay syntax, these words were modified in the aspect of spelling to make it appear Malay.

Some examples of these types of words were identified by Mohideen (2009) (Figure 1):

'konfigurasi', 'siber', 'akses', 'aplikasi', 'satelit', 'komputer', 'teknologi',

'telefon', 'memori', 'slaid', 'e-mel', 'televisyen', 'kamera', 'gajet', 'telekomunikasi', 'mikrofon', 'enkripsi', 'kabel', 'protokol'

4.5 Calquing

Again, similar to Spanish, the method of calquing is observant in the creation of technology terminology in Malay. In Malay, many words have been directly translated from English, and follow the metaphoric meaning as it is in English. Examples of this are as follows:

'tetikus' (mouse), 'muat turun' (download), 'muat naik' (upload), 'pautan' (link), 'kad prabayar' (prepaid card), 'fon telinga' (ear phone), 'lebar jalur' (wi-fi), 'rangkaian' (network), 'atas talian' (online), 'tetapan' (setting), 'teknologi maklumat' (information technology)

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, English has much enriched the Malay and Spanish language in its expansion of terminology in the field of information technology. Although many purists argue that with extensive borrowing from the English language it may pose a threat on the authenticity of the original language (Mohideen, 2009); nevertheless, it is to be reminded that language choice does not happen in vacuum, nor does it follow idealistic perception (Sew, 2007). Too many external factors prompt Spanish and Malay to produce terminology of English influence. Hence, this lexical expansion should not be regarded as a mere collection of words inundated by English; rather, be seen as an advanced development to the languages of Spanish and Malay.

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