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Emerging hybrid Spanish–English blend structures: '*Summergete con socketines*'

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Abstract

This study focuses on the analysis of morphologically induced new hybrid blending patterns in Spanish due to the influence and contact with English. Our data-driven approach does not separate word creation from grammatical phenomena but considers hybrid blends – a completely new emerging pattern itself in Spanish – as the output of speakers' or users' word creativity and manipulation that may be subject to morphological laws. However, the limited number of existing examples as well as the understandable lack of records for such recent data led us to analyze them in terms of tendencies and probabilities. We pay special attention to the ordering of the source words according to foreign or native origin; the presence of full forms and the distribution of full words and splinters, clipping and overlapping of the source words, as well as the semantic patterns and relations between the source words.

Keywords: Blending; Hybrid blends; Language contact; Semantic patterns; Structural patterns

1. Introduction

Contact between languages is certainly one of the most effective motivations and reasons for language change and development, which sometimes may lead to either bilingualism or multilingualism (see Ladefoged and Maddieson, 1996). However, it may also occur that the cultures remain monolingual (or diglossic, where there is also a minority language) but still there may be either a strong mutual or one-way linguistic influence between the languages in contact that may affect all language levels. In fact, it is probably rare to find a language which has not been influenced by another at some point in its history. Even in the so-called cases of ''remote language contact'' (*contacto diferido* or ''indirect contact'' in López Morales, 1993:163) the impact of one language upon another is visible. This is the situation of English and Peninsular Spanish, the focus of our study, where the dominant position of the English language is clearly and increasingly reflected in Spanish lexis, semantics, syntax and pragmatics. The impact of English in Spanish is more than evident in (adapted and unadapted) lexical borrowings, neologisms with English elements, semantic changes (see ''resemanticisation'' in Renner and Fernández-Domínguez, 2015), pragmatic changes (e.g. in the use of discourse markers), and incorporation of English syntactic structures or even Anglicization of native ones.

We believe, however, that it is not ''language contact'' in general terms that makes languages change and develop, but ''speakers' contact''. Accordingly, we argue that the use, adoption or transfer of linguistic material from a language into

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another is the result of the linguistic behavior and interactions of (individual) speakers (on this see Milroy, 1992:199; Milroy and Milroy, 1985), who contribute to the spread of the ''foreign'' linguistic materials or patterns in their native speech communities (see Aitchison, 2008; Labov, 2001, 2007). This is, nevertheless, a quite complex process which most often (but for cases of *crossing*) requires a certain degree of knowledge and communicative competence in the foreign language (and also in the native one) by individual speakers and their communities, as well as positive attitudes toward the foreign language, in order to effectively integrate and progressively establish the ''foreign'' elements, be these necessary or not. In other words, primarily linguistic but also extralinguistic and/or social interactions and conditions determine the outcomes of language contact (see, amongst others, Croft, 2000; Gardner-Chloros, 2009; Matras, 2009; Thomason, 2001) and the consequent language change.

From the mid-20th century onwards we have been witnesses of the establishment and general acknowledgment of the English language as both a global language and a lingua franca, which has meant the irremediable and inescapable contact with other languages, on the one hand, and, on the other, the recognition of English as a dominant but also attractive – and even necessary – language to be learnt and used, especially in international communication, even within native European Spanish borders. Furthermore, the rapid spread of broadcast media and the Internet, where most of the information and communicative exchanges are in English (see Crawford, 2002:95), has also favored contact with, knowledge and use of this language in other external linguistic communities. Nowadays, educated people (in Spain but also in Europe and worldwide, see House, 2008) and younger generations are expected to know English and, hence, they are probably among the most important agents of linguistic change and Anglicization due to their fascination for music, films, internet, videogames (most of them delivered in English), as well as for creativity, breaking the rules and, in general, anything that sounds new. All these language contact situations and the strong linguistic awareness of Spanish speakers as regards the need, importance, prestige and attractiveness of English have led to the introduction and/or borrowing of English linguistic material in Spanish at grammatical, lexical and pragmatic levels.

The strongest and most visible impact of English in Spanish happens at the lexical level, where Spanish has extensively borrowed lexical units and terms from English in general and in specialized domains. The tendency in the assimilation of English borrowings has been increasingly changing from the earliest 20th-century incorporations to the current ones. While the former were usually adapted to Spanish, present-day familiarity with English and its attractiveness and prestige favor the introduction of pure, unadapted English forms (see, for instance, Valozic, 2015:123). More importantly, nowadays English is a source of new words in Spanish and a model or inspiration for innovations, not only at the lexical but also at the morphological level, which demonstrates its powerful influence. This means that Spanish speakers have not only directly or indirectly incorporated or borrowed words from English but they have also created or incorporated new forms either imitating English lexical resources (e.g. false Anglicisms with English appearance borrowed from French, like *footing*) or introducing English morphological devices or forms (e.g. affixes like *-ing* in *puenting* or *balconing*) and, most recently, creating hybrid forms which combine English and Spanish bases (e.g. compounds like *chorlitohead*).

The highest degree of incorporation of English into Spanish or, rather, of the Anglicization of Spanish lexis and its morphological components, seems to be in the creation of blends by joining splinters[1] of English and Spanish bases, which implies not only knowing English elements and borrowing them but also being able to manipulate and effectively recombine them with lexicogenetic or native bases, e.g. *wonderbuloso* (< wonderful + fabuloso 'fabulous'). We may therefore argue that there is a progressive Anglicization of Spanish lexis (see Furiassi et al., 2012), which has become remarkably significant for Spanish society due to the powerful creativity and motivation shown by present-day Spanish speakers themselves. As we shall see, due to English influence blending is evolving from a minor device in Spanish into an important one, not only to cover lexical needs but also for creative and stylistic reasons (to produce humor, irony, punning, etc.). English is encouraging linguistic changes in Spanish which are patent in blend formations. Thus, apart from those which are lexicogenetic blends, the creation of increasing numbers of hybrid blends in Spanish may be due to a threefold impact of English: firstly, Spanish borrows blend formations directly from English, e.g. *brunch*; secondly, Spanish speakers adapt or create new blends in Spanish following the model offered by the English blending mechanism and its patterns, e.g. *fittionario* (from English *fittionary*); thirdly, Spanish speakers also create hybrid blends where they manipulate, reorganize and incorporate English borrowings and Spanish lexical elements in one single word, e.g. *cooltureta* (< cool + cultureta 'culture buffs'), as we shall see in the study below.

[1] In the case of blends, their smallest unit, apparently devoid of meaning and unpredictable in terms of structure (see Bauer, 1983:235), is a splinter (Adams, 1973:148–150). Splinters, also known as fracto-lexemes (Renner and Lalić-Krstin, 2011:270), may be defined as ''shorter substitutes'' of words (Adams, 1973:142) or as ''parts of words in blends which are intended to be recognized as belonging to a target word, but which are not independent formatives'' (Lehrer, 1996:361).

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