

Economic anglicisms: adaptation to the Spanish linguistic system

Paloma López Zurita

Universidad de Cádiz

paloma.lopez@uca.es

Abstract

The enormous number of anglicisms used everyday in Spanish language generates lexical interference between both languages. This paper provides a semantic analysis of the changes in lexis this language contact brings about, through the different linguistic mechanisms of inter-language adaptation involved. When these anglicisms come from the current trend to include English words in Spanish discourse, we also add appropriate equivalents which could avoid the excess of redundant neologisms. A glossary of the most habitual terms derived from interference in English and Spanish in the economic field is included as a result of this study.

Key words: terminology, semantics, linguistic interference, second language (SL)

Resumen

Los anglicismos económicos: Adaptación al sistema lingüístico español

La ingente cantidad de anglicismos que cada día entran en el idioma español a través del inglés en el ámbito económico produce una serie de interferencias entre ambos idiomas. En este artículo se realiza un estudio semántico de tales interferencias a través de los mecanismos lingüísticos de adaptación inter-idiomática utilizados en cada caso. Asimismo, cuando los anglicismos utilizados son sólo producto de la tendencia actualmente de moda de insertar vocablos ingleses en el discurso, se aportan los equivalentes apropiados en el lenguaje español que podrían evitar el exceso de neologismos redundantes. Este análisis se lleva a cabo a través de un glosario de los términos más habituales procedentes de las interferencias entre el inglés y el español en el contexto económico.

Palabras clave: terminología, semántica, interferencias lingüísticas, segunda lengua

1. Introduction

The aim of the present paper is to provide a comparative insight into the semantic study of lexical interference¹ in English and Spanish within the economic terminological field, through the linguistic mechanisms of inter-language adaptation involved.

Semantic changes take place especially within the lexical level, in which we study the linguistic strategies involved in the process of translating meaning from original English terms to the target language. The regular adaptation devices include borrowings, calques, equivalents, and simple and explicative periphrases. These changes in lexis usually entail changes in semantic relations that may result in the generalisation or specialisation of the term.

In the present paper we gloss isolated examples which illustrate the wider trend of English interference.²

2. Anglicisms in the Spanish language

Language contact and the ensuing changes of meaning constitute a very rich area of linguistic inquiry that has produced an extensive bibliography on the subject, as there seems to be a general concern among language specialists about the linguistic consequences the incorporation of so many anglicisms into the Spanish language may imply. Pratt (1980) and Lorenzo's (1996) benchmark research focused on the influence of English over Spanish by compiling the most common anglicisms and studying their process of incorporation into the second language (SL), a concern which has been a constant feature up to now. Recently, different approaches to the topic have been carried out. As examples regarding general language, Rodríguez (1997) highlighted the cultural influence among English and Spanish speaking countries through the existing borrowings; Gimeno (2003) stated different lexical types according to category changes, collocations and lexical calques, focusing on social multilingualism; Páramo García (2003) introduced a historical perspective by studying the lexical anglicisms used in translations during the period 1750-1800; Medina López (2004) established the possible extra-linguistic factors which may explain the use of anglicisms as well as a practical approach towards their classification.

The current trends in discourse analysis examine the phenomenon of anglicisms from a specific point of view and bibliography on particular fields is also relevant. For example, Rodríguez Segura (1999) studied the influence of English on mass media; Alcaraz Ariza (2000) wrote her doctoral thesis on the importance of anglicisms in Health Sciences; Castelo Montero (2003) compiled a specific dictionary of English business terms used in Spanish, as well as the most recent paper by Alejo (2004) concerning the huge impact of English on economic terminology, among others.

Nowadays a growing number of anglicisms are being exported into the Spanish language. Their usage seems to be catching on in Spain, inundating language with new words and expressions, often unnecessary. We cannot miss the opportunity to reproduce part of an article regarding this tendency we read in one of the numerous internet pages related to this topic. Here, the anonymous author humorously observes a disappointing reality:

Desde que las insignias se llaman *pins*, los maricones, *gays*, las comidas frías *lunchs* y los repartos de cine *castings*, este país no es el mismo: ahora es mucho, muchísimo más moderno. Antaño los niños leían tebeos en vez de *comics*, los estudiantes pegaban *posters* creyendo que eran carteles, los empresarios hacían negocios en vez de *business* y los obreros, tan ordinarios ellos, sacaban la fiambra al mediodía en vez del *tupperware*. Yo, en el colegio, hice *aérobic* muchas veces, pero, tonta de mí, creía que hacía gimnasia. Nadie es realmente moderno si no dice cada día cien palabras en inglés. (Asociación Cultural Grupo Búho, 2004)

This neology trend can be clearly observed in general language, but its effects are also considerable in the economic scope, as the importance of business matters in daily life is so spread that, with the exception of specialised forums, most lexical units could be part of everyday common vocabulary. The current influence of English upon Spanish makes it difficult to establish in which cases we are dealing with a word and in which ones we are dealing with a term. On this question we share the idea Cabré and Feliu (2001: 23) proposed in the following paragraph:

Estas unidades (unidades léxicas), que no son inicialmente ni palabras ni términos, sino solo potencialmente términos o no términos, pueden pertenecer a ámbitos distintos. El carácter de término se activa en función de su uso en un contexto y situación adecuados. Esta activación pragmática consiste en una selección de los módulos de rasgos apropiados, que incluyen los rasgos morfosintácticos generales de la unidad y una serie de rasgos semánticos y pragmáticos específicos que describen su carácter de término dentro de un determinado ámbito.

Thus, we will verify how in some cases the analysed anglicisms coming from interference between English and Spanish have been included in the Spanish language system either as general words or as terms in specific contexts.

Likewise, specialised phraseological expressions are common in these cases of interference. The characteristics of specialised phraseological expressions have been established, among other authors, by Bevilacqua (2001). The criteria for their identification include the common features established by Corpas Pastor (1996: 19-20) for the simple phraseological units: these units are institutionalised and stable expressions formed by various words, whose elements have some syntactic or semantic peculiarity. In the case of specialised phraseological units, at least one terminological unit is added, as well as its usage in a specific scope and a relevant frequency in specific texts (Bevilacqua, 2001).

3. Adaptation to the Spanish language system

The most frequently claimed linguistic mechanisms used to translate the meaning of a word or expression into the target language, in this case, Spanish, are as follows:

3.1. Borrowing

Languages in contact habitually tend to incorporate lexical borrowings from the most influential one to the other. This linguistic device has produced an important terminological confusion in Spanish. Most authors prefer the term “préstamo” to refer to an “elemento lingüístico (léxico, de ordinario) que una lengua toma de otra, bien adoptándolo en su forma primitiva, bien imitándolo y transformándolo más o menos” (Lázaro Carreter, 1990: 333). Others consider the term “préstamo” inaccurate and have coined the alternative “trasplante” or “préstamo extranjero” (Casas, 1986: 163), as well as “adopción lingüística” or “aportación lingüística.”³ The different degrees of adaptation into the SL have also generated the term “extranjerismo.” According to Lázaro Carreter (1990), an “extranjerismo” is a type of borrowing which has not been incorporated into the Spanish language system. On the other hand, Clyne (1967), Payrató (1984) and Gómez Capuz (2000), among others, after studying these terminological shortcomings concerning “préstamo” and “borrowing,” introduced the term “interferencia” or “interference” as a positive alternative. Nevertheless, the traditional terms continue being used despite their possible polysemy. For this reason a definition of the terminology used in this paper is worth making. Hereafter “incorporated borrowing” and “sporadic borrowing” will be used to refer, in the first case, to the adoption of a foreign word or expression, whose incorporation into Spanish has been attested in a Spanish language dictionary. Obviously, not every word or expression will be in the same stage in this process, so some elements have had evident

graphic or phonological adaptations (e.g.: broquer, crac, etc.), while in many others the foreign origin of the word is clearly identified, as its spelling remains unchanged.

On the other hand, a “sporadic borrowing” takes place when the word or expression has not been incorporated into the Spanish language system, and for this reason it is not included in any Spanish dictionary of general language (e.g.: brief, cash flow, etc.). As we have just mentioned, some authors refer to this kind of borrowing as “extranjerismo,” as it is situated on the cusp of what could be called “préstamo.” Gómez Capuz (2000) considers “extranjerismo” is the word the speaker perceives strange, either because of its spelling or by its limited usage. This author also uses the terminology “extranjerismo ocasional fuera del sistema” to refer to the same concept we have here called “sporadic borrowing,” but he considers the borderline between “préstamo” and “extranjerismo” is not clear:

[...] no hay razón para negar al extranjerismo el estatus de préstamo, es decir, elemento que surge como resultado de los contactos interlingüísticos. Pero cuando el extranjerismo se presenta siempre en la forma extranjera original, goza de un uso escaso o limitado a ciertos subgrupos de la comunidad lingüística (tecnoclectos, argot marginal) y además no suele ser comprendido por el hablante medio de la lengua receptora, nos encontramos ante un caso extremo en los hechos de préstamo. (Gómez Capuz, 2000: 36)

3.2. Calque and Equivalent

As seen above, a borrowing is the incorporation of a foreign word into a language either having had some phonetic alterations or not, whose foreign origin (at least in the first step of incorporation) is clear to a greater or lesser degree. A common example in this case is the word “fútbol,” an English borrowing whose Spanish spelling reflects the English phonetics. On the other hand, a calque is the incorporation of a foreign word into another language whose meaning has been directly translated (e.g.: “balompié”). Again, we share the opinion of Cabré (1993: 191):

La diferencia entre un préstamo y un calco reside en que un préstamo conserva inicialmente su forma originaria, y por lo tanto es a menudo identificable: un calco es la traducción literal de una palabra de otra lengua, por lo que parece una palabra genuina.

In this paper, we use the term “calque” for these words or expressions of foreign origin that have been translated literally with a possible lack of sense in the target language, as the

translated word is not used with the same sense value and in the same contexts. An example of this is the use of “posición,” from English “position” with the sense “puesto de trabajo.”

We use the term “equivalent” for those words that, although translated directly, have the same sense value in the SL. The term “equivalent” is widely used in the framework of translation theories. In 1959, Roman Jakobson (considered by many authors the founder of the modern linguistic theory on translation with his article “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation”) stated that translation involves two equivalent messages in two different languages (Jakobson, 1959: 232-239).

Zuluaga (2001) describes the equivalence relations in which translation is based. Equivalences are text units that do not always coincide with their language system correspondences, which are themselves system units. So, there are words that, although not corresponding to each other into their own language systems, do correspond after the process of translation and have the same sense value, as in the case of “nacional” for “domestic,” or “solicitar” for “to apply.” This equivalence relation is not unidirectional: translation is the equivalence of the original text, but not vice versa. At the same time, it is a relative concept, because equivalence is not absolute but partial. Were it a relation of equality, every constitutive factor of text sense would not vary (lexemes with the same meaning and denotation), and translation would not be possible. Zuloaga (2001: 1-3) resorts to the concept of similarity of application and explains it by quoting Lyons, who explains this as follows:

When items of different languages can be put into correspondence with one another on the basis of the identification of common features and situations in the cultures in which they operate we may say that the items have the same application. (Lyons, 1977: 434)

On the other hand, in the sixties Nida (1964) had established the existence of formal equivalences, that is, those that look for correspondence in form and content, and dynamic equivalences, whose aim is to have the same effect on the reader.

3.3. Periphrasis

In most cases, when either there is no analogous or equivalent element to the one we want to translate in the mother tongue or our intention is to clarify its possible sense, the most habitual alternative is the use of an explicative or defining periphrasis.

Dubois et al. (1992: 477) defines periphrasis as a rhetorical device that substitutes one term by a number of words, a locution, which defines and paraphrases it. This author also makes the distinction between grammatical periphrasis –those that respond to analytic trends of language– and poetic or stylistic periphrasis –those with which an author may substitute the simple designation of a notion by some words that express the main characteristics of that notion. This distinction is also held by Lázaro Carreter (1990: 319), who defines the grammatical periphrasis as one which derives from a lack of a single word to express a single concept. He also includes literary periphrases and the taboo periphrases. They usually appear in literary texts and, as this is not included in the scope of the present work, its appearance in the analysed corpus is irrelevant.

4. Semantic relations

The previous linguistic mechanisms usually bring about changes in semantic relations. The most common semantic relations are: 1. Generalisation, widening or extension of the original meaning –where a hyperonym is used instead of the element to translate– 2. Specialization, restriction or reduction of the original meaning through a hyponym, or 3. Neither of the previous possibilities, in which case co-hyponyms could be considered as synonyms in English and Spanish (taking into account the cross-cultural differences and without assuming if synonymy can be total and absolute in different languages or not).

5. Glossary

The corpus of terms and expressions analysed hereafter have been drawn from specialised books, written news, internet pages, etc., and also include those examples which reach us through mass media (TV, radio), conferences and expert colleagues' opinions about the topic, etc. (see Appendix). They are situated within the scope of discourse linguistics, where the type of designation, connotation and sense relation the terms have are sometimes difficult to establish.

Here we include some of the numerous cases of anglicisms and linguistic interference in the economic field:

Activity based costing: This specialised phraseological unit is often used as a sporadic borrowing, although the existence of the calque “costos/costeos basados en la actividad” has also been attested. It is also known as ABC in economic forums. E.g.:

Las aplicaciones experimentales del ABC (Activity Based Costing) empezaron a mediados de la década del 80, y se procuraba calcular con mayor precisión los costos de los productos y de los servicios [...]. (Salas, 2001)

Agenda: The original meaning of “agenda” in Spanish is a diary. Nevertheless, it is also used as an anglicism with the English meaning “orden del día” in business meetings. This usage has already been included into the D.R.A.E. as an incorporated borrowing from English. E.g.:

Se ha reservado para este día, 14 de Julio a las 4pm, la sala de RedIRIS [...] La agenda inicial será: 1. Presentación del tema ‘Collaboration @ work’ (I. Laso), 2. Iniciativas Grid en España, 3. [...]. (Irisgrid, 2004)

Antidumping: The origin of this well known anglicism is a United States law, passed in 1921. Its common usage has caused the incorporation into the Spanish language with the meaning of the action taken against the commercial practice of selling more cheaply than competitors to control the market. As an advanced borrowing, the spelling has been adapted to the Spanish phonological system, with the falling of the final -g (antidumpin). The antonym “dumping” has undergone the same process. The periphrasis “rebaja desleal de precios” also exists but the borrowing tends to be the most habitual term used. E.g.:

Si una empresa exporta un producto a un precio inferior al que aplica normalmente en el mercado de su propio país, se dice que hace ‘dumping’. El Acuerdo de la OMC [...] establece disciplinas para las medidas antidumping [...]. (Organización Mundial del Comercio, 2004)

Antitrust: In spite of having an equivalent in “antimonopolio,” “antitrust” has become so widespread that finally it has been incorporated into the Spanish language. The antonym “trust” is also well known, used generally to refer to the group of firms which try to control a product on the market. E.g.:

Pocas personas en el ámbito antitrust han tenido un papel tan destacado como el juez Richard A. Posner, [...]. (Cátedra Fundación ICO-Nebrija de Derecho y Economía de la Competencia, 2002)

Aplicar: “Aplicar” is the direct calque of the English “to apply” when used with the meaning “solicitar un empleo/la entrada en una organización,” etc. The semantic relation of this word has also been modified in this translation, as the resulting term is a specialised hyponym. This neologism is redundant and could be avoided by substituting the appropriate equivalent “solicitar” or “tramitar.” Although as yet its usage is not widespread in the Iberian Peninsula, it is very common in South America. E.g.:

En U.S., el (curriculum vitae o C.V.) y la entrevista es el aspecto más crucial para obtener un trabajo, sin embargo también ayuda inmensamente a tu primer empleo la obtención de conocimiento [...], antes de empezar a aplicar. (Vida Americana, 2004)

Atachar: Widely used in electronic correspondence, “atachar” is a phonologically adapted borrowing that also calques semantically the original “to attach” instead of the proper equivalents “unir, atar, sujetar, adjuntar,” etc.

Background: The semantic possibilities of “background” are so varied (including education, experience, capacity, skills, etc.), that translation sometimes becomes problematic. “Bagaje” has an appropriate equivalence in Spanish but it is clearly losing popularity in favour of the above borrowing. In spite of this, “background” continues to be redundant in general language. Nevertheless, in specific contexts such as Marketing its meaning has undergone a process of specialisation and functions as a hyponym referring to the additional information given about a product or service. E.g.:

[...] inicialmente entramos en las agencias de publicidad, debido a que estas no solían contar con un departamento de RRHH que hiciera esta labor y a la alta movilidad de profesionales del sector. [...] Además, con el background de Florentino en marketing, también empezamos a cubrir esta otra área. (Instituto de Comercio Electrónico y Marketing Directo, 2003)

Bancarización: Not only in “bancarización” but also in “bancarizar” a clear calque of the English “banking” is observed. Spanish language has a lexical vacuum to refer

to the development of economic activities through a bank, or to the actions made by the bank to expand its client list. So in this case the use of the anglicism is justified as there is no equivalence but the translation of the periphrasis above. E.g.:

Las normas de bancarización exigen que todo pago de sumas de dinero a partir de S/. 5,000 ó USD 1,500 deba ser realizado utilizando determinados medios de pago. (Superintendencia Nacional de Acción Tributaria, 2004)

Brief: “Brief” may be a verb and a noun in English but its usage as a sporadic borrowing in Spanish adheres almost exclusively to the nominal function. Again, it is a redundant neologism that coexists with its equivalent “informe.” In the scope of Marketing it has been specialised in a hyponym that focuses on sales strategy. E.g.:

El brief del producto, es la presentación del entorno y la estrategia de venta [...] Tiene que ver mucho con las estrategias de marketing que se van a usar, la imagen del producto y sobre todo las características del mismo. (Gestiopolis, 2004)

Broker: “Agentes de Bolsa” or “intermediarios financieros” are usually called “brokers” in Spanish. Although having appropriate semantic correspondents, this term continues to be a habitual sporadic borrowing. So far it has not been included in the DRAE (2004), although the spelling has been modified according to the Spanish language, resulting in “bróker” and “broquer.” E.g.:

Esto lo podéis hacer ahora mismo con vuestro broquer, basta que os diga el precio de la opción el de la acción a la que optas y la fecha de su vencimiento. (Plaza & Alonso, 2003)

Businessman/businesswoman: These are common terms to refer to “empresario/-a,” but the semantic calque of these words through periphrases as “hombre/mujer de negocios” is also a regular practice. In this case the three alternatives coexist, although from the point of view of the Spanish language it would be preferable to use “empresario/-a.” E.g.:

El imperio Rockefeller supuso una referencia aleccionadora para su tiempo y para el management del siglo XX. Sin embargo, nuestro businessman no parecía brillar en nada en su niñez. (Enebral Fernández, 2004)

Cash-flow: To refer to the “liquidez” or “efectivo” of a firm (elements that have a correct equivalence in Spanish), it is frequent to turn to the semantic calque through periphrases like “flujo de caja, flujo de fondos, fondos generados, etc.” Nevertheless the sporadic borrowing is increasingly catching on in economic forums. E.g.:

El Grupo Krones consiguió un cashflow (recursos generados) de 100,2 millones de €, situándose con ello a un 6,1 % por encima del valor del año anterior (94,4 millones de euros). (Krones Grupo, 2004)

Commodity: There is no Spanish word equivalent for “commodity” (except the periphrasis “productos o bienes de primera necesidad”) and no calque of the English word has been produced. For this reason it is directly used as a sporadic borrowing to refer to the meaning above and also to products used habitually and non-specialised services. At the same time the noun “comoditización” has also been recorded to express the similarity or generalization of products, as well as the verb “comoditizar,” although they are used almost exclusively in specialised context, as, for example, Marketing. E.g.:

A su juicio, las entidades deberán poner ‘énfasis’ [...] en mejorar la eficiencia comercial, ofreciendo lo que demanda cada cliente y evitando ‘comoditizar’ la relación con ellos. (Caja Madrid, 2004)

Corporación: Originally “corporación” had a public sense in Spanish. Its meaning has been generalised and now functions as a hyperonym to refer to any private firm as well. It has undergone a clear process of contamination from the Anglo-Saxon “corporation.” Examples of this change can be observed in “corporate card,” calqued as “tarjeta empresaria,” or in “corporate image” as “imagen corporativa” instead of “imagen institucional.” In summary, the calque has been produced in all these cases where “corporative” is considered a synonym of “empresario.”

Crack: The word “crack” is an incorporated borrowing and as such it has three different entries in the DRAE (2004): 1. Drug derived from cocaine, 2. Horse that stands out in a race, 3. High quality sportsman/woman. Nevertheless, its economic sense is not included under this entry but under “crac.” This phonological adaptation reflects the advanced stage in its incorporation into Spanish which “crac” has attained. As can be observed this process has taken place with the specific economic term and not with the general word, which still remains “crack.” To avoid redundancy “crac”

could be translated by the correspondent equivalent “quiebra” in some contexts while in others Spanish language has to turn to the perifrasis “cadena de quiebras.” E.g.:

A la luz de esta situación ya hay algunos economistas que piensan que el derrumbe bursátil puede convertirse en un crac, es decir, en una cadena de quiebras bursátiles. (Altamira, 2005)

Crash: Closely related to the previous term, “crash” is still considered a sporadic borrowing. The onomatopoeic sense refers metaphorically to a rapid and severe drop on the Stock Exchange. There are appropriate equivalents in Spanish that would work better than the anglicism, as “quiebra” or “crisis.” E.g.:

Las arcaicas y obsoletas medidas anticrash vigentes en Estados Unidos han vuelto a conseguir evitar un crash [...] Estas medidas actúan en cuatro fases. La primera entra en vigor cuando el Dow Jones cae 150 puntos [...]. (Alonso, 2004)

Customizar: This sporadic borrowing has been adapted to the Spanish spelling. “Customizar” - from English “to custom” - has become a usual term to make reference to the adaptation of a service or product to the needs of its end-users. E.g.: “Cómo “customizar” la información a la medida del usuario” (Consultorio RRHH, 2005). The adjective “customizado” or the noun “customización” have also been attested.

DAFO: Marketing experts use the acronym DAFO (Debilidades, Amenazas, Fortalezas, Oportunidades) to refer to the strategic analytical tool that delimits the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of a firm or product. It is a simple and direct calque of the English SWOT. E.g.:

Pienso que es la herramienta estratégica por excelencia, ya que en mi trayectoria docente y profesional he observado que es muy utilizada, aunque a veces de forma intuitiva y sin conocer su nombre técnico. El nombre lo adquiere de sus iniciales DAFO. (Muñiz González, 2003)

Doméstico: Increasingly “doméstico” is unusually collocated in Spanish, for example, “vuelos domésticos,” “comercio doméstico,” “comunicaciones domésticas,” etc. These expressions do not have a real meaning, as “doméstico” refers exclusively to something of or relating to the home. In English it may involve the home or family, but it also may

concern the internal affairs of a nation, or the production of a particular country. In this latter case the term “domestic,” should be translated as “nacional” or “interior.” The direct calque implies a hyperonymic process that includes new and foreign senses which do not correspond to its meaning in Spanish. E.g.:

[...] la segunda parte interrelaciona los cambios en los principales sectores productivos durante el siglo XIX – con especial hincapié en la agricultura, la industria y el comercio doméstico e internacional. (De la Torre & Lana, 2004)

Establishment: In Spanish “establishment” is now commonly used to make reference to the group of people who hold senior positions in a firm or any other organization. This has resulted in a specialization of the term through a hyponym. It is one of these fashionable words that seem to imbue the person who uses them with a cosmopolitan and modern touch. E.g.:

El Top 25 del establishment. (*El Mundo*, 2004a)

Franchising: In Spanish language “franchising” is used to mean “sistema de licencias o de cesión de uso de marca.” At the same time it coexists with “franquicia,” term that also maintains a semantic calque. The periphrasis used above has a limited usage, and “franquicia” has become the most frequently used term to refer to “licencia.” There are as well semantic calques in the borrowings “franquiciante” or “franquiciador” –from franchisor– and “franquiciado” –from franchisee. E.g.:

El franchising es un sistema de distribución de productos y/o de servicios, según el cual una empresa [...] transmite a otro empresario independiente todos sus conocimientos específicos y experiencia sobre el negocio original, a cambio de un derecho inicial más un porcentaje de regalías mensuales [...]. (López, 2004)

Home-banking: This term is closely related to new technologies. Spanish language has not created a satisfactory word to define the financial operations made from home by telephone or computer yet. There have been some attempts, such as “banca hogareña,” although it still has a very limited and unsatisfactory usage, being a mere calque from English. This financial activity from home has also produced a number of different calques depending on the action involved, resulting in “home-shopping,” “home-work-er,” etc. E.g.:

La aplicación de Banca Electrónica [...] ha sufrido una evolución continua siguiendo el mismo proceso de extensión del comercio electrónico y de Internet, que ha desembocado finalmente en los actuales portales y bancos ‘on-line’, conviviendo con los primeros desarrollos de ‘Home Banking’. (Fuyitsu, 2003)

Joint-venture: Spanish language does not have any term equivalent to “joint-venture.” To refer to the company which has the capital of its members pooled in a common fund –broadly speaking– we must either turn to an explicative periphrasis or to the sporadic borrowing, whose usage is becoming more prevalent in economic fields. E.g.:

El Joint Venture es un mecanismo de solución óptima para penetración a nuevos mercados, cuando no se cuenta con los recursos suficientes. (Arias Núñez, 2003)

Junk: The collocation of the English word “junk” (literally “basura” in Spanish) has caused different calques in Spanish which coexist with their corresponding sporadic borrowings: “Junk bond” is calqued in “bono basura,” “junk mail” in “correo basura,” etc. E.g.:

Los mercados financieros también han generado mucho criticismo [...] hasta la sospecha de que los ‘bonos basura’ (junk bonds) merecen ese nombre. (Hicks, 2004)

Lease back: “Lease back” is renting out or letting again of a product or service which has already been sold. Although Spanish has the equivalent “alquiler de retrocompra,” this alternative continues to be a semantic calque of English. In spite of this, the current and growing tendency is the usage of the sporadic borrowing.

Leasing: The difficulty of translating “leasing” into Spanish, as there exists a lexical void in this language, has caused its incorporation into the language system with the definition “arrendamiento con opción a compra del objeto arrendado” (DRAE, 2004). Because there is not an equivalent term, the only possible solution to avoid the borrowing would be the periphrasis. E.g.:

Sale and Lease Back Es una modalidad de arrendamiento financiero, en el cual la empresa realiza una compra/venta y arrendamiento de sus propios Activos; lo paga mediante cánones y al final del plazo los vuelve a adquirir ejerciendo la opción de compra en un valor simbólico (% del Valor Facturado al Banco) [...] Tipos de leasing [...]. (Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria, 2003)

LIBOR: This acronym refers to the inter-bank interest rate from London. It is the lexicalisation of “London Inter Bank Offered Rate.” It has not been translated into Spanish (as has occurred with other acronyms such as DAFO) because the English term is used in this specific banking context in almost every country. E.g.:

Los pagos que han de efectuarse [...] son las diferencias entre el Libor a un año y el tipo de interés fijo al 6%. Es evidente que el Libor correspondiente al segundo y tercer año solo se conocerá al comienzo de cada uno de esos años. (Ciberconta, 2004)

Lobby: The word “lobby” has two possible meanings in both English and Spanish. It may mean either a large entrance/reception room or a group of people who actively try to influence legislation. Although the etymologic stem comes from Latin, the transference to Spanish has taken place through English. Thus, “lobby” is an incorporated anglicism that stands for the two previous senses in the equivalent word “vestíbulo” and the periphrasis “grupo de presión financiera.” The usage of the nouns “lobista” and “lobbying” has also been attested. E.g.:

La ex ministra de Asuntos Exteriores, Ana Palacio, ha confirmado que el ‘lobby’ que contrató el Gobierno en Washington ‘colaboró’ con las gestiones de la embajada española en EEUU para ‘apoyar’ la concesión de la Medalla de Oro del Congreso de aquel país a Aznar. (*El Mundo*, 2004b)

Mail: The growing expansion of electronic mail together with the widespread practice of traditional mail with commercial aims, including not only letters but also leaflets, brochures, surveys, packages, etc. has caused the generalisation of its meaning in English through a hyperonymic process. It does not only mean the sacks of letters and packages transported by the postal service but also includes a wide range of commercial and marketing techniques. For this reason “mail” is a sporadic borrowing frequently used in Spanish instead of the general equivalent “correo.” It is also used to create a number of collocations relating to this field, such as “mailing list,” “mailing card,” etc. E.g.:

Cuanto mayor sea la preparación de una campaña de marketing directo, mayor será la cuota de respuesta. De este modo, unos catálogos (extensos) alcanzan una cuota de respuesta que oscila entre un 5 y un 30%. Unos mailings sencillos alcanzan cuotas que oscilan entre un 1 y un 3%. (Marketing Directo, 2005)

Management: It is almost impossible to translate the term “management” into Spanish as it includes concepts so varied as “gestión, administración, recursos humanos, dirección,” etc. (see also López Zurita et al., 1999). For this reason it is a very usual sporadic borrowing in economic contexts. So far it has not been incorporated into the Spanish language system but its widespread usage convinces us it will be included as an incorporated anglicism sooner or later. E.g.:

El buen Management, en definitiva, consiste primordialmente en mostrarle a la gente común cómo se puede convertir en gente excepcional. (Cestau Liz, 2003)

Marketing: The word “marketing” involves a series of strategies whose aim is to make a particular product a priority for consumers, in order to expand sales and the brand value. It is an incorporated borrowing widely prevalent either in specialised or in general contexts. It coexists with the equivalent “mercadotecnia,” although this Spanish term is clearly losing popularity in favour of the borrowing—even the studies related to this area are named by the English word. This superiority in usage can also be observed in the consolidated existence of collocations such as “marketing mix.” This concept includes the so called Marketing Four Ps – Place, Product, Price and Promotion, which are used in English instead of the equivalents “Lugar, Precio, Producto y Promoción.” The verb “marquetinear” or “marketinear,” adapted to the Spanish spelling, also exists. Its meaning includes all the activities related to the marketing of a product in a hyperonymic process. This usage could be avoided with the equivalent “comercializar.”

Merchandising: “Merchandising” basically means the exchange of goods for an agreed sum of money, but it also refers to the techniques and methods used to promote those goods in the market, the decision making process to choose those techniques and methods, and even the very product or good by itself. This term has a lot of different senses difficult to translate and is habitually used as an English borrowing. “Comercialización” includes some of these senses, but experts prefer the foreign term. Some periphrases and simple terms which adapt the meaning of “merchandising” to the context in which it is being used have been proposed, such as “actividades de compra-venta,” “promoción,” “mercadeo,” “dirección comercial,” “incentivación de ventas,” “promoción en el punto de ventas,” “artículos de propaganda para promocionar otro producto,” etc.

The use of “merchandiser” has also been attested. Although frequently translated by “promotor comercial,” it is also preferred by experts, who consider its meaning to be wider and more effective than the Spanish one. E.g.:

La compra interna de productos de merchandising se realiza a través de la página web ‘Solicitud de productos de merchandising’ del Servicio de Comunicación y Publicaciones de la UJI. (Universia, 2003)

Packaging: Once again in the field of Marketing, the borrowing “packaging” is used instead of the partial equivalents “envase,” “empaquetado” or “embalaje.” This anglicism is explained by the hyperonymic sense of the English term, whose meaning has been generalised including not only the place where the product is contained and protected, but also the kind of material which makes it easier to be handled, the process of design to attract customers, the place it should have on the shop shelves, and even the message issued on behalf of some products. All these specific meanings make “packaging” almost impossible to be translated into Spanish, as all the attempts lack any or other of the previous sense values. Thus, the usage of this term is justified because there is no way of defining the design, content, ways of promotion, etc. of a product but through “packaging.” E.g.:

Con una facturación anual de 9.000 millones de euros, la industria del packaging se ha convertido en uno de los sectores económicos más importantes de España. (Plast Unifers, 2004)

Posición: Nowadays Spanish language usually refers to the position within an enterprise by the word “posición,” instead of “empleo,” “puesto de trabajo,” or even “cargo.” This is a mere calque of the English “position” with this sense. It functions as a hyponym in specific contexts. E.g.:

Recuerde que todo cambio tiene implicaciones y que nuestro nivel de adaptabilidad o adaptación a dichos cambios van a determinar el éxito o fracaso en nuestra nueva posición laboral. (Porfinempleo, 2005)

Posicionar: Being a calque of the English “to position,” in the last few years “posicionar” has been used in Spanish as a verb instead of the equivalents “colocar” or “ubicar.” At the same time, “posicionamiento” is being coined as a new word with

a sense different to “posición” (see above). Marketing experts use it to refer to the consolidation and establishment of a particular make, brand or product in the market. This is supposed to be the origin of the borrowing in Spanish. Nevertheless, “posicionar” or “posicionamiento” are generalising their meanings to refer also to a way of regarding situations or topics, to the relative position of things and people in a society or to a rationalized mental attitude towards a situation. E.g.:

Seguramente, para muchos, la palabra *posicionamiento* es ya bien conocida, pero también es probable que el significado real sea confuso: posicionamiento significa tomar o hacernos de un lugar. En publicidad y mercadotecnia significa hacernos los dueños de una posición en la mente del consumidor. (Urdiain, 2000)

Prospecto: “Prospecto” does exist in the Spanish language system to refer to a short account or advertisement given to the public about a particular product in general (English “prospectus”). Nevertheless, in the commercial or economic field it is being used as a semantic calque of English “prospective” (from the collocation “prospective client”) with the meaning “concerned with or related to the future.” So, the specific expressions “cliente futuro” or “cliente en potencia” are merely direct calques from English. This usage could be avoided by the equivalents “candidato,” “interesado,” or any other periphrasis. E.g.:

Uno de los errores más comunes de la gente de ventas es su impaciencia cuando el cliente prospecto es lento para entender su oferta o tomar una decisión. (Milenium Network, 2001)

Publicitar: Once again in the field of Marketing, the adapted borrowing “publicitar” is used as a semantic calque of “to publicise.” This term is still considered incorrect, and linguists advise the use of the equivalents “divulgar,” “promocionar,” “anunciar,” etc., and even the periphrasis “hacer publicidad,” instead. E.g.:

Dove busca un nuevo canon para publicitar la belleza femenina. (Pérez, 2005)

Reportar: It is usual to read “reportar” in Spanish job advertisements. This term is a semantic calque of one of the numerous English meanings of “to report” with the sense “depender de alguien” or “estar bajo las órdenes de alguien.” It is an incorporated borrowing, as it is admitted in Spanish with the general sense of “informar.” At the same time, “reporte,” as a noun, is sometimes used instead of the

equivalents “informe” or “noticia” but this usage is still unusual, although, as in the previous cases, its expansion is a question of time. E.g.:

Reporting to the general manager he/she will be responsible of developing dealers network, maximise parts profitability ensuring excellent availability, etc. (*El País*, 1993)

Royalty: The etymologic origin of English “royalty” and the Spanish equivalent “regalía” is the Latin “regalis.” Nevertheless, the Spanish word now sounds obsolete in most contexts while the incorporated borrowing “royalty” is preferred, coexisting with other equivalents as “derecho,” “patente,” or “canon.” E.g.:

El franquiciado o franquiciatario, está obligado a pagar un derecho de ingreso al sistema y además de un canon generalmente mensual, un «royalty» sobre las ventas. (Abatí & Roca, 2004)

Soft: The English adjective “soft” has caused a varied number of lexical collocations in Spanish which have calqued the sense “delicate,” “lacking in hardness,” etc. with different results: The English expression “soft loan” is used to refer to low interest loans through the Spanish calque “préstamo blando”; “soft currency” is also calqued as “moneda blanda,” etc. Sometimes “soft” is used as a direct and sporadic borrowing. For example, the product range offered at a discount store (also calqued in Spanish as “tienda de descuento”) is known directly as “soft discount.” In other cases, Spanish language turns to the periphrasis to refer to this concept, as in “soft goods,” translated as “bienes de consumo” or “bienes perecederos.” E.g.:

Basta hojear la sección de información económica de cualquier periódico para toparnos, una y otra vez, con la incorrecta traducción literal del inglés ‘soft loan’ como préstamo blando. (Agencia EFE, 2001)

Sponsor: Although it is often used with its English spelling, “sponsor” has already been incorporated into the Spanish language system with some adaptations, resulting in “espónsor.” Spanish language purists advise the usage of the equivalent “patrocinador.” Nevertheless, the meaning of “sponsor” is wider as it also includes other possible equivalents as “promotor,” “fiador” or “garante,” depending on the context. In addition, there exists the verb “esponsorizar” or even “sponsorear” and “esponsorear,” and the nouns “esponsorización,” “esponsoreo,” “sponsoreo.” The

existence of different spellings shows a less consolidated usage of these words, still considered sporadic borrowings.

Staff: In Spanish the word “staff” refers to the highest positions in a firm. Although being a well known borrowing, its usage differs semantically from the English original. In English “staff” includes all the personnel in an organization or firm, whereas in Spanish it usually only includes the senior posts (directors and executives). In some cases it does attach to its original meaning – as in the academic field, where “staff” does refer to the whole group of workers, teachers, administrators, etc.

As an extension of this meaning, the noun “staffing” is also used in Spanish as a sporadic borrowing which defines the process of recruiting new personnel as well as its administration and management. E.g.:

Staff. La Redacción de el Periódico. Director: Antonio [...]. (*El Periódico*, 2005)

Stock: The term “stock” is used in Spanish with two possible senses, either with the meaning “mercancías en depósito,” “existencias,” “reservas,” “surtido,” etc, in a broad commercial context, or as “acciones,” “bonos” and “títulos,” in Stock Market terminology. Only the first of these two meanings has been attested in Spanish dictionaries. So, both senses are in a different stage of incorporation. The second one is still considered a sporadic usage of the borrowing. Due to the rapid expansion of this anglicism we think its final incorporation into the Spanish language is again a question of time.

Swap: There is no equivalent to “swap” in Spanish. For this reason it is used as a sporadic borrowing in specialised contexts. The only solution to avoid this foreign term would be to turn to explicative periphrases which make reference to the financial flow or interchange between two banks or firms to combat interest rate variability. In some cases Spanish experts use the expression “permuta de flujo,” although most of them prefer the direct use of the borrowing. E.g.:

Las técnicas de intercambio que proporcionan las operaciones Swap permiten a dos o más partes intercambiar el beneficio de las respectivas ventajas que cada una de ellas puede obtener sobre los diferentes mercados. (Ministerio de Industria, Turismo y Comercio, 2005)

6. Conclusions

It is clear that the Anglo-Saxon economic supremacy together with its ever expanding market is also exporting an increasing number of linguistic terms into other languages. Allied with its economic consequences, globalisation also impacts on a cultural level and the Spanish language is no exception. Language is a defining characteristic in the idiosyncrasy and identity of a country. For this reason we have preferred Spanish equivalents to avoid excessive English borrowings whose usage implies redundancy, as they coexist with native terms. This happens in the case of “atachar, agenda, brief, cash-flow,” etc.

On the other hand, in some cases the rapid growth of economic development makes borrowings necessary because there are no semantic equivalences in Spanish, as in “bancarización, commodity, joint-venture, leasing, management, swap,” etc.

Within the economic scope, although anglicisms are attested almost in every field, it is Marketing where they have the strongest influence. Examples of this are “publicitar, merchandising, mailing, DAFO, customizar,” etc.

While this tendency is taking place in Iberian Peninsular Spanish, its main effects are observed in South American Spanish, where language contact brings about continuous interference.

(Revised version received April 2005)

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Paloma López Zurita is lecturer of English at the E.U.E. Empresariales (University of Cádiz) and holds a PhD in English Philology. Her main research area is terminology and cross-cultural interference, particularly applied to scientific discourse. She has participated in various international conferences and published several papers in specialised journals.

NOTES

1 The meaning of the term "interference" is used here in the classic sense outlined by Weinreich (1953), shared as well by Payrató (1984). See also Gómez Capuz (1998: 101-102).

2 The present article is the development of the idea outlined in the paper presented at the III International Conference of AELFE, called "Semantic Study of the Spanish/English Interferences in Business English. Mechanisms of Inter-language Adaptation."

3 See A. Castro, "Adopción lingüística," en Lázaro Carreter, 1990: 28.

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