Dame un hamburger plain con ketchup y papitas

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English/Spanish contact in Puerto Rico

[The following report emerges from a joint project for a graduate course in the Department of English, College of Humanities, University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras.]

ONE OUTCOME of language contact is lexical borrowing. Borrowing in Puerto Rico (for political, economic, and social reasons) is evident in the influence English has had on Spanish, especially in lexical terms. This paper explores the impact of American English on the lexicon of Puerto Rican Spanish, specifically on vocabulary relating to food. Data were collected through participant observation in selected fast food restaurants from different regions in P.R. An analysis of the corpus provides the basis for five categories useful in understanding the influence of English on Spanish in this domain. The study indicates that English borrowings have had a tremendous influence on the Puerto Rican lexicon, and predicts that, even though Spanish will continue to be the dominant Puerto Rican language, it will continue to change under the influence of English.

Introduction: The Puerto Rican context

The Caribbean island of Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States with a population of almost 4 million. It became a territory of the United States in 1898 when Spain was defeated by the US in the Hispanic-American War. Although Spanish, one of the official languages in Puerto Rico, is the native language of most Puerto Ricans, English, the island's other official language, English, also has many functions. When two language systems are in contact in a society such as Puerto Rico, each is somewhat affected by cross-linguistic influence (cf. Schweer and Hudders, 2000). English in a non-native setting can be investigated in different ways. One way is to look from the outside in, which involves seeing English as a foreign element imposed on the local language and culture, interfacing with it, and producing highly observable manifestations of language contact (Nash 1983). Language contact has long been recognized as one of the mechanisms of language change, an unstoppable evolutionary process.

In the Puerto Rican context, Spanish and English are not in competition; they are partners. The acquisition of English neither causes loss of nor diminishes the prestige of Spanish. Knowledge of both languages can be complementary and even synergetic. Nonetheless, issues related to Puerto Rico's political status affect the attitudes of speakers toward the languages and cultures in contact, particularly attitudes concerning a non-native language, English, and the motivation for learning it as a second language (Fayer, Castro, Díaz, & Plata, 1998).

One of the effects of language contact is lexical borrowing. Görlach (1989) states that there are three ways of expanding the vocabulary of a given language: borrowing from other languages, the coining of new words and expressions, and the extension of the meaning of existing words. English has become a universal *lingua franca* whose influence is manifest in many modern languages, a phenomenon that is motivated by the political and social pre-eminence of the United States. According to Onysko (2004), after 1945, the rise of the USA as a world power created a surge of anglicisms, words from the English language that are used in other languages. Also in recent

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times, increasing globalization and tools of mass communication such as the Internet, among many other factors, have strengthened the position of English as a global language. The hegemonic influence of this nation is reflected in what might be considered an eagerness to imitate "American" lifestyle and culture. In Puerto Rican Spanish, all of these factors favor the appearance of many borrowings from North American English (Morales, 2001). Puerto Rico, because of political, economic, and social circumstances, is a country whose language has been significantly influenced by English.

In contact situations borrowing goes both ways. Just as English has influenced Spanish in Puerto Rico, there is also the influx of Spanish words into English. Many native English speakers living in Puerto Rico have incorporated Spanish words into a particularly important everyday part of their lexicon – food. The following words, which do not have English equivalents, fall into this category. They do not have English equivalents and all pertain to the food domain:

arroz con pollo a mixture of chicken and rice cooked together using a variety of native Puerto Rican spices
asopao chicken with rice soup with Puerto Rican spices
tostones fried plantains
mofongo mashed plantains with garlic and pork rinds filled with various meats or sea food
pasteles green bananas and plantains ground and mixed with pork wrapped in a banana leaf
morcilla blood sausage made with pig intestines
chicharrones crispy fried pork rinds
piña colada pineapple and coconut frappe, with or without Puerto Rican rum
majarete coconut and rice custard
tembleque coconut custard

Although these and other Spanish words are part of the vocabulary of English speakers in Puerto Rico, there is more borrowing in the opposite direction – English to Spanish. This is also most evident in the field of food. Anglicisims are borrowings that are reflected in the incorporation of new forms. They substitute traditional words with borrowed ones. As Onysko (2004) notes, anglicisms can often be found in the media, particularly in advertisements. Their use is propagated through newspapers, magazines, TV, and the Internet. Some activities are particularly prone to their influence; among these are business, computing, sports, leisure activities, fashion, and music. In

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this study the influence of anglicisms in the 'fast food' domain is explored.

The circumstances that exist as a result of commercial and cultural exchange between the island and the US favor the incorporation of new terms into Puerto Rican Spanish. According to Morales (2001), new English names will accompany the introduction of new products into Puerto Rican markets, which in turn will make inappropriate the traditional terms used before. This is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but also a series of cultural manifestations that brings about change in customs, ideologies, values, and ways of living, often extending certain characteristics of the civilization that lends it.

From the 1980s to the present, Puerto Rico has been bombarded by fast food restaurants. The majority of these are franchises from the United States with menus in English. Burger King, for example, entered Puerto Rico in 1963 and currently has 166 locations, more than 80 of them located in the San Juan metropolitan area (Figueroa, 2004). Other fast food restaurants found throughout the island include McDonalds, Taco Maker, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Subway, Taco Bell and Church's. Their arrival accelerated the borrowing and promotion of new English food names. Despite the fact that many restaurant customers are monolingual Spanish speakers, the menus are usually entirely in English or are a mixture of Spanish and English.

When these two languages came into contact significant borrowing of English words occurred in the field of food. According to Lehrer (1974), a semantic analysis can make explicit certain facts about the meaning of words that speakers have learned but have never previously been consciously aware of. Nonetheless, the extent of this borrowing in the food lexicon has not been analyzed in such previous studies of Puerto Rican English as Nash (1983), Walsh (1994), Nash and Fayer (1996), Fayer, Castro, Díaz, and Plata (1998), and Fayer (2000).

Methodology: fast-food anglicisms

The increase since the 1980s in the number of fast food restaurants has facilitated the collection of data through participant observation in selected fast food restaurants. Weekly supermarket advertisements, paper tray inserts in restaurants, and fast food advertising campaigns were also examined. Data from these sources come from different regions of Puerto Rico, including towns, and not just from the San Juan metropolitan area which is influenced by business aimed at English-speaking tourists.

In fast food restaurants the menu was analyzed and the ways Puerto Ricans ordered their food was observed. In addition, lexical items associated with food were collected from the weekly special flyers of four major supermarket chains. An analysis of this corpus led to the development of the five categories reviewed below. Most of the words included in these categories are nouns. However, a few exceptions are adjectives, such as *spicy, hot, non-fat,* and *low-fat*. The researchers also recalled their personal experiences as customers in Puerto Rico's fast food establishments. This background allowed them to posit categories that were useful in understanding the influence of English on Spanish in the domain of food.

Anglicisms from a study conducted by Morales in 2000 were also considered. Although this study was not related to the food domain in particular some food words are included in the analysis. These items are included in Table 1 and those that also appear in Table 2 are cross-referenced with an asterisk. The research conducted by Morales uses different types of data. Surveying one speaker from 40 corporations located throughout the island, her analysis charts the frequency with which they recognized the anglicisms. These food words are found in order of decreasing frequency in Table 1 (overleaf).

The corpus of English food terms used for the current study consists of 138 words which are divided into the following five categories[1]:

Category 1: Assimilated borrowing (AB)

This category consists of words which are considered to be incorporated into Spanish through assimilated borrowing from English. It is interesting to note that there is no Spanish equivalent for any of these terms (i.e., an extended explanation may be used for some of the words but there is no one word lexical equivalent). Examples of words in this category include*: brownie, pie, biscuit, muffin, nugget, sundae and ketchup.*

Category 2: Combined English/Spanish (E/S)

This category consists of compound words or phrases that are uttered half in Spanish and

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half in English. The order can be either English/Spanish or inverted to Spanish/English. Some terms state the word in English and then repeat the same word, or a closely related word, in Spanish (e.g., *carne beef, chicken fajita, taco burger, meat burrito, chicken carnita,* and *ensalada chicken Caesar*). It is not unusual to hear longer food requests such as: *Dame un hamburger con queso* ('Give me a cheeseburger'), *Quiero un* apple pie *de* cherry ('I'd like a cherry apple pie') and *Por favor un* hot fudge brownie *con* whipped cream *y mantecado* ('A hot fudge brownie with whipped cream and ice-cream, please'), *Dame un hamburger plain con ketchup y papitas* ('Give me a plain hamburger with ketchup and fries').

Category 3: Semantic extension (SE)

The review of data reveals that some words are characterized by a semantic extension in Spanish that is broader than the meaning that the term has in English; they cover a wider field in the food domain in Spanish than they do in English. Some of these but not all are brand names. *Campbells*, for example, can be used to refer to any kind of canned soup, *leche carnation* can refer to any canned milk, and *galletas export soda* can refer to any kind of cracker. Another example, *peanuts*, is a term which refers to all kinds of nuts and *corn flakes* refers to any cereal.

Category 4: Variable use (VU)

Included here are words that have a variable use depending on the frequency with which the speaker uses them in Spanish or in English. They have Spanish equivalents that can be expressed as a single lexical unit that requires no extended explanation (e.g. *bacon/tocineta*; *French toast/tostadas francesas*; *strawberry/fresa*; *popcorn/palomitas de maíz*). The word *hot dog* does have a Spanish equivalent (*perro caliente*) which is used in other Spanish-speaking countries but not in Puerto Rico.

Category 5: Foreign borrowings (FB)

This consists of source words that have been borrowed from another language and have entered English as borrowings, then entered Spanish (e.g., *buffet*, *crouton*, *sauerkraut*, and *BBQ*): a very limited group. As in Category III, this category has very few borrowings. Table 2 contains a listing of all the English borrowings found in this study.

Table 1 Anglicisms referring to food domain found in study conducted by Morales

Food related term
pancake*
hamburger*
corned beef
Refill*
barbecue*
pie*
Corn flakes*
dressing*
Slice*
bacon*
Deli
Blackout
Soda*
Cono (cone)
snack*
fast food*
bakery
Broil*
Drink*
Ice cream
Grill*
low (low fat)*
seafood*
french fries*
cookies
fat*
roast
shake
Toast*
Nuts*

Analysis: five lexical categories

Long ago, Latin contributed to the development of the English language in areas such as architecture and government. Likewise, French influenced English in such areas as 'gentility' and a Latinized English. Comparably, in Puerto Rico today, English borrowed food words are

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Table 2 The Corpus of English food terms and its classification into five major categories

1 Assimilated borrowing	2 Combined: English/Spanish	3 Semantic extensión	4 Variable use	5 Foreign borrowing
Bagel	Apple pie de cherry	campbell's	baby ribs	BBQ
banana split	baby nacho	cheez whiz	Bacon	buffet
Blackout	Carne beef	corn flakes	Broiled	crouton
blueberry	chicken carnita	galletas export soda	carry out	kiwi
broccoli	chicken fajita	galletas ritz	Celery	pita
brownie	classic doble	peanuts	Classic	pizza
cantaloupe	ensalada chicken caesar	pepper steak de pavo	Chunk	sauerkraut
cash & carry	ensalada side	quik	cheeseburger	yogurt
cheesecake	hard shell taco		Cranberry	
chocolate chip	hot dog de pollo		cream cheese	
coleslaw	Leche con Quik		cold cuts	
(dona) donut	meat burrito		Coleslaw	
dumpling	pan de hot dog		Delivery	
fish stick	pan deli		Deluxe	
fish filet	pan pita		Dressing	
frozen	papitas crispy		Drink	
fruit punch	pollo crunchy		fast food	
gravy	pumpkin pie de calabaza		french fries	
hamburger	Queso cheddar		french toast	
hash brown	ron punch		fruit cake	
honey biscuit	slice		Grilled	
honeydew	soft shell taco		Hamburger	
honey mustard	taco burger		hot dog	
hot dog	wrap pollo/carne		iced tea	
ketchup			Jumbo	
loncherita (lunch)			kiddy meal	
mozzarella sticks			Lite	
muffin			low fat	
nugget			macaroni and cheese	
onion rings			non-fat	
pancake			Peach	
pie			Plain	
pop tart			Plum	
pound cake			Pickle	
praline			Popcorn	
pretzel			rare/medium/ well done	
roast beef			Salad	
roll (egg etc.)			Sandwich	
salad bar			Sausage	
snack			Seafood	
snack pack			Slice	
strip			Snack	
sundae			Soda	
syrup			sour cream	
tender (chicken)			spicy hot	
Topping			Strawberry	
TV dinner			Stuffing	
Wafer			sweet & sour	
Waffle			Tuna	
Whopper			Whipped cream	

influencing the everyday Spanish spoken on the island.

Because Puerto Rico and the United States have close political and economic bonds, the influence of English on Spanish is self-evident. The growing relevance and global spread of

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English has affected all languages where English serves as an L2 alongside a native language (Onysko 2004). More and more changes at the lexical and phonological level are observed in Spanish, mainly due to the influence of and crossovers from English. Indeed, the semantic field relating to food is being bombarded from English at a very fast pace worldwide.

The general changes appearing in the food domain occur in two forms. One type of change or variation is spontaneous: native speakers of Spanish begin using a word spontaneously for the purpose of improving communication. The words listed in Category 1 (assimilated borrowings with no Spanish equivalents) emerge from this kind of influence. The second type of change occurs as a result of the specialized advertising of corporations and franchises. These are the results of companies' efforts to make their products more attractive and marketable. Some of the words from Category 4 illustrate this type of change (e.g., *kiddy meal, classic, deluxe, jumbo, low fat*, etc).

The words in Category II exemplify a combination of English and Spanish. Some also are extensions. For example, *apple pie* can be the name of any fruit pie and *apple pie de cherry* specifies the particular pie. Terms such as *apple pie de cherry, pumpkin pie de calabaza*, and *carne* beef all indicate how an American system of food naming is being accepted as the norm for food naming in Puerto Rico.

Categories 2 and 3 are examples of new categories that need to be analyzed in greater depth, and may open the door to future research in this particular field. Words from Category 3 reveal that semantic extensions are being created in Spanish by using food names and food brands to represent a wider range of foods. For example, *corn flakes* has been extended to refer to any dry cereal in a box or bag. *Campbells* refers to any kind of canned soup. *Peanuts* can refer to any kind of nuts. Although some of these terms are brand names, they have extended to cover a much wider range of signification in Spanish.

Words in Category 2 are being incorporated into Spanish as bilingual compound words (e.g. *carne beef*; *chicken carnitas*). Anglicisms are particularly productive in the creation of hybrid compound nouns mixing two languages in contact (Onysko 2004). This shows a new and creative way of naming foods in Puerto Rico.

Another variable considered in this study is 'alternation (u)'. This refers to the speaker's willingness to use or substitute a term in Spanish for another equivalent term in English. This phenomenon can operate in the opposite direction as well (from L2 to L1). Basically, this variable could be considered in Categories 1 and 4. In Category 1 the level of alternation is very low. In contrast, in Category 4 the level of alternation is higher because the speaker can decide which terms will be used in English or Spanish. In some instances, the Spanish word may be used, where in other instances the speaker might use the English term (e.g., a speaker might say *pickle* instead of *pepinillo* or vice versa).

Since several words did not follow the patterns observed in the first four categories, it was important to establish a fifth category for them. Some of these terms were words borrowed from another language, such as *crouton* and *buffet* from French. In English they are assimilated borrowings from French and later passed as such into Spanish. The same occurred with the word *sauerkraut* which entered English as a German borrowing and passed into Spanish as a borrowed word from English. The word *barbecue* is an interesting case. The word *barbacoa* comes from Taíno, the language of the indigenous people of Puerto Rico at the time of the Spanish conquest and was adopted into Spanish (cf. Alvarez 1996). The word was taken into English as *barbecue* and much later entered the Puerto Rican lexicon as an English borrowing.

Borrowed English words that are adapted to Spanish phonology and pronunciation may differ greatly from Standard English pronunciation. For example, the way Puerto Rican speakers pronounce some of these borrowed words conforms to Spanish stress patterns. In Spanish, stress is placed on the second part of the compound; whereas, in English it is placed on the first part (*hot dóg*, as opposed to *hót dog*). Stress is a feature that characterizes how English borrowings are adapted to Spanish phonology. Such a pattern can also be observed in such two and three syllable words as *pancáke* and *cranbérry*. However, English stress is observed in words such as *whopper* and *wáffle*. Examples of this shifted stress are: *cheese cáke*, *fish stíck*, and *ice-téa*.

Another effect of language contact found in this study is that grammatical gender has been assigned to nouns that in English have no gen-

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der. Here, Spanish gender has crossed over lexical boundaries. Our findings related to gender resemble the findings of Onysko's study of Anglicisms in German, which found that the majority of the borrowings examined were nouns that had become integrated at the phonological, orthographical, and structural level of the recipient language. The borrowings were assigned gender according to semantic and morphological analogies of English borrowings and their German cognates (Onysko 2004). In the current study, with few exceptions, only words that have the regular Spanish ending *a* are assigned the feminine articles *la* or *una*. This rule applies to words for which there is a Spanish equivalent as well (e.g., *un slice* in mixed Spanish and English versus *una lasca* in Spanish). On the other hand, most terms become masculine using *el* or *un*. Some examples of words portraying this masculine gender assignment are:

un hot dog
un sundae
un pancake
un biscuit
un hamburger
un apple pie
un ice-tea
un brownie

Some words have however been rendered using feminine gender, as for example:

Una soda
Una dona
Una chocolate chip
Una caesar salad
Una hash brown

Conclusion

This study explores the impact of English on the Spanish lexicon, specifically nouns in the food domain. Fast food restaurants are very common in Puerto Rico as in many other countries. In this particular area the tremendous effect of English borrowings as they enter the Puerto Rican lexicon and expand speakers' vocabularies can be observed. As noted by Ahulu (1994), 'borrowing is one of the major processes by which (modern) English is creating and expanding its vocabulary.' It is also true that English borrowing is one of the ways vocabulary is being expanded in other languages.

For example, in Puerto Rico, when languages come into contact, borrowing occurs in two major ways: Some words in English become high-frequency words in Spanish because there are no Spanish equivalents for them, and loanwords used to designate new things or terms become rapid additions to the vocabulary (cf. Weinreich 1974). One important factor that explains why Anglicisms enter a language is the necessity of naming new products accompanied by their original English terminology. There is another category of words that have Spanish equivalents, and alternation depends on the speaker's personal choice. If fast food restaurants with their English food terms continue to expand so will the lexical borrowings. The prediction is that, even though Spanish will continue to be the dominant language of Puerto Ricans, it will continue to change quite rapidly due to the influence of English. As English food terms are likely to continue to influence language in the semantic field of food, this contact phenomenon should also be analyzed in other countries.

Puerto Rico's political status affects the attitude of the people toward language and cultures in contact, particularly towards the nonnative language and the motivation for learning it (cf. Fayer, Castro, Díaz, & Plata, 1998). English taught from 1st to 12th grade in Puerto Rican schools is taught as Standard American English, but are students able to communicate in it? Since the arrival of fast food restaurants has brought with it a wide variety of new additions to the vocabulary of the Puerto Rican populace, why not take advantage of this boom and use it to motivate students toward learning this second language, making them aware that English is all around them? However, many may be unaware that when they go to a fast food restaurant and order *un hamburger con ketchup*, they are using English – which means that they already know some English, and the vocabulary they already have can be used in classroom instruction.

As American fast food restaurants expand worldwide so does the world's English lexicon. This new form of language contact spreads as well. Further research on the effect of English in the domain of foods is necessary. It is hoped that the material presented here can be seen alongside other studies which explore language contact in countries where English is used as a second language. Such comparisons are undoubtedly crucial to understanding the influence of English in Spanish-speaking coun-

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tries and should be addressed in future scholarly work. ■

Notes

1 This study was conducted as a class project in English 6475, a graduate linguistics course taught by Dr. Joan Fayer in Spring 2004 in the Department of English, College of Humanities, University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus.
2 Because of the way data were collected, frequency of use was not analyzed.

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