

Running Head: ENGLISH BORROWING IN VENEZUELAN SPANISH

English borrowing in computer-related Venezuelan Spanish: Use and policy

Yuly Asención

Northern Arizona University

Abstract

Languages are dynamic and thus changing constantly. Language borrowings are evidence of such a change. Different positions are assumed in the discussion about the use of foreign words into a language. Descriptive approaches identify what terms speakers are using, and prescriptive ones consists of the positions assumed by a language academy, Royal Academy of Spanish Language (RASL). This study combined both approaches to describe the use of borrowing terms in Venezuelan Spanish used in computer-related fields. A corpus of on-line magazines, and webpages about computers and internet was collected and analyzed with corpus tools. The corpus tool identified 31 English borrowings with a total of 1,797 instances. The language policy adopted regarding the use of these borrowings was determined by their official inclusion in the dictionary published by RASL (1992.) The analysis of the borrowings identified in the corpus indicated that the penetration of English in the computer-related Venezuelan Spanish is a current phenomenon. The role of the RASL seems to be minimal to accept, reject or adapt the most frequent borrowings in this area. Venezuelan speakers are using loan words frequently instead of the Spanish equivalents proposed by specialized associations trying to regulate the use of foreign words in computer-related Spanish.

English borrowing in computer-related Venezuelan Spanish: Use and policy

Languages are dynamic and thus changing constantly. They come in contact especially in fields or disciplines where the influence of a language in which the new advances take place is observed in the linguistic system of languages consuming new information or knowledge. This linguistic contact enriches languages' lexical, morphological, syntactic or phonological systems by borrowing terms from a donor language to refer to new concepts, situations, actions or objects.

English borrowing in computer-related Spanish has been investigated from different viewpoints: linguistic viewpoint, language policy, and regional varieties. Linguistic viewpoints

analyze the forms adopted by the foreign words in the vocabulary of the receptor language. This approach, for instance, has generated a variety of glossaries or lists of terms taken from English in areas such as politics, sports, computer-related fields, etc. The language policy perspective, on the other hand, examines not the use, but the usage of the terms. For example, a prescriptive view seeks to rule the amount of English words that are “invading” the Spanish language. A third approach looks for sociolinguistic factors motivating the adoption of foreign terms, so the emphasis is on the study of the word-borrowing phenomenon in different varieties and fields of knowledge. This study has as its main purpose to investigate the adoption of foreign words in Spanish from the three aforementioned viewpoints. It, specifically, examines the use of English borrowings in Venezuelan computer-related Spanish, and the language policy adopted by language institutions like the Royal Academy of Spanish Language.

Review of the Literature

Native speakers can be aware of the penetration of English in specialized Spanish, but their intuitions about language use are not enough to analyze this language change in a thorough way. Previous literature has provided sufficient evidence to systematically describe what language users are doing in Spanish, and what “language experts” are doing to regulate the use of foreign words. The next section of the study presents a brief summary of this evidence under three areas: a) issues of definition and taxonomy of borrowings, b) English borrowings in computer-related Spanish, and c) problems and language policies related to the use of English borrowings in Spanish.

Definition and Taxonomy of Anglicisms

Borrowing has been defined as the introduction of phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic items from one language or variety into another (Crystal, 1992). Borrowings occur

when two languages are in contact. Although language contact is said to happen between two speech communities close to each other geographically, nowadays, such contact does not require geographic proximity to occur. Our society is media-based; thus language change due to the influence from other linguistic systems makes use of virtual space to affect the way language speakers use foreign terms in their speech or writing. In this linguistic interaction, the language providing the term is called *donor*, while the language acquiring the item is called *receptor* (Filipovic, 1990, as cited in Sicherl, 1998). In this study, the donor language is English and the receptor one is Spanish.

Although most linguists use the term *borrowing* to describe the incorporation of terms from one language to another, there are some scholars in Spanish linguistics that consider *borrowing* an inappropriate term to speak about a linguistic transaction in which the receptor language does not return the term to the donor language. Rodríguez (1996) has suggested using terms like “foreign word” or “alienism” to refer to borrowings. In spite of this inappropriate semantic connotation, *borrowing* seems to be the term most used in the literature to refer to this linguistic act. English borrowing has also been labeled as *anglicisms*, *neologisms*, *calque*, and *barbarisms*. Sampedro (2000) defines *anglicisms* as items taken from English without any modification, and specifies that *calques* occur when the term taken from the donor language is translated into the receptor language partially or totally (e.g. lista de correo – mailing list). *Neologisms* are those lexical or semantic items created to name new inventions or concepts (e.g. fax, módem, aplicación). *Barbarisms*, according to Sampedro (2000), are those foreign items written or pronounced inappropriately by speakers of the receptor language in their attempts to incorporate them into their language (e.g. savear). *Barbarisms*, however, can be replaced by translations that have already been proposed as “correct usage” for the foreign items (e.g. guardar).

The difference in terminology is reflected in the first taxonomies describing the form taken by foreign words adopted in Spanish. Giralt-Torre (1991) describes borrowings from the

morphological, syntactic and lexical-semantic level. Morphological anglicisms are those borrowings adopting the morphological features of Spanish and eliminating the ones in the source language (e.g. *clubes*), Syntactic adaptations copy the word order, mode or aspect used in the source language, English (e.g. *López Editores*). Lexical-semantic borrowings are said to be the most frequent ones and consist of vocabulary items adopted in sense or form by the receptor language (e.g. *correo-e*).

Similarly, Montes (1993) presents categories like complete lexical borrowing, translation, semantic transfer or calque, morphosyntactic transfer and phonological transfer. The complete lexical borrowing reflects the adoption of the term in form and sense (e.g., *internet*), the “translation” provides a term that imitates the source word in form and keeps the sense (e.g., *computadora*), calque refers to the semantic adoption of a term (e.g., *aplicación*), morphosyntactic transfer consists of copying the syntax or morphology of the source language (e.g., *el correo es enviado – se envía el correo*), and the phonological transfer copies the pronunciation of the foreign word (e.g. *pc - /pi –si/*).

The previous typologies emphasized the linguistic description of borrowing; however, the pragmatic functions of adopting foreign words into one’s language were not explored until recently. Gomez (1996) and Rodríguez (1996) suggested a categorization of anglicisms based on the language functions proposed by Halliday: referential, expressive, textual and discourse function. These functions seek to explain the motivations a language user has for using a foreign term in his/her language. For example, the referential function denotes the need of naming technological innovations and novel situations in modern society (e.g., *software*). The expressive function allows the speaker to use the borrowing with an ironic or humor purpose, or to show other speakers that he/she employs the same specialized terms the group of speakers from a high social status use (e.g., *recibí un email*). The textual function is related to the principle of economy of language. Speakers can use a term because it can easily adapt to the rules of their native language (e.g. *fax, faxear, faxes*), or to be more accurate when referring to a concept (e.g.

browser). The discourse function is evident when speakers use foreign terms to give cohesion to a text, or has an argumentative value in the text.

Conceptualization of borrowings also responds to practical issues related to the methodology employed in corpus studies. For example, Humbley (1987) decided not to include brand names for programs or computer equipment in his count of anglicisms. Sampedro (2000), on the other hand, includes in his description of this language area a wide range of items that goes from anglicisms, barbarisms, false friends, neologisms, acronyms, to emoticons. In this study, we would refer to borrowings as English words introduced in form or sense into Spanish. As in Humbley (1987), names given to software, platform or applications are not going to be counted as borrowings in our sample of language. Besides, for analysis purposes, only three types of borrowings or anglicisms from the taxonomies proposed are going to be considered: complete adoptions, calques and neologisms.

English borrowing in computer-related Spanish

Computer-related disciplines or registers seem to be one of the language areas in Spanish where English borrowings are more evident. Due to the growing body of inventions and advances in science and technology and its geographic concentration in English speaking environments (USA, England), languages such as Spanish do not seem to go fast enough in terms of coining new terminology to describe or name those inventions named in English (Calvo, 1997; Castillo, 1995). Why are not Spanish terms readily available to describe innovations? Marcos (2000) suggests some directions to answer this question: a) Spanish-speaking scientists do not write their findings in English, and b) non-native speakers of Spanish do not feel the need to write about their studies in Spanish. English, then, apart from being the language in which innovations are made, is also the language of status for the scientific community. This attitude towards English and Spanish could explain the increasing use of English terms in Spanish in specialized areas such as computer-related fields.

Bernal-Labrada (1989) in his essay about how English influenced modern Spanish, mentioned computer-related registers as one of the fields in which English words are widely used. Specific borrowing examples presented in his work are the words *software* and *hardware*, *bit* and *byte* and the corresponding equivalents suggested by the Royal Academy of the Spanish language: *programas* and *equipos*, *bitio* and *octeto*. Although the English words have been given equivalents in Spanish, these seem to be largely ignored by Spanish speakers. This behavior, according to the author, appears to be reinforced by the media. Television, press, radio, and internet make ample use of English borrowings and contribute to the widespread of the items.

Vaquero (1999), in a more recent work, explores some other reasons behind the fact that science and technology are very permeable in linguistic terms. He explains that in some cases terminology requires translation for daily use, and people translating new terms are not conscious users of Spanish or native speakers of the language. This would cause an improper adoption of terms, instead of favoring the creation of new terms or the adoption of new meanings for existing words in the language. In his study of anglicisms in German and Swedish, Inghult (1997) proposes other factors for the adoption of foreign terms. In the case of these two languages, German and Swedish speakers seem to have a positive attitude toward Anglo-American culture, and there is a weak language purism among the younger generations of language users. In the case of Spanish, most of the reasons mentioned may well apply to explain the use of borrowings in computer-related fields. We also have to mention that in certain varieties of the Spanish language, like Mexican Spanish, geographic proximity with the US and its technology favors the adoption of anglicisms. In the case of Venezuelan Spanish, Tello (1995) indicates that the US political, economical and technological influence could make Venezuelan speakers adopt foreign words to name common things. Although the terms presented by Tello as examples of anglicisms are not specific for computer-related fields, borrowings like *bit*, *byte*, *chip*, *escaner*, *fax*, *hardware*, and *rango* are included in his list of foreign words adopted in Venezuelan Spanish.

Although efforts at regulating English borrowings used in Spanish have been advanced, their number is increasing in scientific and technological Spanish. This tendency is corroborated in studies like the ones carried out by Blanco (1997), Millan (1997) and Sampedro (2000). In a research study on the use of anglicisms in the media, Blanco (1997) studied the Spanish used in the media associated with internet, and identified and illustrated actual use of a large number of anglicisms used in Spanish. Similarly, Millan (1997) carried out a corpus-based study of the Spanish used in the internet, and found that a third of the words used in the sample of language collected were English words, direct translation from English, or semantic borrowings. Sampedro (2000) examined the frequency of concrete examples of English borrowings in the language used in computer-related fields, and provided a thorough glossary of the most used anglicism, barbarisms, neologism and false cognates used in this specialized Spanish language. It seems from these studies that anglicisms are clearly penetrating Spanish in areas like internet and computer-sciences. However, questions about how they are actually used in the different Spanish varieties still remain unanswered. This study has as its aim to add more information about this issue by addressing, in an exploratory way, English borrowings in computer-related areas in Venezuelan Spanish.

Anglicisms and Language Policy

Spanish is a language with multiple varieties regulated in use by the Royal Academy of Spanish Language (RASL). The role of language authority assumed by the RASL can be explained by the fact that the academy is the institution that shows concern for the written and academic language and produces the official inventory of acceptable words, appropriate meanings, rules for spelling and pronunciation (Kaplan & Bauldauf, 1997). Although the RASL is an institution with a long-standing tradition and branches in countries where Spanish is spoken, it does not always seem in step with the language changes occurring in Spanish. Members of the

Academy, for instance, see anglicisms, as a language problem, and they have been trying to regulate the large number of foreign words included in the Spanish vocabulary.

In his essay about the influence of English in modern Spanish, Bernal-Labrada (1989) pointed out some of the attempts made to deal with the anglicism “problem”. For example, in the III Congress of Spanish language academies held in 1969, academy members agreed on forming special groups (Comisiones de Vocabulario Técnico) that were to analyze the foreign words, adopt or reject them, look for an equivalent in Spanish or create new words to substitute them. Bernal-Labrada also indicated that the RASL in Spain would assign this task to the Royal Academy of Exact, Physics and Natural Sciences. The speakers of the language hardly ever know the reports from these specialized groups. It seems that the users of the language do not share the purist sentiment of academy members, and thus their efforts are not productive. For example, the Colombian academy members suggested the word *bitio* for *bits*; however, Spanish speakers are still using the English item and the RASL included it in its dictionary.

Why is not a language policy as determined by the RASL adopted by users of Spanish? Lorenzo (1995-1996) indicates that the lexical modernization task carried out by the RASL seems to be slow and not dynamic enough to keep up with the rhythm of new terminology in need to be labeled in Spanish. Language regulations as proposed in the official dictionary of the RASL take about 8 or 10 years to be published, leaving time and space for the users to incorporate English words in their vocabulary and to use them widely.

Some of the problems just mentioned have been addressed by the RASL. For example, the web page of the RASL offers a section where lexical and grammar questions can be posed to language experts. The RASL has also signed agreements with the biggest telephone company in Spain to disseminate the use of correct Spanish in the internet. The two institutions agreed on working on an electronic dictionary of Spanish questions. In addition, some researchers have proposed a combination of science and language experts from the academy to create a common language database to be used by speakers in the area of science and technology (Calvo, 1997).

Another direction towards the regulation of the Spanish used in computer-related fields seems to be the agreement signed by the RASL and Microsoft to work on the translation of software produced by this company into Spanish.

Language policies, however, have some questions to answer before being implemented. For example, Millan (1997) and Amigot (1999) argue that when trying to standardize the use of Spanish in the net, there is a concern for the kind of variety to use so that speakers feel the language proposed is familiar to them. This problem demands solutions that involve the creation of a neutral Spanish. However, Amigot (1999) points out that while big computer corporations such as Microsoft are guided by the speed of the market demands, the RASL seems to take considerable time to solve linguistic problems. This discrepancy could be an obstacle for the RASL in the regulation of the Spanish use for the new computer technology. Millan (1997) claims that in spite of the RASL measures, the linguistic policy determining the computer terminology to be used in Spanish is mostly determined by the economic interests of computer companies like Microsoft. This latter linguistic policy seems to be the one finally adopted by the users of computer technology in Spanish.

It seems that so far language policies have only been focused on what words to use, and they have not been effective when dealing with the 'problem' of anglicisms. It is worth noticing that there are language policies, but users do not see the use of foreign words as a problem, so their view on how the language should be employed for communication does not fit purist ideas of Spanish usage. In spite of this mismatch between use and language policy, nowadays, Spanish speakers have more sources of language to turn to when in doubt on how to use of foreign word in computer-related Spanish (e.g., Royal Academy of Spanish Language, the Español Urgente in the EFE press group, Instituto Cervantes, and Associaciòn de Tècnics de Informàtica).

As illustrated in the different studies summarized in this short review of the literature, anglicisms are considered a current language phenomenon of relevance for speakers and language policy makers. Although some researches have raised important questions regarding the

identification, classification and “appropriate use” of anglicisms in computer-related Spanish, there is a need for more research insofar as the different varieties of Spanish to better understand what speakers of Spanish in different countries are actually borrowing from English. This exploratory study addresses part of this need by examining the case of Venezuelan Spanish. In specific, this research seeks to answer two main questions:

- (1) What is the frequency of English borrowings in a sample of computer-related Venezuelan Spanish?
- (2) What is the language policy of official language institutions regarding English borrowings in Venezuelan Spanish as used in computer-related fields?

Method

The present study was exploratory in nature since it analyzed in a qualitative way the use of anglicisms in a small corpus of Venezuelan computer-related web pages, news, and magazines. The design of the study included the identification and classification of the English borrowings present in the corpus, and an examination of the language policy adopted by official language institutions regarding their use. The following sections describe in detail the corpus of written Venezuelan Spanish built for this study, the sources of language policy consulted, and the procedure followed to collect and analyze the data.

Corpus

A small corpus of written Venezuelan computer-related Spanish was collected for the purposes of this study. A total of 118,204 words were collected from electronic texts in 10 on-line magazines, news, and webpages about internet and computer sciences. All the texts were written in Spanish by Venezuelan speakers for an audience speaking the same variety of Spanish. Table 1 lists the sources of texts and the amount of words provided by each media publication.

Table 1

On-line Resources Used in the Corpus

Resource	Number of words
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Cielo rojo – Reaccium	5,619
Computación Global Venezuela	20,645
Computer world Venezuela	9,807
El Nacional	15,795
Internet world Venezuela	2,614
La red	15,796
Pc News Venezuela	14,485
Pc-world Venezuela	22,162
Tecnología – El Universal	11,281
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 118,204

As can be observed, not all the sources contributed with the same amount of words. *Internet world Venezuela*, for example, was mainly a webpage without articles so the words in the homepage were the ones included in the corpus. *Cielo rojo* was a newsletter created by Reaccium, a network used for academic research in Venezuelan universities. This magazine has information related to the network, and how it is used by the scholars in academic setting in Venezuela. *El Nacional*, one of the main newspapers in the country, contributed with words taken from news related with the word “informática”. *Tecnología-El Universal* is the weekly section on technology in *El Universal*, another big newspaper in Venezuela. *La red* is an independent magazine about internet published on-line by Venezuelan speakers. The rest of the sources are magazines originally published in English. These magazines have a branch in Venezuela so they focus on local news, reviews of software, interviews, as well as notices on international products. These magazines can also be found in print.

Sources of Language Policy

Different sources of language policy were used in this research to determine the status of the anglicisms identified in the corpus. The main source was the dictionary by the RASL. This dictionary is the official reference material to words and meanings considered appropriate by the main institution generating language policies in Spanish. In this study, the researcher used the electronic version of the latest edition of the dictionary (1992), and also searched for words in the section of the webpage of the RASL about new lexical items or meanings pending to be added to the new edition of the dictionary.

As explained in the review of the literature, other institutions in more specialized areas offer glossaries or webpages to help Spanish speakers make an “appropriate” use of the language and avoid using foreign words when talking or writing about computers or internet. One of those associations is the Asociación de Técnicos de Informática (ATI). The ATI has an electronic version of its glossary, and it also sponsors research, like the one carried out by Sampedro (2000).

The research reports contribute more words to the glossary and provide evidence of the actual use of the anglicisms and their Spanish equivalents.

Venezuela has its own academy of Spanish language; however, being a branch of the RASL, its only job is to document the use of Spanish by Venezuelan speakers and propose lexical items to be included in the RASL dictionary. This official language institution does not regulate or produce language policies to regulate the use of Spanish in the country. A document used for this research is a press notice in which a small list of terms is proposed by the Venezuelan Academy of Spanish (VAS) to be included in the new edition of RASL dictionary. This list gave the researcher an idea of the status of the words found in the corpus of Venezuelan Spanish.

Procedure

The researcher downloaded the Spanish texts from the webpages already mentioned. The texts were saved in different files according to the magazine they belong to. This facilitated the counts of words per source. Then the files were analyzed using corpus tools. In order to determine the frequency of the borrowings in the corpus, a concordance program was used, MonoConc. This program provided a list of the most frequent words. The researcher set up the program to provide results up to two instances of each word in the corpus.

Once this list was obtained, the researcher looked for the frequency of all the words that appeared to be English in form or meaning. The new list of words was revised to eliminate those borrowings that were names for programs, applications or computer companies. The frequency of the new list of words was checked using the concordance function of the program. This function provided the frequency of the word searched as well as the contexts in which it appeared.

Finally, the words in the final list of borrowings were checked for their status as official words to be used in Spanish in the RASL dictionary, ATI glossary, and VAS list of words to be included in the new RASL dictionary. Previous studies were also used for determining if the words had been reported before in other samples of Spanish language related to computers.

Results

The purpose for the analysis of the borrowings in the small corpus of Spanish language collected was two-fold: to determine the frequency of the English borrowings identified in the corpus, and to establish the status of the borrowings in terms of language policy. The results of

this analysis will be presented in three main sections: a) frequency of borrowings in the corpus, b) type of borrowings found, and c) language policy regulating the use of the borrowings identified.

Frequency of Borrowings

As already explained, in this study, borrowings were defined as those English linguistic items already in use in Spanish. In order to avoid topic or writer influence in the number of instances of a borrowing in the corpus, only those items with ten or more instances were considered for analysis. After taking into account all these considerations, a set of 31 items were identified as borrowings. Table 2 shows these lexical items and their frequency in the corpus.

Table 2

Frequency of Borrowings in the Corpus (118,204 words)

Borrowing	Frequency	Borrowing	Frequency
Internet	363	Dominio	22
Web	243	Ram	22
Software	211	Chip	21
Aplicación(es)	136	Intranet	18
Pc	114	Email	17
Navegar (ante,ación,dor)	87	Bits	16
Plataforma	76	Internauta	15
Site	65	Hackers	15
Herramienta(s)	62	Módem	14
On-line	43	Formato(s)	13
Portal(es)	42	cd-rom	13
Interfaz	37	Browser	12
Multimedia	27	cd	11
Protocolo	26	Rango(s)	11
Bajar	25	Correo-e	10
Hardware	25		

As can be seen in Table 2, the 5 most frequent borrowings were *internet*, *web*, *software*, *aplicación(es)*, and *Pc*, each with more than one hundred instances in the corpus. Some of these words have already been reported in other studies on anglicisms. For example, Bernal-Labrada (1989) identified *software* as a borrowing that has been adopted with no concern about Spanish orthography. Blanco (1997), and Sampedro (2000) discuss the use of the popular

anglicism in computer-related areas, *internet*, and the use of articles with this anglicism. Blanco (1997) also includes *Pc* in his list of anglicisms, and claims that this is a term imposed by big computer companies like Microsoft to avoid the use of other trademarks like Macintosh. Sampedro (2000) identifies *aplicación* as a borrowing for *application*. The word *web* is not reported in the list of words based on corpus studies offered in the literature, though in this sample of language is very frequent.

In the group of words with more than 50 instances, but less than a hundred, we had *navegar* and its derived forms (*navegación*, *navegador*), *plataforma*, *site*, and *herramienta*. Blanco (1997) explains the high frequency of these items in Spanish. For instance, *navegar* is frequent due to the extended use of the commercial program to access the web: Netscape navigator. *Herramienta* and *plataforma* are considered borrowings by Blanco (1997) because they acquire the meaning of their English counterparts, *tools* and *workstation*. The word *site* is also reported in the study by Sampedro (2000) as one of the most frequent words in computer-related Spanish.

Borrowings with more than 20 instances, but less than 50 consisted of 10 items: *on-line*, *portal*, *interfaz*, *multimedia*, *protocolo*, *bajar*, *hardware*, *dominio*, *ram*, and *chip*. Most of the items have been included in lists of borrowing offered by different researchers (Blanco, 1997, Sampedro, 2000), except for *portal* that has acquired a new meaning in computer-related Spanish.

The less frequent borrowings in the corpus, less than 20 instances, were: *intranet*, *email*, *bits*, *hackers*, *módem*, *formato*, *cd-rom*, *browser*, *cd*, *rango* and *correo-e*. In spite of their low frequency, most of the words are frequently reported in studies on anglicisms in computer-related Spanish. The only word not included in these studies is *formato* which is a calque for *format*, and has been also used as verb, *formatear*.

Most of the items found in our list of borrowings have been identified in previous studies on anglicisms in Spanish so Venezuelan Spanish seems to reflect a tendency followed by other users of Spanish in different countries.

Type of Borrowings

English borrowings found in our corpus take different forms in Spanish. Some words are adopted in form and sense (anglicisms), others are expressed in Spanish words, but they are translation from English words (calques), and other lexical items or meanings are created in Spanish to describe the English word (neologisms). In this section, we classified the loan words in our corpus into these categories. Table 3 shows such categorization.

Table 3

Type of Borrowings in the Corpus

Anglicisms	Neologisms	Calque
Internet	Aplicación	Plataforma
Web	Navegar	Herramientas
Software	Interfaz	Portal
Pc	Multimedia	Formato
Site	Protocolo	Rango
On-line	Bajar	Correo-e
Hardware	Dominio	
Ram		
Chip		
Intranet		
Email		
Bits		
Hackers		
Modem		
cd-rom		

Browser
Cd

As observed in Table 3, anglicisms outnumbered neologisms and calques in our list of borrowings. Anglicisms represent 1,223 instances of the 1,797 borrowings in the corpus with more than 10 instances. Neologisms provide only 360 instances and calques were the least in number and frequency (214).

Let us examine the grammar categories that anglicisms can have in Spanish. The examples show the use of some of these borrowings in context:

- (1) El acuerdo crea igualmente un mercado [[online]] de marca compartida a través del cual ... (*Pc world Venezuela*).
- (2) ... con exactitud, un hacker o grupo de [[hackers]] logró infiltrarse hasta las redes ... (*La red*)
- (3) ... 40 millones de suscriptores de la [[Web]] sin cables en los Estados Unidos para ... (*El nacional*)

In (1), the anglicism has an adjectival function because it is describing the kind of market to be created, keeping the original category the word has in English. The borrowing is considered just one lexical term in this case, but some examples were found in the corpus in which the item is separated by a dash: *on-line*, resembling more the English word.

In (2), the borrowing refers to a person so it is used as a noun that can also be pluralized as it is the case of the English term. This is an example of complete adoption of an item since its use keeps also the pronunciation. While in Spanish the “h” in initial position is silent, this word is pronounced with the sound given to the letter in English.

The meaning of the term in (3) refers to the service consisting on virtual communication obtained using internet. It is classified as a noun, and in Spanish is considered to have a feminine gender as marked by the use of the article “la”.

Neologisms, as explained before, are the creative response to the use of English in computer-related fields because users are inventing new meanings or lexical items to describe the concepts or referents of the English words. Examples taken from the corpus are:

(4) ... sobre todo porque en las [[aplicaciones]] bancarias cada segundo es crítico. ... (*Cielo rojo-Reaccium*)

(5)... que estamos ofreciendo actualmente es [[navegar]] por internet a alta velocidad en Cantv ... (*Computación global*)

(6) ... como el de iniciarme en el mundo de la [[multimedia,]] de manera de poder contribuir a que ... (*El nacional*)

In (4), this word already exists in Spanish with a meaning derived from the verb “aplicar” (tr. Apply), but in computer-related fields it acquires a new meaning: a specific program or software.

Example 5 illustrates the use of the neologism *navegar*. This is a practical term because it has multiple derivations to address different meanings in English. The verb has a basic meaning in Spanish, to sail, however, in the internet world its replacing the English item: *surfing*. The derived noun, *navegador*, seems to be a translation from *navigator*.

In (6) the term is used to describe the multiple communication channels used in different applications presenting information. This item is adapted in orthography and pronunciation to Spanish.

A third group of borrowings in this sample of Spanish is calques, translations of the terms into Spanish. Therefore, the form or the sense corresponds to the word in English, but the word can easily be recognized as a Spanish word in orthography and pronunciation. The following are some examples of calques found in the corpus:

(7) ... Cisneros Television Group, y El Sitio, [[portal]] que provee contenido original... (*Computer world Venezuela*)

(8) ... de 25 mil programadores han bajado [[herramientas]] de software del sitio Phone.com, ... (*Computación Global*)

(9) ... Las capacidades multimedia del [[formato]] Quicktime encuentran muy buen lugar en ... (*Pc world Venezuela*)

A first example is *portal*, a Spanish item that is a translation from the word *port*. In internet, this Spanish word acquires the meaning of being a website offering the user the chance to access internet services and resources.

Another translation of an English term is the word *herramientas* in (8). This is a Spanish word that is translating the foreign word: tools, and is used with the meaning of instruments or possibilities offered by internet applications or software.

In (9), a calque is illustrated by the word *formato*, as a kind a translation in terms of meaning of the English item, *format*.

As shown before, there are multiple examples of borrowings in Venezuelan Spanish used to describe items and concepts in computer-related fields and in the internet world. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the different categories of borrowings in the language sample collected. Figure 1

Distribution of Borrowings per Category

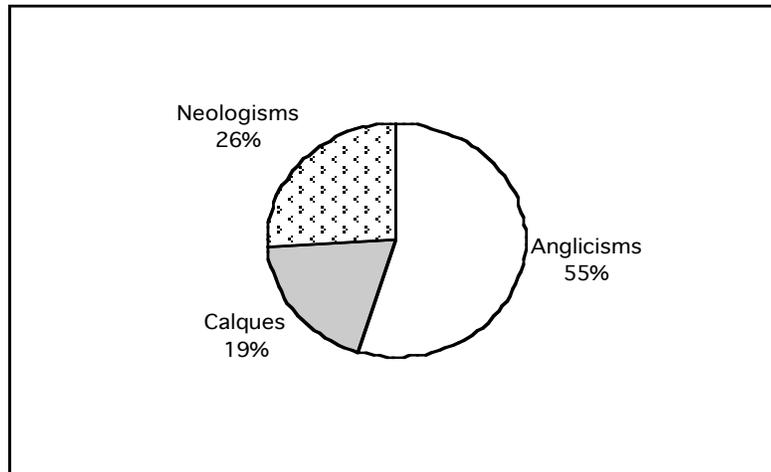


Figure 1 shows a tendency to Venezuelan Spanish speakers of adopting more anglicisms (55%) than creating new terms or meanings (26%), or translating English items into Spanish (19%). Speakers do not seem to be willing to create substitutes for the foreign words used computer-related fields, but they have an open attitude to the incorporation of English items. It would be interesting to see if the same trend is observed in a larger corpus of other Spanish varieties.

Language Policy Regulating the Use of the Borrowings

In this section, words in our list of borrowings will be examined in terms of their official status in the inventory of vocabulary in Spanish. This analysis will be based on three sources of language policy in Spanish: the dictionary published by RASL, the glossary by ATI, and the list

of words proposed to be included in the RASL dictionary by the Venezuelan Academy of Spanish (VAS).

In the list of loan words obtained, there are some words that have been already accepted by the RASL, and some others that are on list to be included in the new edition of the dictionary of the RASL. Table 4 shows such words and their status in the inventory of lexical items of the RASL.

Table 4

Borrowings Adopted or Adapted in the RASL Dictionary

Borrowing	RASL Policy
Aplicación	Addition of new sense to the current meaning
Interfaz	Modification in the current meaning
Chip	Item adopted from English
Bits	Item adopted from English
Módem	Addition of item
Formato	Addition of new sense to the current meaning
cd-rom	Addition of item modifying the pronunciation of the original term.

As shown in Table 4, very few items (22.6%) from the list of borrowings in our corpus have been accepted in use by the RASL. Officially, only two terms (*bit* and *chip*) appear in the current edition of the dictionary of the RASL (1992); the other terms are in the list of the items to be included in the new edition of the dictionary.

The other source of language policy used in this study was the glossary prepared by the Asociación de Técnicos de Informática. This glossary informs Spanish speakers of the vocabulary options available in the language to substitute English words in computer-related Spanish. Table 5 shows the terms from the list of borrowings that are included in this glossary and the “appropriate” translation or Spanish word created or suggested by ATI to name the concept originally in English.

Table 5

Borrowings in the ATI Glossary

Borrowing	“Appropriate” use	Borrowing	“Appropriate use”
internet	La red	Hardware	equipo
web	Malla, telaraña	Chip	chip
software	Programas	Intranet	Intranet, intrared
pc	Computadora personal	Email	Correo electrónico
site	Lugar, sitio	Bit	Bit, bitio
On-line	En línea	Hacker	pirata
portal	Portal	Módem	módem
multimedia	Multimedia	Browser	Hojeador, navegador

Most of the English words (59.3%) in our list of borrowings that have not been modified by Spanish speakers are included in the ATI glossary. It is interesting to note that the Spanish equivalent terms suggested by the ATI are also present in our corpus, but with a smaller number of instances than their English counterparts. For example, Venezuelan speakers in the sample of language collected preferred to use *internet* (363) vs. *red* (165), *software* (211) vs. *programa* (117), *site* (65) vs. *sitio* (6). It seems that even though these Spanish users are aware of Spanish equivalent terms for the English items, they prefer to employ the foreign words.

The Venezuelan Academy of Spanish has its own lexicography commission that has as its main objective to collect the most frequent lexical items used by Venezuelan speakers of Spanish in order to propose them to be included in the official Spanish lexical inventory by the RASL in its dictionary. Carreño (1999) mentioned in his press notice some of the terms Venezuelan linguists are proposing to the RASL. The VAS is proposing to adopt the word *internet* as neologism, and *navegar*, as the appropriate term to be used instead of *surfear* (tr. Surfing the net). From a list of 31 frequent borrowings in Venezuelan Spanish in computer-related fields, only two terms are identified as frequent borrowings in Venezuelan Spanish. It is important to mention that the VAS list includes more colloquial terms or items used in oral language. This can explain the low frequency of technical terms proposed.

In the list of borrowings identified in the corpus, there is a group of words for which no language policy has been proposed. These words (*plataforma*, *herramienta* and *correo-e*) happen

to be neologisms that are frequently used by the Venezuelan speakers in the sample of language collected. These lexical items have not been considered by the RASL in their new meanings, and have not been included in the ATI glossary.

It is clear from the analysis that the penetration of English in the Venezuelan Spanish in computer-related is a n active phenomenon. The role of the RASL seems to be minimal to accept, reject or adapt the most frequent borrowings in this area. Furthermore, Venezuelan speakers are frequently using loan words instead of the Spanish equivalents proposed for specialized associations (e.g. ATI) trying to regulate the use of foreign words in computer-related Spanish.

Conclusions

The exploratory examination of the borrowings from English used by Venezuelan speakers in computer-related fields suggests that these speakers seem more prone to use English words to refer to concepts, innovations and objects related to computers and the internet. The borrowings more used were classified as anglicisms, words taken in form and sense from English. This complete appropriation of foreign words seems to indicate a tendency in these language users to prefer adoption from English over the creation of new terms in Spanish.

The findings in this study also support previous scholars' belief that the RASL language policy regarding the use of English in computer-related Spanish seems to be slow in proposing Spanish terms equivalent to English ones. The RASL dictionary, in most cases, seems to be a useless or out-dated source to look for an official position regarding many foreign lexical items.

In addition, even though the RASL task of lexical modernization has been transferred to other specialized groups, the terms proposed by this lexical commissions seem to be unknown or ignored by most of the users. It seems necessary to implement more efficient ways of disseminating information among the speakers of Spanish through the media regarding lexical suggestions. Another important element is the design and distribution of more software or websites in Spanish that contribute to the creation of more Spanish words that substitute the borrowings already identified.

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 Internet world Venezuela: <http://el-nacional.terra.com.ve/revistas/internetwv/home.htm>
 Computer world Venezuela: <http://www.cwv.com.ve/>
 La red: <http://www.lared.com.ve/>
 Pc-world Venezuela: <http://www.pcworld.com.ve/>
 Computación Global Venezuela: <http://venweb.com/VENWEB/cglobal/hemeroteca.html>
 Cielo rojo – Reaccium: <http://www.barquisimeto.com/cielorojo/computacion.html>
 Pc News Venezuela: <http://www.pc-news.com.ve/24intro.htm>
 El Nacional: <http://www.el-nacional.com/archive/>