

Mexico's 'Commission for the Defense of the Spanish

Language' (1981-82)

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Abstract

This paper focuses on one of the most intriguing and short-lived corpus language planning efforts in the history of Mexican Spanish—the *Comisión Para La Defensa del Idioma Español* (Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language). Formed in 1981 and disbanded the next year, the Commission's concentration during its short tenure was the cleansing of Mexican Spanish grammar of so-called errors as well as the Mexican Spanish lexicon of English borrowings. Those linguists who worked on the Commission were both prescriptive as well as descriptive in perspective, and hence some very valuable linguistic work resulted. This paper compares some of the Commission's findings with the state of English borrowing in Mexican Spanish today.

Keywords: Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language, English borrowings in Mexican Spanish, Language planning, Mexican corpus language planning, Mexican Spanish, World Englishes



1 Introduction

...en qué idioma va a hablar el niño? [And which language is the child going to speak?]

Español, qué no? [Spanish, no?]

Y todas esas jergas nuevas, qué? El espanglés y el angloñol y el ánglatl...

[And what about all those other new jargons? Espanglés, angloñol, ánglatl...](Note 1) Cristóbal Nonato (Fuentes, 1987, p. 25)

On August 11, 1981, Mexican President José López Portillo (1976-1982) signed a decree that gave birth to the *Comisión Para La Defensa del Idioma Español* (CPDIE)—Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language. Less than two years later this Commission, little-known outside of Mexico, was no longer functioning. Because of financial constraints (Alatorre, 1989) as well as perhaps some unpopular positions it had taken regarding Spanish usage (Lara, 1993), the Commission was not considered a priority by incumbent Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988). During its short tenure, the Commission was relatively productive (see Appendix A); its publications included works on status, corpus, and language-in-education planning. The purpose of the present paper is to discuss the significance of the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language within the context of language and language planning in Mexico in the early 1980s. The paper will begin with a brief historical overview of language policy in Mexico, a discussion of the role of the Mexican Academy of Language, the work of the Commission, and will conclude with a discussion of the present state of English borrowing in Mexican Spanish, one of the central concerns of the Commission.

2. A Brief Historical Overview of Language Policy in Mexico

The Spanish *conquistadores* arrived in the Americas with a language policy in hand. It was the colonial policy of Spain according to the Laws of Burgos (1512) to spread Catholicism through the language of Castile: "After lecturing the Indians on their need for salvation through Christianity and describing the magnificence of the king of Spain, Cortés accepted a gift of twenty young maidens and continued up the Gulf coast" (Meyer, Sherman, & Deeds, 2003, p. 98). Initially Cortés and his fellow invaders had to work through translators, but their ultimate goal was to Castilianize (and Christianize) the Indian populations they conquered in the "New World." While Christianization was the responsibility of men of the cloth, Castilianization too eventually became their job; civilians were too occupied with the day-to-day administration of the new colony and had little time to devote to overseeing language teaching (Heath, 1972). The friars, however, found it much easier to spread Christianity through the medium of the indigenous languages of ancient Mexico, which they learned well. Their task was made even easier because Nahuatl was the *lingua franca* of the ruling Aztec Empire that the Spanish had overthrown. As Heath (1972) has observed:

Once again, the key question was practical: which language—Spanish, Latin, or an Indian tongue—would best serve the missionaries' purpose? Directed by their problems as they arose, friars chose what appeared to them to be the most workable solutions. First considerations had to be primarily numerical. All the Indians would have to be taught Spanish, if it were to be the language of conversion. Fewer Indians, to be sure, would have to learn Nahuatl, and the friars themselves could more easily learn Nahuatl or any of the Indian tongues then they could undertake the teaching of Spanish to all the Indians. Hence, early missionaries ruled out Spanish. They had neither the manpower nor the materials to teach Spanish to the Indians. ... Latin was merely a literacy tool which could be handled by Indian assistants who could read the scriptures directly and translate them into Nahuatl. But resistance to teaching Latin to



the Indians had made that experiment short-lived. The Indian tongues remained as the practical and official medium of communication for all the Indians. (pp. 33-34)

During the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries Spain periodically issued new decrees concerning the teaching of Spanish to the indigenous populations of New Spain, but for the most part the Church continued its use of native languages for the purpose of conversion. "Clergymen who spoke an Indian tongue had not allowed their parishioners to learn Spanish. They looked upon the Indians' use of Spanish as a sign of disrespect and punished those who used the language in the priests' presence" (Heath, 1972, p. 50).

A popular sentiment among a number of friars, in fact, was that Nahuatl, not Spanish, should be the official language of the Indians. Spain's wish to Castilianize the Indians as well as the large number of indigenous languages spoken in ancient Mexico (well over 100), however, prevented the implementation of this idea. "The Spanish government vacillated over the enforcement of its policies, but from time to time the offers to teach the Indians Spanish were renewed. By the time of independence in the early nineteenth century, the Latin American nations had established the supremacy of Spanish in all their territories, but they were still far from having taught the language to all their Indians" (Haugen, 1985, p. 8). It was not, in fact, until the early twentieth century that Mexico undertook serious steps to assimilate or Castilianize/Spanishize its indigenous population. During those years Mexican officials could not decide which method, the Direct Method or Bilingual Education, was better to teach Spanish to the Indians (Heath, 1972, pp.103-105) for assimilation purposes. The purpose of each method was clear, however—to bring the Indians into the mainstream Spanish-speaking population with no consideration for the preservation of indigenous languages or cultures.

More recently Mexico has taken a different approach to dealing with its marginal populations: "Now Mexico is promoting something of an ethnic revival, at least in her schools and universities. Language and education policies—once used to 'unify' the country through enforced linguistic homogeneity—are now used to cultivate the roughly fifty ethnic languages having withstood 'unification'" (Patthey-Chavez, 1993/1994, p. 201). In the final analysis, however, Spanish has remained dominant. As Mar-Molinero (2000) has observed: "...although in recent years more resources have been spent on teaching these [Nahuatl and other non-Spanish languages], the policies and ideology of the Mexican state have been to use Spanish as a national unifier and to create institutions to protect this (such as the Mexican language academy), and the media to promote it" (p. 57). (Note 2)

3. Spanish and the Mexican Academy of Language

Some two hundred years after the 1512 Laws of Burgos called for the promulgation of Catholicism through the medium of the Spanish language in the Americas, Phillip V of Castile in 1713 called for the establishment of the *Real Academia de la Lengua Española* (Royal Spanish Academy), a move motivated by the political context of early 18th-century Spain. As Mar-Molinero (2000) has pointed out:

It is, however, not really until the eighteenth century that hard language policies establish the hegemony of Castilian in parallel with the now highly centralised Spanish state. The beginning of that century saw a highly significant power struggle for the Spanish throne that left many of the peripheral regions, notably Catalonia, Valencia and Mallorca [and their languages], on the losing side. The consequence was the arrival in Spain of the Bourbon royal family, who installed the centralised state-building which was also then taking place in France. (pp. 22-23)

Modeled after the French Academy (est. 1635), the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) had/has as its goal the preservation of the beauty and purity of the Spanish language—Limpia, fija y



da esplendor [It cleans, fixes and gives splendor]. "National language academies...," according to Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), "...are almost always concerned with language purity as well as with the standardization of the language. That is, they seek to keep the standard (authorised) version of the language free of foreign language influences or to integrate such usages appropriately into the language" (p. 66). The Spanish Academy publishes, among other things, a dictionary (Real Academia Española, 2001), a grammar (Alarcos Llorach, 2004), a spelling guide (Real Academia Española, 1999), and a Boletín (bulletin). In 1871 the Royal Spanish Academy began establishing affiliate academies in Latin America. The first was in Colombia; four years later in 1875 the Academia Mexicana de la Lengua (Mexican Academy of Language) was established. At present there are 21 affiliate academies, including the Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española (the North American Academy of the Spanish Language), whose purview is the Spanish language in the United States of America.

The Mexican Academy publishes (often in conjunction with both governmental and non-governmental agencies) various works related to Mexican language, literature, philosophy, and geography, *Memórias*, and an *Anuario* (Yearbook). In the area of lexicography it has concentrated on Mexicanisms (which include primarily Spanish, Amerindian, French, and English lexical items) in the Spanish of Mexico, and before every new edition of the Spanish Academy's *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (DRAE) is published, the Mexican Academy (as well as other affiliated Academies) submits Mexican lexical items for inclusion in it, a tradition which began with the 12th edition of the *Diccionario* in 1884. Of the one thousand items submitted for the 1992 edition by the Mexican Academy, six hundred were accepted (Bertrán, 1997a, p. 1). The most recent publication of the Academy in the field of lexicography is the *Diccionario Breve de Mexicanismos* (Gómez de Silva, 2001), a work based on 138 compilations of Mexicanisms published since 1761.

In certain quarters in Mexico neither the Spanish Academy nor the Mexican Academy is held in high esteem. Writing of language academies in general, Lihani (1988) avers that "Over the years of their existence, however, some of the academies relinquished or lost much of their influence, and have become mere honorary social clubs" (p. xiv). Raul Prieto in three books about the RAE (1958, 1977, 1985), or *Madre Academia* (Mother Academy), has made a career of lambasting it for its erroneous, antiquated, and often outrageous lexicography (see, e.g., Alatorre, 1989, pp. 259-260). Nor does Prieto spare the affiliated Mexican Academy, which he refers to as the *Academia Malinchista de la Lengua* (Traitor Academy of the Language) (1985, pp. 705-706) or *La Academia Naca* (The Vulgar Academy) (1977, p. 705): "los veinte tomos de *Memorias* académias, que ni siquiera como obras de entretenimiento valen, son veinte ladrillos que no han prestado ni pueden prestar ningún servicio a la lexografía" [the Academy's twenty volumes of academic Memorias, which are not even entertaining, are twenty bricks which have not contributed, nor they can contribute, any service to lexicography] (Prieto, 1985, p. 706).

This lack of respect for the Academy was one of the main reasons the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language was formed in 1981 (Lara, 1993). As Alatorre (1989) notes: "Como es natural, los puristas de hoy están poniendo el grito en el cielo. Uno de esos gritos, muy resonante, se eschuchó en México a comienzos de los ochentas. Lo notable es que no brotó de la Academia, sino del mismísimo presidente de la República" [As one might expect, the purists are screaming to high heavens. One of these screams was heard very clearly in Mexico at the beginning of the eighties. And notably, it did not emanate from the Academy, but from the very President of the Republic] (p. 315).



4. Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language: Rationale

In its 1982 pamphlet ¿Qué es la Comisión para La Defensa del Idioma Español? (What is the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language?), the Commission posed and answered a series of questions in order to explain the raison d'être of the organization. Language and culture, first avered the Committee, are inseparable. Can languages "defend" themselves? Some believe so; the Commission, however, thought not. Mexican language and culture were being invaded by a force that regarded itself as superior and that manifested itself in the transfer of ideas and language in science and technology, in tourism, in mass communication and in advertising (¿Qué es..., 1982, p. 12). There can be no doubt that the Commission is concerned here about the penetración into Mexico of U.S. language and culture. "El desplazamiento del idioma y la cultura materna, por una equivocada asimilación de las influencias externas, es un fenómeno muy extendido" [The displacement of the maternal language and culture through assimilation of foreign influences is a wide-spread phenomenon] ¿Qué es..., 1982, p.12). Furthermore, wrote the CPDIE (¿Qué es..., 1982):

El desplazamiento gradual del idioma, la deformación constante de sus reglas sintácticas, gramaticales y fonolólgicas se presenta también en un gran número de publicaciones.... Las páginas de estas publicaciones están llenas de anuncios comerciales, un gran número de ellos escritos directamente en otros idiomas, y en la mayoría de los restantes se hace una mezcolanza arbitraria de palabras y significados, con el propósito solamente de atraer la atención de las lectores, pero a costa de distorsionar por completo la estrucgura idoimática y, por consiguiente, el pensamiento mismo de quienes reciben el mensaje. La deformación de la lengua nacional por el uso exagerado de extranjerismos se manifiesta también en le paisaje urbano. Las calles de nuestras cuidades se han plagado de anuncios comerciales escritos en inglés y francés, o introduciento en el español extraños apóstrofes, siempre con la intención de lograr un supuesto prestigio, a costa de exaltar lo ajeno y despreciar lo proprio [The gradual displacement of the language, the constant deformation of its rules of syntax, grammar, and phonology is also present in a large number of publications.... The pages of these publications are full of commercials, a large number of which are written in foreign languages and the majority of the rest in an arbitrary mishmash of words and meanings.... The deformation of the national language by the exaggerated use of foreignisms is also apparent in urban centers. The streets of our cities are plagued with advertisements written in English and French, which introduce into Spanish foreign apostrophes, always with the intention of attaining a false prestige by exalting the foreign at the cost of the local]. (p. 13)

On a similar note, the Committee (¿Qué es..., 1982) sounded an alarm against cultural and linguistic imperialism by claiming that "Gran parte de los 'sueños del mexicano hoy' están envueltos en inglés...." [A great part of the 'deams of today's Mexican' are enveloped in English] (p. 21). So, what was the objective of the Committee (¿Qué es..., 1982) in this context?: "Cuidar el uso del idioma español que se habla y excribe en México, coordinar las actividades para su defensa, principalmente en zonas fronterizas y regiones de difícil adaptación cultural, tomar medidas para procurar un idioma común a todos los mexicanos...." [To defend the use of the Spanish language which is spoken and written in Mexico, co-ordinate activities for its defense, mainly in the border areas and in regions of difficult cultural adaption, take steps to establish a common language for all Mexicans....]. (p. 19)

The two groups singled out by the Commission as linguistic transgressors were Mexicans living the "border areas" of the United States (including Mexicans living in the United States)



and the Amerindian-speaking indigenous population of Mexico. As for the latter the CPDIE (¿Qué es..., 1982) professed that "La pólitica educativa de México comprende la conservación, difusión e incluso la enzeñanza de nuestras lenguas nativas; pero es indudable que el yaqui del norte y el maya del sureste para comunicarse entre sí requieren del español" [Language-in-education planning in Mexico encompasses the conservation, diffusion, and also teaching of our native languages; but it is indisputable that the Yaqui of the north and the Maya of the southeast need Spanish to communicate with one another] (p. 22). (Note 3)

The Commission's concern with the adverse linguistic influence of Mexican-Americans (for the Commission *pochos* (Note 4)) on the Spanish language is a familiar one. As Keller (1983) has observed:

The Chicano is engaged in combat not only with the 'Anglo establishment' [in the USA] but with the disapproving 'Mexican establishment', of which even such a distinguished Mexican linguist as Antonio Alatorre ... may be taken as a representative voice. Alatorre compares the Chicanos to the *mozárabes* of medieval Spain, intimating that the former, like the latter, have served to introduce many foreignisms into Spanish. He defines the Chicano (except that he uses the term *pocho*, which is pejorative in Mexico) as a Mexican who permits himself to be seduced by the American way of life and for whom Mexican ways are always contemptible and American ways unsurpassable. As for the language, it is the product of a border society 'that has created a type of dialect or creole in which elements of English and Spanish are fused. (p. 259)

The Commission further pointed out that while other Spanish-speaking countries (e.g., Chile, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic) had taken similar steps to curb such linguistic and cultural intrusion, it was Mexico's obligation as the world's largest Spanish-speaking country to defend its language. Other countries, such as France, Switzerland, and Canada, cited the Commission (*Qué es...*, 1982, pp. 14-15), had also done so.

Mexico's concern with English borrowings in Spanish did not reach a critical mass until the middle of the twentieth century. Until then "...almost all English words borrowed by Spanish were of British English origin, and were usually transmitted through writing, often via French" (Penny, 1991, p. 230). The Committee was very concerned, however, with the influx of Anglicisms in contemporary Mexican Spanish which began after WWII, and while the Mexican Academy, according to Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, pp. 66-67), was also concerned (see, e.g., Alcalá, 1968; Carreño, 1967a, 1967b; Huacuja, 1960), it did not command enough respect or clout on its own to tackle the problem. Ironically, the Commission, composed of eight sub-commissions, included the *Subcomisión de Lenguaje* (Sub-Commission of Language) of which the Mexican Academy was a part.

5. Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language: Publications and Concerns

The tables of contents of the works in the Committee's series *Colección Nuestro Idioma* (1982) are filled with the names of renowned Mexican linguists. Its published literature (see Appendix A for the complete list) ran the gamut from prescriptive (Gringoire, 1981, 1982) to descriptive (Lara, 1982; Lope Blanch, 1982; López Rodríguez, 1982). In Volume III of the series, *Voces extranjeras en el español de México* (Foreign elements in the Spanish of Mexico), a reprinted article by Juan M. Lope Blanch that first appeared in 1977 classified English borrowings in Mexican Spanish in groups according to usage. His data was based on interviews with 24 educated Mexicans from Mexico City (Note 5). Following in Table 1 are five select lexical items from each of Lope-Blanch's (1982) five groups.



Table 1. Select lexical items from Lope-Blanch's (1982) five groups

Group I	Anglicismos de uso general	e.g., boxeador [boxer], cátcher, líder [leader], pay	
	[Anglicisims in general use]	[pie], and <i>penalty</i>	
Group II	Anglicismos muy usuales	e.g., bar, bermudas, short(s), show, and switch	
	[very commonly used		
	Anglicisims]		
Group III	Anglicismos de uso medio	e.g., córner, fólder, mánager, túnel [tunnel], and	
	[occasionally-used	zíper [zipper]	
	Anglicisims]		
Group IV	Anglicismos poco usados	e.g., bloque [block], mofle [muffler], réferi	
	[little-used Anglicisims]	[referee], spray, and tándem	
Group V	Anglicismos espontaneos	e.g., (inter) net, pick up, rompevientos	
	[rarely-used Anglicisms]	(<'windbreaker'), magazine, and trust	

Lope Blanch's classic study represents an early attempt in Mexican linguistic studies to classify English borrowings according to their frequency of usage in the spoken Spanish of educated Mexico City residents. Language mavens (after Pinker, 1994), however, are also well-represented in the Committee's publications. Pedro Gringoire (1981), for example, in his Repertorio de Dispartes (Repository of Errors) listed both what he considered an offending borrowing as well as a "Castilian" equilvalent he felt should be used in its place: castigo for penalty (in Lope Blanch, 1982, Group I), tarta for pie (Group I), espectáculo for show (Group II), pantalones cortos for shorts (Group II), carpeta for fólder (Group III), rociador for spray (Group IV), and revista for magazine (Group V). Gringoire (1981, pp. 161-162) did note that *pénalty* was borrowed within a sports context; he did not note, on the other hand, that castigo is used in most other contexts. About the borrowing pie (as in "apple pie" and often written in Mexican Spanish as pay), he (Gringoire, 1981) glibly writes: "¡Y quién sabe! Tal vez en su próxima edición del Diccionario la docta Academia de la Lengua se habrá rendido y habrá autorizado el extranjerismo" [And who knows! Perhaps in its next edition of the Dictionary the learned (Spanish) Academy will have published and authorized the foreignism] (p. 164). The 22nd edition [DRAE, 2001] does not contain it.

Among Gringoire's (1981, pp. 179-180) 'errors' are also found Spanish calques modeled on English. For example, *regresar* is often used in Mexican Spanish with an English meaning in addition to its original meaning in Spanish. For example, intransitive *regresar* in Peninsular Spanish means "to return" in the sense of "go back" (Juan regresó a México) [Juan returned to Mexico]; when used transitively (a calque, or loan translation), it means "to return something," as in "Juan regresó el GameBoy que compró ayer" [Juan returned the GameBoy that he bought yesterday].

While U.S. English appears to be the main linguistic target of the Commission (Lara, 1993), French borrowings, or Gaulisms, the substrate influence of Amerindian languages in Mexican Spanish, vernacular Mexican Spanish dialect variants, and occasionally Arabic and Mozarabic borrowings (Note 6) were also considered worthy of attention by the Commission. One vernacular form that received great attention was the second person preterite *tú dijistes* (you said) in place of *tú dijiste* where the –*s* is added by analogy with the second person present form *tú hablas* (you speak) (Valadés, 1982, p. 38). Another analogy considered to be an error was the use of the form *cercas* in place of *cerca* (near) formed on the model of *lejos* (far). Gringoire (1981, pp. 116-117) and the Commission also singled out the ambiguity of the preposition *hasta*. In Mexican Spanish *hasta* can mean either 'up to' or 'beginning at' as in:

Venden boletos hasta las tres.
(a) [They sell tickets until three o'clock.]



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(b) [They don't sell tickets until three o'clock.]

In Castilian Spanish only reading (a) is possible. Gringoire (1981), language maven par excellence, also bemoaned the use of ayer noche for anoche (last night) (p. 42), ojalá y in place of ojalá que (God willing that...) (p. 154), una poca in place of un poco (a little) (p. 208) as well as many other vernacular forms. He (Gringoire, 1981, p. 195) also called attention to the "error" Juan se lastimó su mano [Juan hurt his hand] versus Juan se lastimó la mano. Amerindian substrate influence is thought to cause the use of the possessive adjective here in place of the article in Mexican Spanish (Lope Blanch, 1982, p. 28). Gringoire (1981) also espoused the use of Spanish expediente in place of the Gaulism dossier (p. 90) and función matinal (afternoon performance) instead of French matiné (p. 142). The use of the apostrophe before consonants to indicate elision in the names of Mexican businesses, for example, d'Pedro and d'Lerma, also came under attack by Gringoire (1981, pp.31-32) and other Commission authors. This construction is allowed in present-day French (probably the source in Mexican Spanish), Italian, and archaic Castilian before vowels. (Note 7)

In addition to CPDIE's published literature, the Committee mounted both a television and radio campaign. The television campaign (Lara, 1993, p. 156) included six short scenes about (i) a Mexican boy with his father and other townspeople in Acapulco who could not find their way because of the signs in the city written in English (ii) a young man declaring his love for his girlfriend in vernacular Spanish (the girlfriend rejected him because of his speech) (iii) a group of ladies from high society having a conversation filled with Anglicisms (iv) a director filming a scene and giving directions to his crew in cinematic jargon filled with Anglicisms (v) a worker in a mechanic's shop asking another worker for tools using very few words (vi) children frightened by the laughs of Santa Claus in a store window surrounded by "Merry Christmas" signs; the children preferred to go a traditional Mexican Christmas festival. These scenes were aimed not only at discouraging the use of Anglicisms (i), (iii), (iv), (vi), but also the use of vernacular Mexican Spanish (ii) and informal spoken Mexican Spanish (v), the point being that the mechanic was not using "complete sentences."

Lara (1993, pp. 156-157) has also described the radio campaign of the Commission. It included (i) slogans about the defense of the language: Tus palabras reflejan tu personalidad [your words reflect your personality] (ii) programs about the life and works of renown writers as well as (iii) the resurrection a program called Sopa de Letras (Alphabet Soup), in which listeners could ask Mexican language mavens about the acceptability of certain usages. Interestingly, Lara (1993) felt that it was not the Commission's crusade against Anglicisms that brought about its ultimate demise, but its criticism of vernacular Mexican Spanish in this public forum: "Fue esta campaña la que desencadenó la mala opinión pública acerca de la Comisión del español" [It was this (radio and television) campaign that caused bad public opinion about the Commission] (p. 157).

In 1982 the Presidency of José López Portillo came to an end with the election of Miguel de la Madrid. In the first months of the year 1983 the work of the Commission ceased. Lara (1993, p. 165) cited both economic as well as "other" reasons for its disappearance. Those who looked back on the brief work of the Committee were, not surprisingly, divided in opinion. José G. Moreno de Alba (1992a, p. 158-159, 1996a, p. 333-335) defended in spirit the work of the Commission, especially its campaign against the use of Anglicisms and Gaulisms in names of businesses (e.g., *Robert's, American Photo, Adam's Apple, La Baguette*). Moreno de Alba (1992a) wrote: "Sin embargo es indudable que esa tendencia es mucho más acusada ahora que hace algunos años, sobre todo en cierto tipo de comercios de las grandes ciudades. Estoy convencido de que aún estamos a tiempo a frenarla" [However, it



is undeniable that this tendency is much more apparent now than some years ago, above all in certain types of businesses in large cities. I am convinced that it's time to put a halt to it] (p. 159). While Moreno de Alba felt that the Spanish language, given the large numbers of its speakers, could probably "defend" itself (except perhaps in the Philippines), he believed that cultures could/should be defended. He cited in a positive light the Colombian law (número 2744) passed in 1980 which prohibited businesses from using English names. (Note 8)

Antonio Alatorre, on the other hand, felt that 'Es una fortuna que la Comisión de Defensa del Idioma haya desaparecido' [It is fortunate that the Committee has disappeared] (1989, pp. 316 - 317). With tongue firmly in cheek, Alatorre (1989) wrote:

De haber seguido existiendo, fácil le habría sido obtener ciertas victorias: del gobierno habría podido suprimir, con mano fuerte, los rótulas ajenos a la lengua español y a la "cultura nacional", como Vanity Fair y Charlie's (y también Le Petit Cluny y Pizzeria Napoli), y, habría podido negar la entrada en el registro civil a nombres como Nancy y Walter (o como Ivette y Sandro). No sería la primera vez que esas innocuas señales de cosmospolitismo sufrieran un sofocón. Pero seguramente no se habría llegado a mucho más. El jazz, el jonrón, y el jaibol habrían salido incólumes, burlando a los miles y miles de inspectores a quienes hubiera sido necesario adiestrar para sorprender a la gente en flagrante delito de anglicismo y castigarla con multas [If the CPDIE had continued in existence, it would have been easy to obtain certain victories: the government would have been able to abolish, with a heavy hand, the foreign signs (like 'Vanity Fair' and 'Charlie's' and also 'Le Petit Cluny' and 'Pizzeria Napoli') from the Spanish language and 'national culture', would have been able to stop names like 'Nancy' and 'Walter' (and like 'Ivette' and 'Sandro') from entering the National Register. It would not be the first time that these innocuous signs of cosmopolitanism suffered a blow. But it certainly would not have done much more good. 'Jazz,' jonrón [homerun] and jaibol [highball] would have escaped unscathed, making fun of the thousands and thousands of inspectors whom it would have been necessary to train to surprise people in the act of using Anglicisms and to *punish them*]. (pp. 316 - 317)

The CPDIE was not the Mexican government's first foray into linguistic legislation (corpus language planning) of the Spanish language. Another attempt to regulate the use of Spanish as regards both borrowings as well as usage took place during the early 1940s during a period of outrage by the Mexican public over the substance and language found in comic books (caricaturas, comics, historietas, pepines), both Mexican and translations of those of U.S. origin. This outrage culminated in 1944 when President Avila Camacho formed the Comisión Calificadora de Revistas y Publicaciones Ilustradas (Qualifying Commission of Magazines and Illustrated Publications). "A 1945 report from the commission to the secretary of public education described the process: censors called on editors of comic books and Sunday supplements, asking them to 'cease publishing those comic strips that had been pointed out to them as immoral, suppress the worthless nudes, correct the vulgar language and the use of slang'..." (Rubenstein, 1998, p. 117). Furthermore, "...they denied title licenses to publications with English-language names" (Rubenstein, 1998, p. 117). In spite of its effort to shield the Mexican public from "unsavory" images and "degenerate" language, the Qualifying Commission, according to Rubenstein (1998, pp. 133-134), failed in its multipronged attack on *los comics* because of the Commission's "lack of enforcement power."

This, however, did not prevent a campaign by the Mexican government during the 1960s against another U.S. import, *rocanrol* (rock and roll). As Eric Zolov has shown in *Refried Elvis* (1999), language, in this case the language of *la onda chicana* (The Chicano Wave),



Mexico's indigenous, urban, politically-oriented 1960s rock movement, was very much the target of protest by the Mexican establishment: "In the realm of mass culture, pornography, delinquency, gratuitous violence, and, significantly, 'distortions of language,' all became a central focus of the brewing backlash (Zolov, 1999, pp. 54-55). A reviewer of one magazine devoted to youth culture bemoaned '…the repeated printing of common slang which, 'besides its vulgar style, is an affront to syntax'" (Zolov, 1999, p. 57). What is an affront to syntax in linguistics?

Language mavens on the Qualifying Commission of Magazines and Illustrated Publications as well as the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language were concerned with both the "deterioration" of Mexican Spanish grammar and the influx of Anglicisms into the variety (what linguists call "language change"). As regards English borrowings in Spanish, a close examination is revealing. Lapesa (2005), for example, believes 73% of the word stock of Peninsular Spanish comes from Latin, 17% from Arabic, 5% from Greek and another 5% from other sources, including French, English, German, and so forth. Luis Fernando Lara, director of the *Diccionario del Español Usual en México* (1996) as well as CPDIE's *Diccionario Fundamental del Español de México* (1982), sheds some much-needed light on borrowing in Mexican Spanish (Lara, 1997) when he writes:

Although the vast majority of words in standard Mexican Spanish are of Spanish origin, a small fraction of the lexicon is composed of words from foreign languages, particularly French and English (another small fraction comes from Amerindian languages). If during the nineteenth century Gallicism was considered the accursed manifestation of foreign influence over the Spanish language, this role now is played by borrowings from English. Due to the United States' considerable economic and political influence, Anglo-American culture also has considerable influence in contemporary Mexico. Anglicisms can be found everywhere in Mexican Spanish, although the absolute number is probably negligible. (p. 876)

This position is supported by the fact that out of 14,000 entries in Lara's (1996) dictionary, fewer than 2% (.018) are English borrowings. This trend holds for other dictionaries of Mexican Spanish as well. Of the 30,550 entries in Santamaría's *Diccionario de Mejicanismos* (1974), 1.6% are English borrowings and "at least 20% are of Aztec (Nahautl) origin" (Cotton & Sharp, 1988, p. 104). Gómez de Silva's (2001) *Diccionairo Breve de Mexicanismos*, a compilation of ninety-five previously published works on Mexicanisms since 1761 (including Santamaría, 1974), contains 77,000 entries, not even one per cent (.003) of which are labeled as coming from English; words of French origin are even fewer (.001). The Amerindian (especially Aztec) influence is far greater.

6. English Borrowings in Mexican Spanish: A Brief Overview

Unlike for other varieties of Spanish, there has been to date no published dictionary of Anglicisms in Mexican Spanish (for Peninsular Spanish, see Alfaro, 1970; Lorenzo, 1996; Pratt 1980, 1986; Rodríguez González & Lillo Baudes, 1997; for Costa Rican Spanish, see Zuñiga Tristan, 1976; and for Spanish in America in general, see Sala, Munteanu, Neagu Tudora, & Olteanu, 1982). Anglicisms in Mexican Spanish are generally included in (i) dictionaries of *Mexicanismos* (see, e.g., Gómez de Silva, 2001; Icazbalceta, 1975; Martínez, 1997; Santamaría, 1974) (ii) in general Mexican Spanish dictionaries, see García Cerezo (2008) and Lara (1996); or (iii) in scholarly works (Baumgardner, 1997; Lope Blanch, 1977, 1982; López Rodriguez, 1982; Sánchez, 1995). As stated in the previous section, they are a small part of the overall lexicon of Mexican and other world Spanishes.

English borrowings in Mexican Spanish include a wide range of word-formation types: single lexical items (marketing, western); compounds (reality show, jet set, golden boy); calques



(lavaplatos [dishwasher], hora feliz [happy hour], and galleta de soda [soda cracker]); abbreviations (FBI); acronyms (radar); eponyms (sandwich); clippings (blog < web log); semantic shifts (socket in Mexican Spanish can also mean 'plug' and smoking means 'tuxedo'—see Baumgardner, 2005; Moreno de Alba, 1996c); and functional shifts (relax is a verb in English and a noun and adjective in Spanish and fashion is a noun in English and an adjective in Mexican Spanish meaning "fashionable")—see Appendix B, Figures 1 and 2, in which cool, fashion, guapa (pretty) and seca (dry), segura (sure) y siempre fashion (and always fashionable) are parallel descriptive adjectives. Once borrowings are incorporated into Spanish, they quickly become part of Spanish phonology and morphology: Sandwichitas (see product names below); chatear (> English "to chat"), driblar (> English "to dribble"), and zigzagueante (> zigzag); kit de clutch pick-up (pick-up clutch kit), a compound composed of three English borrowings; canta-bar (Spanish cantar 'to sing' + English 'bar' meaning "karaoke bar"); ladies bar (Mexican compound creation composed of English words; deportips, a blend of Spanish deportes (sports) + English 'tip' and Snobistro, a blend of

English borrowings are brought more clearly into focus when they occur in newspaper headlines. Following in Table 2 is a small selection of such headlines from *Reforma* (Mexico City) from the first 12 years of the 21st century:

English 'snob' + French 'bistro' (see Appendix B, Figure 3); and *beis*, *bull*, and *super* (Mexican Spanish clippings of English borrowings beisbol, bulldozer, and supermarket).

Table 2. English borrowings in Mexico City's Reforma newspaper

- 1. ¡Sale del clóset Robbie Williams! [Robbie Williams comes out of the closet] (December 22, 2000) Gente (People)
- 2. ¡Los malditos penalties! [Those damn penalties] (June 29, 2001) Deportes (Sports)
- 3. Coca-Cola cambia de estrategia y busca centralizer su marketing [Coca-Cola changes its strategy and looks to centralize its marketing] (March 7, 2002) Negocios (Business)
- 4. Gadgets de Google [Google's gadgets] (February 10, 2003) Interfase (Interface)
- 5. El flashback de Almodóvar [Almodovar's flashback] (September 19, 2004) El Angel (The Angel)
- 6. Blogs, Wikis y conversaciones [Blogs, Wikis and conversations] (January 3, 2005) Interfase (Interface)
- 7. Puede rentar software [You can rent software] (December 7, 2005) Negocios (Business)
- 8. ¿Quieres chatear conmigo? [Do you want to chat with me?] (September 18, 2006) Interfase (Interface)
- 9. ¿En qué grabo mi podcast? [How should I record my podcast?] (October 2, 2006) Interfase (Interface)
- 10. De músico de rock a escritor 'bestseller' [From a rock musician to a bestselling author] (December 11, 2007) Cultura (Culture)
- 11. Tendrán reality show los Lohan [The Lohans to have a reality show] (March 6, 2008) Gente (People)
- 12. Emma Watson ¿topless? [Emma Watson, topless?] (July 21, 2009) Gente (People)
- 13. YouTube y Twitter directo en tu TV [YouTube and Twitter direct in your TV] (September 28, 2009) Interfase (Interface).
- 14. Algo freak, pero sexy [Somewhat freaky, but sexy] (November 19, 2009) Gente (People)
- 15. La Guerra de las mini: netbooks vs. smartbooks [The war of the minis: netbooks vs. smartbooks] (December 31, 2009) Negocios (Business)
- 16. Admite Sasha 'culpa' en boom electrónico [DJ Sasha admits "guilt" in the electronic music boom] (March 19, 2010) Gente (People)
- 17. iPhone vs. BlackBerry: los nuevos frentes [iPhone vs. BlackBerry: the new frontiers] (June 25, 2010) Negocios (Business)
- 18. Facebook: el gran reto de Google [Facebook: Google's great challenge] (December 20, 2010) Interfase (Interface)
- 19. Funcionan tweets y posts como monedas de pago [Tweets and posts work like cash] (February 14, 2011) Interfase (Interface)
- 20. Piden medidas contra sexting [Measures sought against sexting] (June 27, 2011) Cuidad (City)

This group of *Reforma* headlines shows not only the prominent place English plays in journalistic writing in Mexican Spanish, but also reflects how borrowings are reflective of modern-day Western technology and societal trends.



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Table 3. English borrowings in Mexican Spanish 1993-2009, Reforma, Mexico City

English Lexical Item	# of Articles	First Date of Record	Source
look	5,943	November 20, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
tip	4,631	November 20, 1993	Gómez de Silva 2001
boomerang	366	November 20, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
gay	4,487	November 21, 1993	Berlitz 2004
closet	1,989	November 21, 1993	Lope Blanch 1977/1982
jeans	3,929	November 21, 1993	Ferrer Rodríguez 1995
spot	3,029	November 21, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
boom	4,196	November 21, 1993	Ferrer Rodríguez 1995
marketing	6,022	November 23, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
fan	4,077	November 23, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
software	15,675	November 23, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
round	2,461	November 23, 1993	Lara 1996
gangster	438	November 23, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
web	13,250	November 24, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
backup	179	November 24, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
sexy	3,644	November 27, 1993	Ferrer Rodríguez 1995
smoking	736	November 27, 1993	Gómez de Silva 2001
chip	3,173	November 29, 1993	Ferrer Rodríguez 1995
comics	1,714	December 3, 1993	Lope Blanch 1977/1982
western	2,011	December 5, 1993	Lope Blanch 1977/1982
spray	729	December 6, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
nylon	819	December 10, 1993	Ferrer Rodríguez 1995
radar	2,000	December 11, 1993	Lara 1996
hippie	655	December 11, 1993	Lara 1996
poster	1,037	December 12, 1993	García-Cerezo 2008
inning	2,694	December 14, 1993	Lope Blanch 1977/1982
zigzag	218	December 18, 1993	Gómez de Silva 2001
baby dolls	46	December 25, 1993	Lara 1996
reality (show)	4,386	January 4, 1994	Mendoza 2004
offset	144	January 6, 1994	García-Cerezo 2008
boiler	193	January 7, 1994	Lara 1996
driblar (dribble)	162	January 20, 1994	García-Cerezo 2008
best-seller	320	January 23, 1994	García-Cerezo 2008
kit	1,324	January 29, 1994	García-Cerezo 2008
bulldozer	77	April 18, 1994	Lara 1996
socket	61	June 26, 1995	Lara 1996
chatear	375	August 4, 1997	Reforma 2009
Google	1,986	February 15, 1999	Reforma 2009
H1N1	2,168	March 18, 2000	Reforma 2009
blog	961	April 30, 2001	Reforma 2009
iPod	1,723	October 29, 2001	Reforma 2009
Blu-ray	280	March 7, 2003	Reforma 2009
MySpace	604	October 30, 2005	Reforma 2009
FaceBook	677	October 12, 2006	Reforma 2009
tweet	23	January 31, 2007	Reforma 2009
Twitter	461	April 16, 2007	Reforma 2009

Table 3 contains a selection of English borrowings in Mexican Spanish taken from the Mexico City newspaper *Reforma* (Note 9). In column 1 of the table are the singular lexical items used in my database search. I used the English spelling for search purposes; for many borrowings, however, there are variant Spanish spellings (e.g., *spray* or *espray*; *poster* or *poster*; *inning* or *inin*; *lunch*, *lonch*, or *lonche*). The number in column 2 represents the



number of articles in which the lexical item occurred—it does not represent the number of times the particular lexical item occurred. It is possible for a lexical item to occur only once or a number of times in a single article in both the singular and/or the plural form. In my searches I restricted myself to the singular form of nouns. In addition, no attempt was made to refine searches. For example, the English word box in Mexican Spanish can mean both "box springs," the sport of "boxing," anyone whose name is Box, the name of the U.S. fastfood chain Jack-in-the-Box, or Burger King's "mega box menu." The English borrowing spot also has at least two English meanings in Mexican Spanish: (i) an appearance on an entertainment program and (ii) mercado spot, or spot market. I tried to avoid searches of such polysemous lexical items. Column 3 in the table represents the first date the lexical item appeared in the Reforma database (but certainly not the first time it was used in Mexican Spanish). Column 4 represents an additional source. All the lexical items in the table appear in Reforma, but in order to give more credence to the inclusion of these borrowings in the table, I chose words that had also occurred in published Mexican Spanish dictionaries and scholarly work on Mexican Spanish, that is, established borrowings (Gumperz, 1982, p. 66). The most recent borrowings can be found in writing at the present time only in periodicals like Reforma; enough time has not passed for them to be found in dictionaries. Table 3 is arranged according to date of occurrence of the lexical item; it could have been arranged as well in alphabetical order, by the total number of articles in which lexical items appeared, or by source. Words from various semantic fields are included, for example, sports, technology, social networking, entertainment, business, and miscellaneous items.

As regards a lexical item's frequency of occurrence during the period under study (1993 – 2009), I believe that *baby dolls* (found in 46 articles), *bulldozer* (found in 77), and *socket* (61) are just as much a borrowing as is *software* (found in 15,675 articles)—all are found in Mexican Spanish dictionaries, but their rates of occurrence depend on conventions of lexical frequency (López Chávez, 1991). I would classify all words in Table 3 as established borrowings, but the last ten in the list (marked *Reforma*) are too new to have been included in dictionaries. However, they occur frequently in the speech and writing of certain segments of the Mexican Spanish-speaking population as well as in the speech of the Amerindian-speaking population. (Note 10)

7. English Borrowings in Context

Let us now look briefly at English borrowings in Mexican Spanish in context, that is, at their use in Mexican product names (branding), print advertising (magazines), the linguistic landscape (billboards, street ads, wall paintings, and shop names), and Mexican radio and television.

7.1 Product Branding

Mexican products that have English in their names use either an outright English word or use English along with Spanish in the formation of a name, a process Kachru (1986, pp. 163-165) has described as 'bilingual creativity.' A popular brand of Mexican cigarettes goes by the name *Boots*; well-known brands of potato chips and popcorn are called *Chip's* and *Gold Pop*, respectively; and a Mexican boxer short "cortos boxer para caballero" (boxer shorts for men) goes by the name *Lancer*. The English borrowing *sandwich* can be found in numerous product names. A popular brand of sandwich bags is called *Sandwichitas* (English "sandwich" + Spanish derivational suffix *-ita* meaning small, literally "little sandwiches"), and one of Bimbo's *LonchiBon* line of snacks is the *Sandwichón* (English 'sandwich' + Spanish derivational suffix *-ón* which means large). The name *LonchiBon* is composed of English "lunch" and French "bon" meaning good.



The English word "dip" is used as a base for the name of *Dippas*, a corn chip made by Sabritas—see Appendix B, Figure 4. The chip's package reads "arma la combinación perfecta para dippear, busca la nueva salsa dip Dippas" [put together the perfect combination for dipping, look for the new salsa dip Dippas], which contains three forms of the English borrowing "dip": the verb dippear (dipp + -ear), the product name Dippas, and "dip" in the compound salsa dip, where the influence of English is also apparent in the use of a "binomial syntagmatic" or "juxtaposition" compound (salsa dip) rather than a "preposition" compound (dip de salsa). Mexican manufacturers also create new English words for their products. White bread and hot dog buns were marketed in Mexico by the company Maseca Gruma under the name Breddy (no longer available); Sabritas uses the English word puff as a base for its product, Poffets, a chili-lime flavored pop corn; and Mexican food giant Gamesa markets Crackets, which uses the English word cracker as a base to form cracket. (Note 11)

7.2 Print Advertising

Another domain in which the influence of English is evident is print advertising. I will concentrate here on print advertising in magazines. Both English and Spanish appear in codemixed attention-getters (words and phrases used to draw the attention of readers), slogans (set phrases associated with a particular product), body copy (the remaining text of the ad), and standing details (contact information). Ferrer Rodríguez (1995, pp. 101-106) gives a century-by-century account of the most commonly used words in advertising in the Spanish-speaking world for the twentieth century. Among the Spanish words also appear English borrowings and calques: (1900-1910) tenis, offset, fans, Rolls-Royce, etc.; (1910-1920) esmog, hockey, limpiaparabrisas (windshield wiper), Titanic, crack, etc.; (1920-1930) jazz, fox-trot, charleston, Kleenex, robot, scotch, etc.; (1930-1940) nylon, Xerox, teflón, trampolín, etc.; (1940-1950) CIA, racquetball, LSD, bikini, Tupperware, bit, etc.; (1950-1960) long-play, gol (goal), láser, Singer, etc.; (1960-1970) hippie, dolby, supermercado (supermarket), smog, esnífar (sniffer) etc.; (1970-1980) videojuego (video game), escanner, (micro)chip, Watergate, etc.; (1980-1990) crack, shock, single, teleshoping, etc.; and (1990) chips, estrés (stress), fax, gay, and so forth.

Code-mixed advertisements are those ads with one-word, phrase(s), and/or sentence(s) in otherwise Spanish attention getters, slogans, body copy, and standing details. English words used in such advertisements are often already established borrowings in Mexican Spanish. For example, German carmaker Wolkswagen uses the compound *off-road* in the attention-getter in its ad for the Touareg, *la major tecnología Off Road del marcado* (the best off-road technology on the market) (*Automóvil Panamericano* June 2007, p. 2). *Off-road*, like other English borrowings in the automotive domain (*cab forward, camper, custom, hot rod, overdrive, spoiler, etc.*), is an established English borrowing in Mexican Spanish; it occurs in 403 articles in *Reforma* during the period of 1993-2009. Note also the following *Reforma* headline (*Automotriz*, May 8, 1999, p.1):

Optimiza Grand Cherokee manejo "off-road" y carretera [the Grand Cherokee optimizes off-road and highway driving]

I would like to call readers' attention here to a distinction between the use of English borrowings in ads in Mexican print media and the use of English as "language display" (Eastman & Stein, 1993). There is nothing particularly remarkable about the use of lexical items such as *off-road* and *cool* in Mexican advertising; they are for most Mexicans part of the lexicon of the language. In Appendix B, Figure 5, there are six English borrowings—*iPod*, *póster, test, look, tips* and *fashionizar*. Like *off-road* and *cool*, their use is not particularly noteworthy. But in the Skiny (Appendix B, Figure 6) and Converse (Appendix B, Figure 7) ads the English attention-getters *What a Feeling* (Skiny) and *You are the Converse Century*



(Converse) stand out. Similarly, when English-language product slogans such as *Life's Good* (LG) and *A different world* (Rado) are used in otherwise all-Spanish copy, it is noteworthy since these English words are not Spanish borrowings. They are used intentionally to get the attention of potential buyers, and their use brings to mind a 'modern' identity in this non-English context. 'The mere presence of English associates the product with modernity, quality engineering, exclusivity, professional mobility, international appeal and other positive concepts, depending on the product category and target audience' (Martin, 2006, p. 170). The use of English as language display often serves to draw potential buyers' attention to the fact that a foreign product is being marketed, and buyers' comprehension of the text is not of prime importance. (Note 12)

7.3 The Linguistic Landscape

Almost twenty years have passed since José G. Moreno de Alba (1992a) made the following statement (cited also above) about English shop names in Mexico: "...it is undeniable that this tendency is much more apparent now than some years ago, above all in certain types of businesses in large cities. I am convinced that it's time to put a halt to it" (p. 159). Yet English continues to have great influence in this area of the Mexican linguistic landscape. Mexico, however, is not alone in this respect; there is a growing body of literature on the power of English in this domain throughout the world. (Note 13) What all these studies have in common is that the use of English in a shop name (like the use of English in branding discussed above) adds a certain aura or mystique to the shop, even when clients do not necessarily understand the meaning of the name, or in some cases even when a native speaker of English does not necessarily understand the intended English meaning (Hasanova, 2010; Ross, 1997). The largest music store in Mexico City is called *Mixup*, an English name that many of its customers and passers-by probably do not understand. CDs purchased in Mixup are placed in plastic bags that advertise the store (see Appendix B, Figure 8). The bag reads "CD, DVD, Video Games." CD and DVD are Spanish plural forms (along with CDs and DVDs) of the borrowed English abbreviations; "video games" is English language display for Spanish *videojuegos* (a calque).

Other shop names in the capital include Jiffy Express Supertintorerías (dry cleaners), Go MiniSuper, Pitbull clothing (whose English slogan is Wear with Rage), Resurrección Clothing Company, McCafé, Sport City Fitness Club, Compucity and Mac Store (computer stores), Robert's Outlet (clothing store), Alquiler Smoking's Dandy (Dandy Tuxedo Rental)—see Appendix B, Figure 9 (note the superfluous comma in the plural), Reebok Outlet Store, Quick Film, Black Flys, and Fly Girls (both clothing shops). In the inner city Jethro Jeanswear, named after the British Rock group Jethro Tull (see Appendix B, Figure 10), sells high-end jeans and t-shirts for women, and in the suburbs clothiers Fuckerswear and No Problem make t-shirts and other clothing with the store logos—see Appendix B, Figures 11 and 12, respectively. Note in Figure 12 that the receipt from No Problem has umlauts below the 'o's and a stamp in the middle (Authentic Product). Both English and other Germanic languages are being used here to promote a youthful identity. In the posh Zona Rosa area of the city are *Snobistro* (a bilingual hybrid blend composed of English "snob" and French "bistro") and the Collage Canta-Bar ("karaoke bar"—see Appendix B, Figure 13 and Figure 3, respectively). Another type of Spanish/English blend can be found in Appendix B, Figure 14, where the English borrowing cool is substituted for the first syllable in the Spanish word *cultura*. Another example of the use of this borrowing is *cool-tívate* (from Spanish *cultivarse*, "to cultivate oneself") (Tú, January 15, 2008, p. 20). Snobistro, Canta-bar, Cool-tura and cool-tívate are Mexican Spanish/English hybrid creations.



Mexican Spanish has borrowed numerous English words from this domain—baby dolls, Bermudas, flat(s), halter, jeans, short(s), legging, pant, rompevientos (windbreaker), strapless, stretch, top, and zíper to name only a few (see Carranza Vásquez, 1988, for further discussion of English and French clothing terminology in Mexican Spanish). Outside of shops and outlets shoppers on the streets are often handed leaflets and flyers (flyers in Mexican Spanish) that promote stores and products. Figure 16 in Appendix B is a flyer advertising the "factory outlet sale" (venta de fabrica) of leather jackets for men and women (chamarras de piel para dama y caballero). Note that the word outlet is spelled as it is pronounced in Spanish (autlet), but the initial 'a' is crossed out and an 'o' is written over it. Flyers (los flyer) are a very cheap and popular way to advertise on the streets of Mexico.

In the northern Mexican city of Monterrey in Plaza Morelos, the city's main inner-city shopping area, shoppers find similar shop names, such as Le Pavillion Sports Bar (a French-English compound), Mr. Piel (Mr. Leather), T.T. Blues (blue jeans), Snack's Tropicana (another superfluous comma), Joker (restaurant), and Payless Car Rental. Other store names around the city include Kool Kar (car wash), Lewinsky Lencería (lingerie)—see Appendix B, Figure 17, Mariscos Mr. Fish (Mr. Fish Seafood), Mr. Pay Pastelería (Mr. Pie Bakery), Mr. Taco, Office Mart, Pick-Up Shop (car dealer), Slim (gymnasium), Remembers Film Café, and many other outright English names, Spanish names (the majority), and English-Spanish mixed creations. This is a common occurrence in both urban as well as rural areas throughout Mexico. (Note 14)

Street advertising is also found in the posh Monterrey suburb of San Pedro Gárza Garcia—see the FUD ad for lunch meats in Appendix B, Figure 18 that uses a common Mexican Spanish pronunciation of the English borrowing *sandwich*. Another common form of advertising in Mexico is the wall or tarpaulin painting. The colorful wall painting in Monterrey's inner city (Appendix B, Figure 19) is an ad for *tt blues*, a brand of women's jeans, clothing and accessories made in Monterrey, and in Appendix B, Figure 20 the tarpaulin painting is an ad for Comfort Jeans (made in Mexico City). Billboards in Mexico can be found along highways and roads as well as in the inner city. In Monterrey a billboard ad for *Toro Fruta*, fruit drinks with tequila, uses the English word *juicy* as an attention-getter (Appendix B, Figure 21). The lexical item *juicy* occurs in 78 articles in the *Reforma* database (1993-2009), but normally refers to a brand name, for example, *Juicy Fruit* gum; it is not a borrowing. In this billboard *juicy* is an instance of language display used in advertising in the linguistic landscape. (Note 15)

I would like to close my update of English borrowings in the Mexican linguistic landscape with a story. I had just boarded a north-bound bus on Paseo de la Reforma in Mexico City when the bus came to a halt at the corner of Insurgentes Sur and Paseo de la Reforma. This is where farmers of the *Movimiento de los 400 Pueblos* (Movement of the 400 Villages) were holding a rally. They were accusing the former governor of the state of Veracruz of unjustified arrests and seizure of lands. When I saw the banners the demonstrators were holding, I jumped off the bus immediately to the great astonishment of the bus driver. The banner in Appendix B, Figure 22 translates "We ask for justice from the government, not handouts and spots." The English borrowing *spots* here refers to television and radio spots the Mexican government airs that publicize its accomplishments (see discussion of *spots* in Section 6 above and note also that the lexical item is used in 3,029 articles in Table 3). I will not translate the lengthy Spanish text in the next photograph of the demonstration (Appendix B, Figure 23), but the reader can readily infer what the demonstrators think of government "spots" from the addition to the message of the English phrase *bla bla bla*.



7.4 Radio and Television

There has been little research on the use of English on Mexican radio and television. Listening to music stations in Mexico City or Monterrey, one hears English borrowings associated with particular genres of music and dance and the technology associated with music—backstage, blues, dub, funk, R&B, rocanrol, rocanrolero, punk, punkero, rap, rapero, DJ, MC, grunge, jazz, fox-trot, charleston, el twist, ska, reggae, long play, dolby, woofer, tweeter. Mexican rock/punk groups often have bilingual names of songs and lyrics; the group Molotov from Mexico City sings "Molomix" and "Apocalypshit" and Control Machete from Monterrey "Clint Eastwood" and "El Genio del Dub". Even the most popular Mexican group of all times, Los Tigres del Norte, based in Mexico and California, frequently intersperses its lyrics about the plight of Mexican workers in the United States (el otro lado—the other side) with English words.

In a forthcoming paper, Baumgardner discusses the use of English in Mexican television advertising. Based on an analysis of over 30 hours of television viewing in Monterrey in 2007, his findings show how English is used on Mexican television in much the same way it is used in print advertising—English is present both as borrowings as well as language display. Ávila (2006) conducted a study of two Mexican telenovelas (soap operas)—Desencuentro (misunderstanding), produced by Televisa, and Mirada de mujer (look of a woman), produced by Televisión Azteca. The two programs combined made up a corpus of 29, 097 words. Out of these almost 30,000 words, only .03% (21 words) were found to be so-called foreignisms—and the majority of these were Anglicisms—baby, bye, chance, hey, locker, miss, okey, show, smog, suite (sweetie), sushi, test, vedette and yes (some words occurred more than once). Ávila conducted his study to show how programs written for Mexican audiences could have panhispanic appeal, as the Mexican Spanish lexicon as well as most of the borrowings in the two programs were also used in other Spanish-speaking countries; I am citing the study here to show the relatively miniscule amount of English borrowing in Mexican Spanish compared to its large Latinate and Amerindian components, a finding Ávila (1994, 1990a, 1990b) has confirmed in other studies.

8. Conclusion

In the almost thirty years since the demise of the *Comisión* there has not been such a bold, organized anti-English movement in Mexico. There have been, needless to say, occasional outcries about how the influence of English is detrimental to the survival of Spanish. The signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the early nineties occasioned one such incident. "Since 1990 we face a new setback in relation to prior decisions in educational policy. Thus L1 literacy is again being severely questioned in the context of an overall programme of educational modernization (including English instruction) that claims to prepare Mexican students for the new challenges in connection with the new Free Trade Agreement with the USA and Canada (NAFTA)" (Hamel 1994a, p. 278). Even Meyer, Sherman, and Deeds in their seminal history of Mexico, *The Course of Mexican History* (2003), characterize the sociopolitical/linguistic context of post-WWII Mexico in the following way:

To the chagrin of those who prized traditional Hispanic values, advertisements and commercials assumed a distinct United States flavor, and hundreds of Anglicisms invaded the language. Somehow *el jit* [hit], *el jonron* [homerun], *el extra inin* [inning, see Table 3] seemed more palatable, and certainly more understandable, than *okay*, *bay-bay* [bye-bye], *chance*, *jipi* [jeep], *biznes* [business], and *parquear* [to park]. Nobody could explain why Mexican teenagers in Gap jeans began calling up their *suiti* for a date. Linguistic syncretism bequeathed its share of amusing redundancies,



such as the cocktail lounge that displayed a sign reading "4:00-5:00, La Hora de Happy Hour" and the tourist restaurant whose menu proudly advertised "Chili con Carne with Meat." Quick lunches (*quik lonches*) and the coffee break (*kofi breik*) replaced heavy noon meals and afternoon siestas; beer supplanted pulque as the favorite alcoholic drink of the lower classes, while Scotch whiskey took the place of cognac among the middle and upper classes. For the first time, Halloween, complete with plastic pumpkins and trick-or-treating, began to displace Mexico's traditional celebration of the Day of the Dead, and hand-carved folk toys lost favor to imported Tortugas Ninja. (p. 707)

Not all post-Commission reactions to the influence of English on Spanish have been quite so trenchant. At the *First International Congress of the Spanish Language* (Zacatecas, Mexico, April 7-11, 1997), for example, Odón Betanzos Palacios, president of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language in the United States, while affirming that the process of borrowing is a natural phenomenon in language, merely cautioned against incorporating into Spanish English words that might have an acceptable Spanish equivalent (Bertrán, 1997b). On the other hand, Tarsicio Herrera Zapién, secretary of the prestigious Academia Mexicana de la Lengua in Mexico City, has taken a more descriptivist approach to English and other borrowings; the Mexican Academy, he has noted, no longer takes a purist approach, but merely records the language as it is used by Mexicans (Dillon, 2003).

Returning now to Lope Blanch's (1977, 1982) classic study of the educated speech of Mexico City as represented in Table 1 above, we still find in Table 4 below English borrowings from all of his groups in common use in print in *Reforma* (even his least used words in groups IV and V). Recall that the numbers after each lexical item show the number of articles the words have appeared in from 1993 to 2009.

Table 4. Select update (1993-2009) from *Reforma* of Lope-Blanch's (1982) groups

Group I	Anglicismos de uso general [Anglicisims in general use]	e.g., boxeador [boxer] (3,829), catcher (1,003), líder [leader] (104,121), pay [pie] (726) and penalty/penalties (1,705/1,408)
Group II	Anglicismos muy usuales [very commonly used Anglicisims]	e.g., bar (13,718), Bermudas (1,186), short(s) (1,434), show (22,272) and switch (533)
Group III	Anglicismos de uso medio [occasionally-used Anglicisims]	e.g., corner (516), folder (337), manager (8,001), túnel [tunnel] (4,594) and zíper [zipper] (174)
Group IV	Anglicismos poco usados [little-used Anglicisims]	e.g., bloque [block] (9,899), mofle (muffler) (199), réferi (referee) (1,249), spray (927), and tándem (474)
Group V	Anglicismos espontaneos [rarely-used Anglicisms]	e.g., (inter)net (60.768/1,369), magazine (1,728), pick up (2,438), rompevientos (< English 'windbreaker') (364), and trust (1,805)

Note in Group III that the lexical item *folder* (used in 337 articles in *Reforma* in from 1993-2009) has been eclipsed by the Spanish word *carpeta* (used in 2,651 articles), and in Group V *magazine* (1,728) has been far overshadowed by Spanish *revista* (32,718). *Magazine*, in fact, is now used primarily in the names of magazines in English, for example, *Forbes Magazine*. Lexical items from the five groups also appear in contemporary headlines in Mexican newspapers, showing they are an integral part of the lexicon of Mexican Spanish. The examples that follow in Table 5 are again from *Reforma* (Mexico City):



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Table 5. Lexical items from Lope-Blanch's (1982) five groups in contemporary headlines

Group I	Tiene el México nuevo catcher [Mexico has a new catcher] March 18, 2003, Deportes (Sports)			
Group II:	Dustin celebra en Bermudas [Dustin celebrates in Bermudas] August 11,1998, Gente			
•	(People)			
Group III	Muere ex manager de The Beatles [the ex-manager of the Beatles dies] July 5, 2009,			
1	Gente (People)			
Group IV	El réferi no actuó bien [the referee did not act properly] March 12, 1998, Deportes			
•	(Sports)			
Group V	Regularizan 750 mil pickups en ocho meses [750 thousand pick-ups registered in			
_	eight months] November 18, 2000, Negocios (Business)			

A number of these words can also be found in the 22nd edition of the Real Academia Española's (2001) *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (Dictionary of the Spanish Language): bar, bermudas, bloque, box, boxeador, córner, fólder, líder, magacín, mánager, penalti, short, show, tandem, trust, and túnel. The new edition of the dictionary was roundly criticized in academic circles for the inclusion of, among other new English borrowings, software, jogging, light, lifting, western, and windsurf [a noun in Spanish] (Riveroll, 2002). In contrast, some also appear in Real Academia Española and Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española's (2005) *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (Panhispanic dictionary of usage) as "errors," for example, saque de esquina is recommended for córner in Spain, tiro de esquina in American Spanish; penal is recommended for penalty; and carpeta for fólder.

In conclusion, let us not forget that we are discussing here clashes of the titans (i.e., major world languages), for as Zimmermann (1986, p. 121) has pointed out, Spanish has influenced the minor indigenous languages of Mexico (both in lexis as well as in structure) to a much greater extent than English has influenced Spanish (Note 16). And while the presence of Spanish newspapers on the Internet is far fewer than those in English (http://www.thebigproject.co.uk/news/), Spanish's presence is not insignificant; according to López Morales (2006, p. 77), there is a total of 393 electronic Spanish newspapers, 47 of which are Mexican.

Examples of both micro (from below) and macro (from above) language planning abound in the sociolinguistic literature (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). The negative reaction to English in France, for example, resulted in the Toubon Law: "There are many other examples of language policy based on fear of the outsider and the fear that an attack from outside might be so effective as to change or destroy the identity that has been constructed. The Toubon Law, passed in France in 1994...in fact marks a reaction against external dominance and is inspired by a fear of international American and all it conveys, or was thought to convey by the Law's supporters" (Ager, 2001, p. 84; see also Thody, 1995). Like Mexican Spanish, English too has had its share of major and minor language planning incidents. In the mid 1500s there were objections to so-called Inkhorn terms, obscure, ostentatiously erudite borrowings from another language, especially Latin or Greek (Baugh & Cable, 2002, p. 217). In the following century in Shakespeare's *The Second Part of Henry the Sixth* (Act IV, scene vii, line 55), Lord Say, erudite and educated, was decapitated by peasant rebels for speaking Latin:

Say. You men of Kent----

Dick. What say you of Kent?

Say. Nothing but this; 'tis "bona terra, mala gens," [good earth, bad people]

Cade. Away with him, away with him! he speaks Latin. (Evans, 1997, p. 696)



Fast forward to 2008 when the Bournemouth Council in southern England banned the use of certain Latin phrases in official Council communiqués because not everyone knew Latin. Dr. Mary Beard, a professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge, reacted: "This is absolute bonkers and the linguistic equivalent of ethnic cleansing. English is and always has been a language full of foreign words. It has never been an ethnically pure language" (Hastings, 2008). Wolman (2008, p. 29), in fact, claims that more than 10,000 Latinate words have been added to the word stock of English since 1066.

And the language wars will continue with intermittent battles and skirmishes. But after all is said and done concerning Spanish and English (and other major languages of the world as well), Mexican linguist Antonio Alatorre (1989) has undoubtedly summed it up best: "Hay en nuestro mundo muchas cosas de que alarmarse. Entre ellas no está la lengua española en cuanto tal (y en toda la diversidad de sus realizaciones)" [There are many things in our world to get alarmed about. The Spanish language (in all the diversity of its forms) is not one of them] (p. 318). Fuentes' Cristóbal Nonato to be sure will speak Spanish.

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Notes

- 1. English translations of Spanish passages in this paper are in italicized brackets [].
- 2. See also Hamel (1994b, 1997) on indigenous language policy in Mexico.
- 3. As stated in the previous section of the paper, the emphasis nowadays in Mexico is more on the acculturation of the indigenous rather than their total assimilation into mainstream Mexican society.



- 4. A *pocho* in Mexico is a person of Mexican descent who lives in the United States and is adversely influenced both culturally and linguistically by this experience, that is, the *pocho*, always a derogative term in Mexico, prefers U.S. culture and English over Mexican culture and Spanish.
- 5. For the history and organization of the *Project for the Study of Educated Speech in the Principal Cities of Iberoamerica and the Iberian Peninsula*, upon which this study was based, see Lope Blanch (1969).
- 6. Arabic and Mozarabic contributed over 4,000 borrowings to Peninsular Spanish (Cotton & Sharp, 1988, p. 47).
- 7. See Volume 4 of *Nuestra Idioma* (1982) as well as Gringoire (1981, 1982) for a discussion of numerous other phonological, morphological, syntactic and pragmatic forms considered to be errors by some members of the Commission.
- 8. See, for example, Moreno de Alba (1992a, p. 158; 1996b, pp. 334-335) on the Colombian law.
- 9. Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 are based on electronic data from Mexico City's *Reforma* newspaper. *Reforma* began its database on January 1, 1993; the data in Table 3 therefore represents 17 years (1993-2009) of publication. From 1993 through 2000, CD's of *Reforma* were published by *Infosel México*; Monterrey's *El Norte* (*Reforma's* sister publication) was published from 1986 to 2000. Both newspapers are currently available online with databases going back to 1986 (*El Norte*) and 1993 (*Reforma*).
- 10. For further information on the occurrence of Anglicisms in Mexican newspapers, see Sánchez (1995).
- 11. See Baumgardner (2007) and Moreno de Alba (1992b, 1996b) for more detailed discussions, pro and con, of the use of English in Mexican product branding.
- 12. See Baumgardner (2008) for a more detailed discussion of the use of English in Mexican print media.
- 13. See, for example, Backhaus (2005, 2007) for Japan; Baumgardner (2004) for Germany; Baumgardner (2005) for Mexico; Bhatia (2000) and Bhatia & Bhargava (2008) for wall advertising and "video vans" in rural India; Dimova (2007) for Macedonia; Friedrich (2002) for Brazil; Gerritsen, Nickerson, Van Hooft, Van Meurs, Nederstigt, Starren, & Crijns (2007) for Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain; Gorter (2006) for Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain and Thailand; Griffin (2004) for Italy; Hasanova (2010) for Uzbekistan; Hult (2009) for Swedish storefronts; Jia (2009) for China; Liu (2011) for Taiwan; MacGregor (2003) for Japan; McArthur (2000) for Switzerland and Sweden; McCormick & Agnihotri (2009) for South Africa and India; Ross (1997) for Italy; Mežek (2009) for Slovenia; Oikonomidis (2003) for Greece; Rosenbaum, Nadel, Cooper & Fishman (1977) for Israel; Schlick (2002, 2003) for Austria; Schlick (2002) for Italy and Slovenia; Stewart & Fawcett (2004) for Portugal; Taavitsainen & Pahta (2008) for Finland; and Thonus (1991) for Brazil.
- 14. See Baumgardner (2006, 2008) and Moreno de Alba (2003, pp. 438-441) for further discussion of the use of English in Mexican shop names.
- 15. See Sayer (2010) for a pedagogical study of public signs in Oaxaca.
- 16. See, for example, Hekking & Muysken (1995) and Muntzel (1982) on the influence of Spanish on the grammars of Quechua [Bolivia] and Otomí [Mexico], respectively; see also



Butters (2000), d'Amore (2009) and Rodríguez González (1996) on the Spanishization of English.

Appendix

Appendix 1. Publications of the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language

Colección Nuestro Idioma ['Our Language' Series]:

¿ Qué es la Comisión para La Defensa del Idioma Español? [What is the Commission for the Defense of the Spanish Language?]

Tomo I *El origin de la palabra* [Volume I: Origin of the word]

Tomo II *Origin y evolución del español* [Origin and evolution of Spanish]

Tomo III Voces extranjeras en el español de México [Foreign words in Mexican Spanish]

Tomo IV El español hablado en México [The Spanish spoken in Mexico]

Tomo V Lenguas en contacto: el español frente a las lenguas indígenas de México [Languages in contact: Spanish in the context of Mexico's indigenous languages]

Tomo VI La influencia de los medios de comunicación en el habla [The influence of the media on speech]

Tomo VII *El español actual. Contribuciones a su estudio. Necesidad de una defensa.* [Present-day Spanish. Contributions to its study. Necessity for its defense]

Tomo VIII *La política lingüística de México* (Primera parte) [Language planning in Mexico: Part One]

Tomo IX *La política lingüística de México* (Segunda parte) [Language planning in Mexico: Part Two]

Tomo X *La política lingüística de México* (Tercera parte) [Language planning in Mexico: Part Three]

Other Publications of the Commission:

Ávila, R. (ed.) (1982). *Así escriben los niños de México* [The children of Mexico write this way]. Comisión del Idioma Español, Subcomisión Editoral, Subcomisión de Educación.

Gringoire, P. (1981). *Repertorio de dispartes* [Repository of errors]. (2nd ed.). México: Costa-Amic Editores.

Lara, L. F. (1982). *Diccionario fundamental del español de México* [Fundamental dictionary of Spanish]. México: Comisión para la Defensa del Idioma Español, El Colegio de México, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

Lara, L. F., & Verdugo Evans, L. (1982). Vocabulario especializado de la publicidad en México. [Specialized vocabulary of advertising in Mexico]. México: Comisión del Idioma Español, Subcomisión de Publicidad.



Appendix 2. Figures 1 - 23

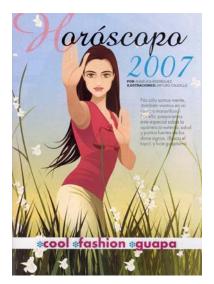


Figure 1. Eres Pocket, December 15, 2006, p. 63



Figure 2. Tú, September 12, 2008, p. 41



Figure 3. photograph, Mexico City, 2008

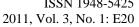






Figure 4. Dippas product container



Figure 5. 15 a 20, October 2008, front cover

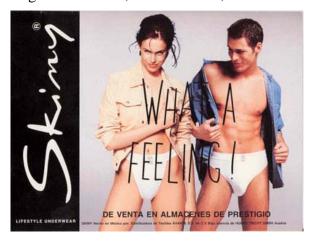
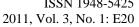


Figure 6. Tú, June 1997, back cover





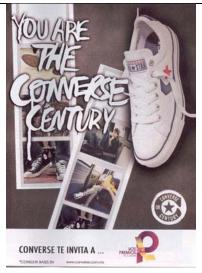


Figure 7. Muy Interesante, September 2008, p. 163



Figure 8. shopping bag, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 9. photograph, Mexico City, 2008





Figure 10. photograph, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 11. Grita Fuerte, June 2, 2008, p. 21



Figure 12. receipt, Mexico City, 2008

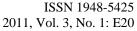






Figure 13. photograph, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 14. Marie Claire, January 2008, p. 122



Figure 15. Mexico City "outlet," photograph, 2008





Figure 16. flyer, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 17. photograph, Monterrey, 2005



Figure 18. sidewalk ad, Monterrey, 2007





Figure 19. wall painting, Monterrey, 2007



Figure 20. hanging tarpaulin ad, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 21. photograph, Monterrey, 2007



Figure 22. banner, Mexico City, 2008



Figure 23. banner, Mexico City, 2008