

The English Language
and Anglo-American Culture:
Its Impact on Spanish Language and Society

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By

Carmen Luján García

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

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To all the women in my family,
for their patience

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations and Tables	ix
Preface	xi
Overview of this Book	
Acknowledgements	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter One.....	7
Presence of English in Spanish Shop Windows in Several Shopping Centres in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	
Chapter Two	23
Anglo-American Film Titles and their Translation into Spanish	
Chapter Three	35
Anglicisms in Spanish Film Magazine <i>Cahiers Du Cinema</i>	
Chapter Four	51
English in the Spanish Educational System: A Case Study	
Chapter Five	73
English in Interpersonal Communication and A Sense of Identity	
Chapter Six	81
Activities and Reflections	
Appendix A	85
Notes.....	93
Bibliography	95
Index	103

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND TABLES

Chapter 1

Figure 1-1. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

Figure 1-2. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

Figure 1-3. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

Figure 1-4. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

Figure 1-5. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

Table 1-1. Sample taken from 7 PALMAS Shopping Centre

Table 1-2. Sample taken from EL MUELLE Shopping Centre

Table 1-3. Sample taken from LAS ARENAS Shopping Centre

Table 1-4. Sample taken from LA BALLENA Shopping Centre

Table 1-5. Sample taken from LAS TERRAZAS Shopping Centre

Table 1-6. Sample taken from LA MINILLA Shopping Centre

Table 1-7. Sample taken from LAS RAMBLAS Shopping Centre

Table 1-8. Percentages of English messages in shop windows in shopping centres

Chapter 2

Table 2-1. Amount and percentages of titles considering different translation strategies

Chapter 3

Table 3-1. Technical terms

Table 3-2. Terms related to marketing, business, distribution and television

Table 3-3. Terms related to film genres, cinema interpretation and cinema trends

Table 3-4. Terms related to art movements

Table 3-5. Terms related to the film industry

Table 3-6. Terms related to the use of new technologies in the area of cinema

Table 3-7. Various terms and expressions that did not fit in the other categories

Table 3-8. Linguistic features of technical terms and acceptance by DRAE

Chapter 4

Table 4-1. Number of subjects from each school type and autonomous community

Table 4-2. Ages of subjects

Table 4-3. Gender of subjects

Table 4-4. Percentages of English language proficiency of fathers, mothers and siblings of participants

Table 4-5. Participants' sources of contact with English

Table 4-6. Contact of participants with English through different sources

Table 4-7. Participants' likeability of English

Table 4-8. Importance of English for participants

Table 4-9. Advantages of knowing English in daily life situations

Table 4-10. Participants' level of proficiency in English

PREFACE

Overview of the Book

As the title suggests, *Globalisation and the Influence of English and Anglo-American Culture on Spanish Language and Society* explores the effects of globalisation on Spanish language and society. It analyses the impact of the English language and Anglo-American culture on Spanish language and culture.

This book compiles four different studies carried out that provide evidence of the increasingly pervasive presence of English in the daily life of Spanish people.

Areas covered include:

- Analysis of the displays in shop windows of different shopping centres in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain) which show Christmas greeting messages in English, rather than Spanish.
- Exploration of the most frequently used techniques of translation of film titles of Anglo-American films.
- Study of the use of anglicisms in the Spanish edition of the film magazine *Cahiers du Cinema*.
- Research on the perceptions of a sample of Spanish students towards English.
- Reflection on the emergence of a certain sense of identity towards English and Anglo-American culture among Spaniards.
- A selection of activities that invite reflection on the issues dealt with throughout the book.

This book may be of interest to students and researchers, whether they are or not specialised in applied linguistics, and to anybody who may be interested in the effects of globalisation on European societies from the linguistic and cultural points of view.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea of writing this book was born in 2010 when I was enjoying an academic stay at the university of Purdue (USA) working with Dr. Margie Berns, and also during my stay at King's College (UK) working with Dr. Martin Dewey that same year. I have been fortunate, as I have had the opportunity to exchange ideas with these two top researchers. The conversations we had and a period of reflection have led me to shape the idea of writing this book and this is the final result. I would like to highlight that both stays were co-financed by a European Social Fund and a Canary Islands Government fund (BOC. Num. 119, de 18 junio de 2010), so thank you.

Various parts of this book have been given a public airing elsewhere. I am grateful for giving me the chance to talk about the impact of the English language and Anglo-American culture on Spain in different forums.

I am grateful to EAE Publishing for permission to use chapter 2 “La traducción al español de los títulos de las películas de origen anglosajón” and chapter 3 “El uso de términos en inglés en la prensa escrita cinematográfica”, both also included in the volume *La Globalización y el inglés en la sociedad española*, EAE Publishing, 2012.

I would also like to thank all the students who participated in the study in chapter 4, as well as their teachers who were very helpful in administering the survey.

Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Geraldine Boylan for proof-reading and providing me with some useful comments on an earlier version of this manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation and the influence of English and Anglo-American Culture on Spanish Language and Society intends to show the important presence that English has on Europe, paying special attention to Spanish society. Important facts such as globalisation and international trade have made English the *lingua franca* and therefore a worldwide means of communication. In the context of Europe, the impact of English affects almost every single domain of daily life. The status of English as the international language may be explained by considering the political, economic, technological and cultural dominance of the US and by the concurrent process of globalisation. Different researchers (Phillipson, 2009; Blommaert, 2010; Saxena and Omoniyi, 2010) have provided detailed accounts of the way English is omnipresent across the globe. Phillipson aptly depicts the role of English in Europe, “the European Union (EU) is officially committed to multilingualism and linguistic diversity, while integrally involved in processes of globalisation that are symbiotically linked to English” (2009: 55). This makes us wonder whether this process of globalisation is the new kind of “imperialism” of the 21st century, where the empire is the US, and its official language, English, is the dominant global language.

Nowadays, English is the most important *lingua franca* of Europe, and it is studied in most European countries, even countries such as Russia (Maximova, 2002), and others that used to be under the rule of the Soviet Union such as Poland (Manczack, 2002), Romania (Constănescu et al., 2002), and Bulgaria (Alexieva, 2002). In the case of Bulgaria, Dörnyei et al. (2006) provide scientific data about the impact of English on Bulgarian society over the last decade (from 1993 to 2004). Their findings reveal that English is by far the most commonly studied foreign language throughout the country, and given the important influence of Anglo-American culture across the globe, it is an indication of fashion and modernisation.

However, as Kirkpatrick (2007: 165) asserts, the status of English within the countries of Europe differs considerably depending on each country. In northern countries such as Norway, Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands, English has an extremely high profile and is almost like a second language. In contrast, “in the countries of southern Europe, i.e.

Spain, Italy, or Greece, the situation is quite different, now that it has less of a presence, although the presence is growing” (Kirkpatrick, 2007: 165).

In general terms, with higher or lower profiles, English is so ingrained in most European societies that we may find the emergence of a certain sense of identity with the English language among European citizens. It is an influence that has an impact on all the levels of the different languages: the phonetic / phonological, the syntactic, and especially the semantic level. There are also many anglicisms that have been integrated into different European languages.

The power that has been given to English, which is gradually increasing, also means that it is present in most European educational systems. In the case of Spain, English is taught as the first foreign language, even before it is required by law. Thus, many pupils start learning it in nursery school, which does not form part of compulsory education, at the age of 3 or 4. Compulsory education starts at the age of 6, and all youngsters have to learn English as it is part of the basic curriculum.

Another important source of influence is North-American cinema as North-American films are the most frequently watched films in Spanish cinemas. Many songs are often sung in English, even though they do not originate in English-speaking countries. Advertising is another field which constantly uses English words. Computer technology and other different areas also employ English words on a daily basis. Consequently, young Spanish generations are integrating the English language into their daily lives.

The impact of English across the globe has been the subject of a vast volume of literature (Görlach, 2002; Anderman and Rogers, 2005; Berns, de Bot and Hasebrink, 2007; Fischer and Pulaczewska, 2008; Furiasi, Pulcini and Rodríguez, 2012) as well as the leading topic of many conferences around the world. Globalisation, the development of economic and technological infrastructure as well as “the issue of the ‘new’ Europe are interrelated matters that today’s young Europeans will have to grapple with as they carry on the building of an increasingly interconnected and unified Europe” (Berns et al., 2007: 43). The need to use a language as the main vehicle of communication to interconnect all those people who are moving around Europe has contributed to making English the *lingua franca* that fulfils this function. Since the twentieth century, English has become the main language of international communication, and today its prominence is growing rapidly.

The result of such a pervasive presence and the various functions that English has in the context of Europe gives rise to questions about the

current status of English in Europe. Evidence of this is the debate about the emergence of a European variety of English or “Euro-English” along with the controversy of English as a *lingua franca*, which has arisen in Europe (Berns, 2009; Modiano, 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009a). With the rapid process of globalisation and changes in communication brought about by technological advances, the patterns of communication have totally changed. English has undergone an unprecedented saturation in every setting of European daily life. Consequently, it might be questioned whether the conventional status of English in Europe, where it is merely considered a foreign language, is changing.

Some well-known authors (Jenkins, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009a) have claimed that a new paradigm of English as a *lingua franca* has to be considered in Europe, since this language has the function of enabling communication within and beyond the borders of Europe. English is understood and described from a fluid and flexible perspective with a focus on “variability” rather than variety codification (Dewey, 2009: 67; Seidlhofer, 2011: 9).

As Ranta (2010: 157) states, “This paradigm shift is based on the facts that non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers of English in the world and that – as a true world language- English is actually used much more as a *lingua franca* between L2 speakers than between L1 and L2 speakers”.

This ELF paradigm provides a very interesting view of English, since it claims the creation of multiple Englishes. From the lexical point of view, the emergence of new terms, specifically those used in a European context, such as *euro-member*, *barometer*, etc. are evidence of the development of a version of English in mainland Europe. The phonological level of English also offers certain specific features in Europe, different from other places. Specific grammatical features from Europe have also been analysed by scholars such as Seidlhofer in the project that she leads called VOICE¹ corpus.

English in Spain

In the specific context of Spain, according to Rodríguez González (2002: 134),

In the 1950s, English was taught as an optional first foreign language in secondary schools to no more than 5 per cent of the students, whereas those who studied French exceeded 90 per cent. Today the situation is reversed: English has rapidly pushed French into a modest second place.

Reichelt (2006: 5-6) highlights the importance of English in Spain, and the efforts that are being made by Spanish authorities to improve the levels of proficiency. In fact, by law, English instruction begins in Grade 1, but some children start learning English as early as age three (in nursery) and students continue studying English as an obligatory subject all through compulsory secondary education. Students at this level receive around 120-180-220 minutes of English instruction per week, depending on each specific autonomous community. Bearing in mind the present political situation in Spain and the growing threats of making drastic changes within the education system, the presence of EFL in Spanish schools may be subject to modification.

With the change to democracy over the last few decades, linguistically speaking, English has gradually permeated Spanish. The syntactic level has been affected, but the influence is more prominent at a semantic level, since English words are frequently used in Spanish discourse. The semantic level will be the focus of this research. The presence of anglicisms in the Spanish language has become an important topic of debate among Spanish scholars and that is why many different definitions of anglicisms have been provided. The 22nd edition of the Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary with its three different definitions has been chosen:

1. *Giro o modo de hablar propio de la lengua inglesa.* (Typical way of speaking the English language)
2. *Vocablo o giro de esta lengua empleado en otra.* (Word or use of English used in a different language)
3. *Empleo de vocablos o giros ingleses en distintos idiomas.* (Use of English words in different languages)²

López Morales (1987: 303) also provides a concise definition of this concept:

[Anglicisms are] not only words which come from English, whether they are already extensively spread in Spanish or whether they have already been accepted by the Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary, [anglicisms] are also those words which come from other languages, which have found their way into Spanish by means of English.

In Spain, the topic of anglicisms has been subject to two main points of view. On the one hand, a tendency that strongly rejects the use of English words in Spanish discourse exists. Authors such as Lorenzo (1996) state that the use of these words frequently does not respond to the real needs of the Spanish language, which usually offers an alternative term for a

specific concept. Even more recent accounts (Segura, 2003) continue to question the real need for so many English loanwords. Other scholars, among which I personally subscribe, have adopted a less conservative point of view, since they have described the situation of English words in different settings without judging these uses in a positive or negative way.

The reality that surrounds us has encouraged me to carry out an analysis of this impact in the specific context of Spain. With that aim, different studies, comprise the various chapters of this book, aim at providing evidence of the impact of English and Anglo-American culture on Spain and Spanish society.

The Structure of the Book

The first chapter presents an analysis of the presence of English in shop windows during the Christmas period. I have examined the messages in English that appear in the shops of the five most popular shopping centres in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The presence of English messages to celebrate Christmas, such as “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Holidays” instead of “Feliz Navidad”, is evidence of the process of “North-Americanisation” and globalisation that Spanish society is undergoing.

The second chapter focuses on the examination of the translation of film titles premiered in Spanish cinemas throughout 2008, whilst the third chapter describes the use of anglicisms by Spanish cinema critics in the Spanish edition of magazine *Cahiers du Cinema*. It deals with twelve issues of this well-known magazine (published between July 2007 and August 2008).

Chapter four researches general topics: first, various settings in which young Spanish students may have contact with the English language outside the educational system. I am referring to media such as radio, music, television, forums, chats or websites on the Internet; the second part of the chapter examines the attitudes of respondents towards English; the third section of this chapter intends to shed light on the participants’ levels of proficiency in English by means of a self-assessment of their own level of English.

The following chapter aims at reflecting on the possible emergence of a certain sense of identity with English among Spanish speakers. Finally, chapter six presents some conclusions and reflections upon this sociolinguistic reality. That is why a set of questions and activities are proposed in order to invite reflection, as well as to encourage awareness of this situation.

One of the key questions addressed in this book is whether or not new varieties of English are emerging in Europe. In other words, is English being adapted to the particular reality of each country? Another question is, which model of English should non-native teachers teach their students? Should the teachers of English teach a variety of English that reflects the accent of their mother tongue? It is essential to bear in mind that the number of non-native speakers of English extensively outnumbers that of native speakers. I support the development of varieties of English that adapt to the specific needs of each country and that allow communication among English speaking people – native or non-native – from any part of the world. These varieties will reflect the accent and vocabulary of the different native languages, and consequently will not be so attached to native English models. The process of teaching a language should never be a source of frustration either for teachers or for students who try to imitate native models unsuccessfully.

Therefore, this is a book that may well be used as a manual or textbook in classes addressed to ELF students. It may also be used by students, linguists and translators, among others. In addition, given the fact that this is an up-to-date theme and it is written in a simple and accesible language, this book may be of interest to any kind of reader, specialised or not, who feels curiosity for this subject.

CHAPTER ONE

PRESENCE OF ENGLISH IN SPANISH SHOP WINDOWS IN SEVERAL SHOPPING CENTRES IN LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA

1.1 Introduction

Both the presence and essence of Christmas has become particularly noticeable in shop windows in recent years in Spain because of the use of English signs, posters and messages. It is unquestionable that English has acquired a leading role in the globalised world of today, especially in those countries that belong to the developed world. Focusing on Europe, a considerable amount of literature dealing with the “invasion” or introduction of English words and Anglo-American cultural aspects to European societies has been discussed.

In this chapter, I will attempt to reveal how important and fashionable English has become in Spanish culture and society by examining the presence of Christmas messages in English in shop windows as a means to attract customers.

Different studies (Goddard, 1998; Durán Martínez, 2002; Bhatia, 2006) have revealed the importance of the English language in advertising as a technique used in order to capture customers’ attention, since English is not the expected language either in a Spanish shop or advertisement. According to Goddard (1998: 3-4),

Although advertisements are ephemeral in that each one is short-lived, their effects are longstanding and cumulative: they leave traces of themselves behind, which combine to form a body of messages about the culture that produced them. These messages can function to reflect and to construct cultural values: they can reflect the values of the powerful groups in society.

The fact that these messages appear in English rather than Spanish may reflect the importance of Anglo-American cultural values in Spanish society. Furthermore, Bhatia (2006:602-603) asserts that, “one of the central concerns of globalisation for international advertisers is how to

resolve the paradox of globalisation and localisation (national and regional interests)”. Nevertheless, the question of language choice is practically resolved, since English is the choice of global advertisers and marketers. Durán Martínez (2002: 179-180) provides different explanations that contribute to justify the use of English in Spanish advertising. Firstly, English plays the role of a stylistic resource that has the purpose of creating complicity with those people with certain competence in the English language. Secondly, the interpretation of these simple messages or texts in English makes the addressee feel satisfaction, because that prospective customer has been able to understand and interpret a message in a foreign language, in this case, English. This strategy helps to modify the addressee’s attitude towards the shop or product that is being sold, sometimes from a negative attitude to a neutral, or even positive one.

These theories could also be applied to the field I am dealing with, since there is a close relationship between the use of Christmas and advertising as a way of attracting customers. Both of them conceal more than one objective: to attract the customer’s attention by trying to persuade people to stop and look at the shop window, and, if possible, to go into the shop and purchase a product.

However, I need to point out that no studies have focused on the impact of English on Christmas greeting messages in shop windows in Spain. There seems to be a gap in research, and that is the main reason why I have decided to do some work in this field and shed some light on this fascinating topic, although this research is geographically limited to the context of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

1.2. Objectives

This research intends to provide an answer to the following research questions:

- What is the impact of English on the Spanish population of the Canary Islands, by examining the presence of English words in a number of shop windows during the Christmas period in the city of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria?
- Which kind of shop is more closely associated with the use of English in advertising?
- Which kind of English spelling is more frequently used in these greeting advertisements, whether British English or American English?

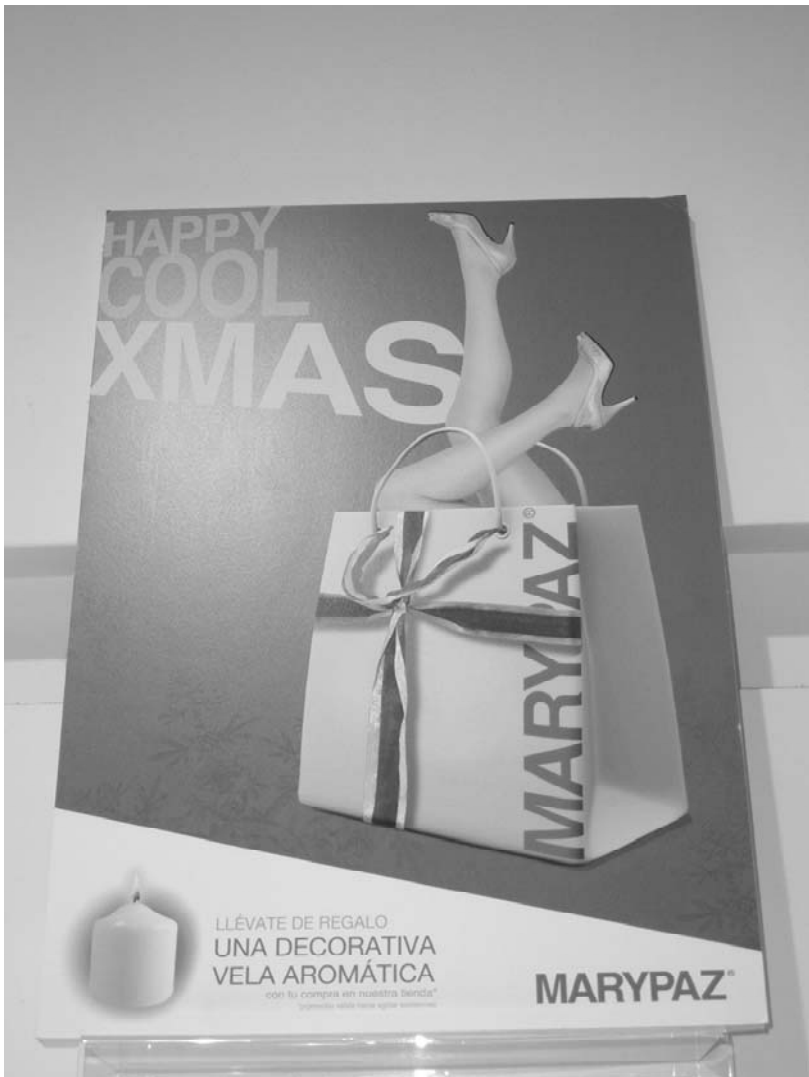


Figure 1-1. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows



Figure 1-2. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

1.3. Method

The method was based on the collection of all the English messages related to Christmas in the shop windows of the seven most important and popular shopping centres in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. The sample was collected during the month of December 2008. I took note of the English Christmas message in the shop window, the name of the shop, and the kind of shop –considering the kind of merchandise that was sold in each shop. This last detail was also covered to check whether the presence of English messages is more frequently associated with a particular kind of shop. After that, a photograph of each of these signs was also taken as evidence. The messages had different formats: in some cases, they were stickers, while in others, posters or window cards. Basically, the format varied depending on the shop.



Figure 1-3. Sample of Christmas greeting messages in shop windows

1.3.1. Sample

In this research, as mentioned above, the sample was taken from the most popular shopping centres in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. All of them are located in different areas of the city centre, except for one, Las Terrazas, which is an outlet shopping centre situated on the outskirts of Las Palmas. This mall has its own features, since its shops are very big, and the prices are reduced. Therefore, I presumed that in this kind of centre, shops do not spend much money on Christmas decorations, and consequently, there are not so many English messages as in others. The following tables provide a compilation of the English messages found in different shop windows in the shopping centres used in this study.

NAME OF THE SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
MANGO	Merry Christmas	Clothes
PULL AND BEAR	Real X-mas for real people	Clothes
STRADIVARIUS	Merry Christmas by Stradivarius	Clothes
BERSHKA	Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Bershka	Clothes
OYSHO	Greetings of Christmas	Underwear
ORO VIVO	Thanks	Jewellery
LEVI STRAUSS & CO.	Levi's happy holidays	Clothes
SPRINGFIELD	This X-mas be real	Clothes
CALZEDONIA	Merry Christmas	Accessories
NATURA	Christmas Revolution	Clothes and shoes
MARY PAZ	Happy Cool X-mas	Shoes
FRIDAY'S PROJECT	New year, New attitude	Clothes
PARTY FIESTA	Merry Christmas	Toys and accessories
PRÉNATAL	Making gifts for Mamy	Clothes
JUGUETERÍA NIKKI	Merry Christmas	Toys

Table 1-1. Sample taken from 7 PALMAS Shopping Centre

NAME OF THE SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN THE SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
C&A	Coming Home	Clothes and shoes
MANGO	Merry Christmas	Clothes
NATURA	Christmas Revolution For a different Christmas	Clothes and shoes
TRUCCO	Mix and Match	Clothes
PEPE JEANS-LONDON	We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year	Clothes
OYSHO	Greetings of Christmas Jiggles and Wiggles!	Underwear
MARY PAZ	Happy Cool Christmas	Shoes
BLANCO	Sweet Christmas	Clothes and shoes
INSIDE	Winter prices New season autumn winter	Clothes
STRADIVARIUS	Merry Christmas by Stradivarius	Clothes
BERSHKA	Merry Christmas and a happy new year from Bershka	Clothes
CORONEL TAPIOCCA	Merry Christmas	Clothes and accessories
SPRINGFIELD	This Christmas be real	Clothes
JEREZ PELUQUEROS	Mil looks en un solo regalo	Hairdressing
CALZADOS NAVARRO	Christmas Time Christmas Pleasure	Shoes

Table 1-2. Sample taken from EL MUELLE Shopping Centre

NAME OF SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
MANGO	Merry Christmas	Clothes
BERSHKA	Merry Christmas and a happy new year from Bershka	Clothes
PULL AND BEAR	Real X-mas for real people	Clothes
SPRINGFIELD	This X-mas be real	Clothes
PIMKIE	Christmas Stars	Clothes
C&A	Coming Home	Clothes and shoes
YAMAMAI	It's Christmas!!!	Underwear
STRADIVARIUS	Merry Christmas by Stradivarius	Clothes
NATURA	Christmas Revolution For a different Christmas	Clothes and shoes
CALZADOS NAVARRO	Christmas Time	Shoes

Table 1-3. Sample taken from LAS ARENAS Shopping Centre

NAME OF SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
PULL AND BEAR	Merry Christmas	Clothes
FOOT LOCKER	Merry Christmas and a Happy New Pair	Sportswear
MARY PAZ	Happy Cool Christmas	Shoes
HEROPO EL 99	Happy Holidays Happy Christmas Season's Greetings Merry Christmas	Clothes and Home accessories
CALZADOS NAVARRO	Christmas Time Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year	Shoes

Table 1-4. Sample taken from LA BALLENA Shopping Centre

NAME OF SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
DESIGUAL	Magic Love	Clothes
PEPE JEANS LONDON	Pepe Jeans London wishes you happy holidays	Clothes
MANGO	Merry Christmas	Clothes

Table 1-5. Sample taken from LAS TERRAZAS Shopping Centre

NAME OF SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
BIJU	Merry Christmas	Clothes
MAYA	Merry Christmas Your gift	Perfume shop

Table 1-6. Sample taken from LA MINILLA Shopping Centre

NAME OF SHOP	ENGLISH MESSAGE IN SHOP WINDOW	KIND OF SHOP
PERFUMERÍA DEFA	Merry Christmas Your Gift	Perfume shop

Table 1-7. Sample taken from LAS RAMBLAS Shopping Centre

1.4. Results

The findings of this research reveal the substantial presence of English Christmas messages in Spanish shop windows. The total number of English messages found in the seven shopping centres subject to this research was fifty-five. Some of these messages are repeated, since they belong to the same chain or shop located in different shopping centres. Since we are living in a period of so-called “globalisation” and economic imperialism. It is common to find shopping centres full of shops that belong to the same owners or franchises of well-known brands.

The English messages repeated were as follows:

"Merry Christmas" by "Mango" occurred four times.

"Merry Christmas" by "Stradivarius" appeared three times.

"Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Bershka" occurred three times.

Three messages *"Christmas Time"*, *"Christmas Pleasure"* and *"Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year"* appeared in the same shop, "Calzados Navarro" (Shoes).

The messages *"Christmas Revolution"* and *"For a different Christmas"* appeared four times in four shops of the chain "Natura".

"This X-mas be real" occurred in three "Springfield" shops *"Real X-mas for real people"* is the "Pull and Bear" message, which appeared in three of its shops.

The shoe shop, "Calzados Mary Paz", showed the message *"Happy Cool Christmas"* in three different shops.

The underwear shop named "Oysho" had two messages: *"Greetings of Christmas"* and *"Jiggles and Wiggles!"*.

The shop "C&A" offered a message associated with Christmas time, *"Coming Home"* (most people go back home for Christmas), which appeared in two different shops of this same chain.

The brand "Pepe Jeans London" displayed the message *"We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year"*, which appeared in two shops.

A total of eighteen of the shops analysed were in only one shopping centre. The messages shown by these shops were as follows:

The shop "Oro Vivo", *"Thanks"* surrounded by Christmas decorations. The objective of this message was to give customers thanks for their shopping loyalty during the whole year.

"Levi Strauss & Co." displayed the message *"Levi's happy holidays"*. This message was quite neutral, since it tried not to mention any religious content.

"Friday's Project", a clothes shop with an Anglo-American name, offered the customers the statement, *"New year, New attitude"*. The word "new" was capitalised twice, since the emphasis was put on the new things that come with the new year.

The shop "Party Fiesta" used the message *"Merry Christmas"*.

The shop "Prénatal" displayed the sentence *"Making gifts for Mamy"*. The use of "mamy", which means "mammy" in English, is explained because this is a shop specialising in future mothers and children.

The toys shop "Juguetería Nikki" also showed the message *"Merry Christmas"*, but no message in Spanish appeared.

The clothes shop "Blanco" displayed the message *"Sweet Christmas"*.