



Linguistic Analysis of English and Spanish

Surbhi

Amity School of Liberal Arts
Amity University Gurgaon, Haryana, India

Received: Apr. 16, 2020

Accepted: Apr. 24, 2020

Online Published: May. 31, 2020

Abstract

This study analyses the nature of English and Spanish language expressing their similarities and dissimilarities using various methods such as phonological analysis, alphabetical words order, lexical analysis, sentence order and verbal inflation. To illustrate sample of 100 sentences were taken from English followed by their equivalent translation in Spanish. The findings revealed that English has lot more words borrowed from Spanish and this being the main reason of their similarity along that they both are Indo European Language and consist of Latin script, the only difference being that English belong to branch of Germanic and Spanish is romantic.

Introduction

The whole world is rich in linguistic field and we see 7,117 languages are spoken today and the number is constantly in flux. Roughly we see that almost 40% of languages are endangered and meanwhile we see that 23 languages account for more than half of world population. The most widely spoken language is ENGLISH with over 1.1 billion native and second language users worldwide. On similar grounds we see SPANISH is commonly categorized as one of the prominent world languages.

Both languages are categories' under Indo European Languages. Since, Majority of the European language is originated from the same family branch; we see that there are certain similarities in both these languages. Spanish is the mother tongue of 8% of the population, with an additional 7% speaking it as a second language. English is a very old language and now we use its modern form worldwide, even we see Spanish also being an old language which had its beginning from 210Bc. Both of these languages have their own vocabulary, grammar, punctuation.

Research Objectives

This study sets three prime objectives to be attained as follows:

- Exploring linguistic similarities and dissimilarities between English and Spanish
- Understanding the lexical and phonological analysis of English and Spanish.
- Making contrastive study of inflection with reference to verbs, gender and number of English and Spanish.

Research Questions

Conforming to the aforementioned three objectives, this study frames three research questions as follows:

- What is the degree of linguistic similarities and dissimilarities between English and Spanish?
- What are the main difference of lexical and phonological analysis between English and Spanish?
- How English and Spanish inflection systems work with reference to verb, gender and number?

The Significance of the study

The significance of the study lies in the fact that a non-native speaker of Spanish will be benefitted from the findings of this study in terms of understanding its sound systems, word order, morphological inflection, and sentence construction.

Literature Review

A survey conducted by Ethnologue (2019, 23rd edition), accentuates that there are 463.0 million people who speak Spanish as a native language, while as English is spoken by around 369.7 million people as their native language. But 898.4 million people speak English as a second language making it rank first and approximately 74.9 million people speak Spanish as a second language making it rank ninth as far mentioned in the lists of languages by number of native speakers and second language in the 2019 edition. It is examined that Spanish is one of the main Latin languages, and as such, its influence and inflections can be heard throughout the world. But its influence on English is marked. The Spanish influence on the English language was especially important in the sixteenth century. More Spanish words entered in English following the American acquisition of Puerto Rico after the 1898 Spanish-American War.

English and Spanish are somewhat closely related to each other as Spanish evolved from Vulgar Latin and English is West Germanic language but with the extensive borrowings from Latin. It is seen that language family of both the language is same as being Indo-European but the only difference is that Spanish belongs to romantic branch and English belongs to Germanic branch. Consequently, feature of these languages really draw our attention. The mutual influence between Spanish and English started centuries ago and is being continued to recently. The same roots of languages and massive process of globalization play the most important role in mutual influence. There are a lot of similarities and dissimilarities between both languages as; they have same script i.e. Latin, written in same format from left to right, but they both have their own grammar, punctuation, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.

Methodology

(To be prepared by sir)

Analysis and Findings

English language has broad degree of standardization and there are multiple ways to spell nearly every phoneme as large number of words has been borrowed. While as Spanish spellings are fairly phonemic, especially in comparison to more opaque languages as English, having a relatively consistent mapping of graphemes to phonemes.

Consonants: English has 21 consonants while Spanish has 27 consonants:

ENGLISH	B	C	D	F	G	H	J
SPANISH	Be	Ce	De	Efe	ge	Hache	Jota
ENGLISH	K	L	M	N	P	Q	R
SPANISH	Ka	Ele	Eme	Eñe	pe	Cu	Erre
ENGLISH	S	T	V	W	X	Y	Z
SPANISH	Ese	Te	Uve	uve double	equis	Ee	zeta

Some consonants of Spanish language which are not there in English are:

Ch	Gu	Gü	ll	Ñ	Rr
----	----	----	----	---	----

Vowel: English and Spanish both have 5 vowels:

ENGLISH	A	E	I	O	U
---------	---	---	---	---	---

SPANISH	Á	É	Í	Ó	Ú
---------	---	---	---	---	---

Alphabetical Order: Although both the language follows Latin Script but it is seen that the alphabetical order of Spanish is bit different from English as contains some extra stressed consonants.

ENGLISH	A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
SPANISH	á be cech de é efegegugühache í jota kaeleemeeñe ñ ó pe cu errerr ese te ú uveuve-double equisee zeta

Sentence Structure

Word order of both the language is same that is **Subject+Object+Verb** and even a neutral order (free order). Sentence of both the language is comprised of subject and predicate and except for a couple of word order exception (adjective before noun in English and noun before adjective in Spanish), both the language have most of noun, verbs, tenses similar. Since Spanish is a very flexible language we can change the order of the sentence without changing the meaning that means word order doesn't have that much importance as in English. Instead Spanish has a system using suffixes and particles that help to denote the subject and object.

English Spanish

1. Hi!	Hola!
2. Good morning	Buenos días
3. Good afternoon	Buenos tardes
4. Good evening/night	Buenos tardes/noches
5. What is your name?	¿Como te llamas?
6. I am Surbhi	Me llamoSurbhi
7. How are you?(informal)	¿Cómoestás?
8. How are you?(formal)	¿Cómoestásusted?
9. I am fine	Estoybien
10. Thanks	Gracias!
11. Nice to meet you	Encantado/a
12. And you?	¿y tu?
13. How is it going?	¿Quétal?
14. How old are you?	Cíantosaños tienes?
15. I am 22 years old	YoTengoveintidos años
16. Where are you from?	¿De dóndeviene?
17. I live in Delhi	Yo vivo en Delhi
18. See you later	Hasta Luego
19. Yes	Sí
20. No	No
21. Please	PorFavor
22. I	Yo

23. You	Tú
24. He	El
25. She	Ella
26. You	Usted
27. We/us	Nosotros
28. You are	Vosotros
29. Excuse me/sorry	Perdón
30. Where?	¿Dónde
31. You are welcome	De Nada
32. I am sorry	Lo Siento
33. I don't understand	No Entiendo
34. How many?	Cúantos?
35. I am happy	Estoy content/a
36. Me too	To también
37. I am great	Estoy genial
38. You are bit stressed	Estás un poco estresado/a
39. She is angry	Ella está enfadada
40. We are happy	Estamos muy felices
41. You are bored	Vosotros estáis aburridas
42. They are tired	Ellos están cansados
43. I am nervous	Estoy muy nervioso
44. I am a student	Yo soy estudiante
45. She is ill	Ella está enferma
46. I am very well	estoy muy bien
47. She is very tall	ella es muy alta
48. I am little bit short	soy un poco bajo
49. She is beautiful	ella es hermosa
50. What time is it?	¿Qué hora es?
51. It is 1'o clock	es la una en punto
52. I am sleepy	tengo sueño
53. He looks simple	se ve simple
54. I want to eat	quiero comer
55. What do you like?	¿Qué te gusta?
56. What is your email?	¿Cuál es tu dirección de correo electrónico?
57. There is a dog	hay un perro
58. There is a lamp	hay una lámpara
59. They brush their teeth	Ellas/Ellos se cepillan los dientes
60. She is shy	Ella está tímida
61. He is cruel	el es cruel
62. She makes the breakfast	ella hace el desayuno
63. My favorite color is black	mi color favorito es el negro
64. The tree is green	el árbol es verde
65. The city is clean	la ciudad está limpia
66. He is my boss	él es mi jefe
67. I want black tea	Yo quiero té sin leche

68. Her mother made the dinner	sumadrehizo la cena
69. A glass of juice	Un vaso de zumo
70. He want to stay	el quierequedarse
71. I am a teacher	Soy professor/a
72. I love my family	amo a mi familia
73. Delhi is the capital of India	Delhi es la capital de la India
74. The sky is blue	el cielo es azul
75. He is studying	Él está estudiando
76. I am good at painting	Soy Bueno/a pintando
77. They know each other	Ellas/Ellos se conocen
78. She is naughty	Ellaestraviesa
79. Good bye	Adiós
80. See you soon	<i>¡Hasta pronto!</i>
81. Today is Monday	Hoy es Lunes
82. Well done	¡Muybien!
83. She is bad at mathematics	ellaes mala enmatemáticas
84. Happy birthday	¡FelizCumpleaños!
85. Have fun	<i>¡Diviértete!</i>
86. I don't speak Spanish	<i>No habloespañol</i>
87. Can you say that again	<i>¡Puede repetirlo!</i>
88. I am lost	<i>Estoyperdido</i>
89. I have no idea	No tengoni idea
90. Can you help me?	¿Puede ayudarme?
91. No problem	¡Sin problema!
92. Do you speak English?	¿Hablasinglés?
93. Do you understand?	¿Comprende? / ¿Entiende?
94. Do you have brother or sister?	¿Tieneshermanos o hermanas?
95. How much is that?	¿Cuánto cuesta eso?
96. Welcome	<i>¡Bienvenidos! / ¡Bienvenidas!</i>
97. Congratulation	¡Felicitaciones!
98. She play badminton	Ellajuegabadminton
99. What is this?	¿Quéesesto?
100.Take care	<i>¡Cúidate!</i>

Lexical Analysis

Both the languages have lot of words similar but only 30% - 40% words are similar in both the languages which have the same meaning called as the perfect cognate words.

Perfect cognates

ENGLISH	SPANISH
Admirable	Admirable
Base	Base
Capital	Capital

Carbon	Carbón
Director	Director
Extension	Extensión
Inferior	Inferior
Normal	Normal
Regular	Regular
Visible	Visible

There are some suffixes which make the words similar in both the languages. According to the research conducted in Spain, in May 2015 it was found that:

1. The nouns ending in -“ncia” in Spanish similar to the nouns ending in -“nce” in English, For instance: circunstancia- circumstance; dependencia-dependence; elegancia - elegance.
2. Adjectives that in Spanish end in -“oso”, very often end in -“ous” in English, For instance: famoso-famous; laborioso – laborious, fabuloso - fabulous.
3. Verbs that in Spanish end in -“ificar”, very often in English end in -“ify”, For instance: clasificar- classify, gratificar - gratis amplifier-amplify:
4. Words ending in -“tion” in English, often end in -“ción” in Spanish, For instance: edición-edition; emoción-emotion: ficción- fiction.
5. A lot of words in English containing -“ph” in their spelling, have -“f” in their Spanish variants, For instance: foto - photo, física - physics.
6. English words which contain double letters do not have that doubling in their Spanish equivalent, although there are some words which contain -“rr” both in their Spanish and English variants, For instance: correspondencia- correspondence

Verbal Inflection

Both English and Spanish are inflectional languages as they add inflectional morphemes to their words either as prefix, infix, or suffix (mostly suffix). English inflection indicates noun plural, noun case, third person singular present tense, past tense, aspect, and comparatives. Spanish shows verb distinction for person and number.

A	I	My work is done.	Mi trabajo está hecho
	li	He will go to the market.	El irá al Mercado
B	I	He and I completed this painting.	El y yo completamos esta pintura
	li	Kali, Rahul and Komal will be singing.	Kali, rahul y komal estarán cantando
C	I	She left her house.	Ella salió de su casa
	li	He ate the food.	El comió la comida

Contrastive knowledge based:

In case of subject head based inflection, in single subject; the verb inflects according to the gender and number of the subject as in (Ai) and (Aii). In case of compound subject of different gender connected with and, the verb inflects for plural masculine form as in (Bii). In case of compound subject of different persons connected with and, the number of verb inflects for plural as in (Bi). In Spanish the preference of order doesn't matter. In case of complement head based inflection, no matter subject be masculine or feminine, it's the complement head, which decides the gender or number of the verb as in A(i) and (ii).

In comparison of English and Spanish, Firstly it is seen that both the languages are almost similar to each other having less differences, as they are approximately 30% - 40% similar.

Secondly, if we see phonologically, Spanish has all the alphabets of English but there are some consonants in Spanish which are not found in English, For instance:

- Ch
- Gu
- Gü
- ll
- ñ
- rr

And these extra consonants results in dissimilar alphabetical order of both languages.

Thirdly, the sentence structure of English and Spanish is same i.e. **Subject + Object + Verb**. To contrast, in Spanish we can change the word order of the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence. But this order plays a very vital role in English as the first person, second person and third person play different roles. In Spanish we have a system using suffixes and particles that help to denote the subject and object. Even we see that accent plays a very important role in Spanish as they are used as a stressed syllable. Through the examples of hundred sentences we notice that Spanish uses capital letters much less often than English.

Fourthly, during the lexical analysis it was found that there are some words which have same pronunciation and meaning in both languages; For instance: "Base", "Admirable", "Visible" etc. Even there are some words which differ by their prefix but have same meaning. It was also noticed that in Spanish the words which ends with (o) are mostly masculine, while as words which end with (a / dad / ción / sión / tud) are mostly feminine. And the words which we aren't sure about we take consider them masculine.

Lastly, English and Spanish both are inflectional languages as they add suffix and prefix additionally to make the proper word. The inflection in English can be seen in noun plural, noun case, third person singular present tense, past tense, aspect, and comparatives, while we see inflection in Spanish as verb distinction for person and number; in Spanish the adjectives, nouns are inflected for number and gender as feminine noun or adjective will end with 'a' vowel and masculine with 'o' vowel.

Conclusion

The conclusion comes out that both the languages are interrelated as they both are from same family that is Indo-European. English has borrowed lot more words from Spanish because of which they both are somewhat similar as even their script is same .i.e. Latin. But due to some extra consonants sound in Spanish their alphabetical order differs. However, unlike with most languages, there are multiple ways to spell nearly every phoneme in English but in Spanish the correct pronunciation is important and even you can predict phoneme of a word by looking at its spelling. Both the languages follow same sentence structure which is S+V+O. Approximately 30% - 40% words are same in both the languages as it can be seen lexicostatistical through cognates, even we see that other words due to some suffix have their meaning same but pronunciation and spelling differs. Both of the languages can be considered as inflectional languages as they add suffix and prefix to mark such distinctions as tense, person, number, gender, mood, voice and case

References

Dzhumayov, Georgi. Lexical similarities between Spanish and English, Journal.mu, 2017 <http://journals.mu-varna.bg/index.php/conf/article/view/3886/3429>

Real Academia Española, <https://www.rae.es/> (Accessed on: 7/4/2020)