Affixation and Nativization of Spanish Loanwords: A Classroom Study of Filipino Language Adaptation among Nursing Students

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A B S T R A C T

This study investigates how affixation functions in the Filipino adaptation of Spanish loanwords in actual language use among nursing students. The main objective is to describe the affixes applied to Spanish-derived words and how these morphological changes facilitate their integration into Filipino. Employing a qualitative descriptive methodology grounded in Construction Morphology Theory, data were collected from seventy (70) fourth-year nursing students enrolled in a Basic Spanish course at a public university in Cebu City, Philippines during the academic year 2022-2023. Students' sentence constructions and classroom interactions involving Spanish vocabulary were analyzed to identify affixation patterns and morphological adjustments. Findings reveal that Spanish loanwords undergo inflectional and derivational morphological changes—such as the addition of suffixes (-han, -hin) and prefixes (mag-, nag-, i-)—which enable these words to function naturally as Filipino nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Some loanwords retain their original lexical categories while others acquire new nuanced meanings reflecting contextual adaptation. This dynamic affixation process illustrates the ongoing evolution of the Filipino lexicon shaped by historical and sociolinguistic influences. The study highlights the critical role of affixation in enriching Filipino vocabulary and offers practical insights for language instruction and curriculum design in multilingual classrooms.

R E S U M O

Este estudo investiga como a afixação funciona na adaptação de empréstimos linguísticos do espanhol para o filipino, no uso real da língua entre estudantes de enfermagem. O objetivo principal é descrever os afixos aplicados a palavras derivadas do espanhol e como essas mudanças morfológicas facilitam sua integração ao filipino. Empregando uma metodologia descritiva qualitativa fundamentada na Teoria da Morfologia de Construções, os dados foram coletados de setenta (70) estudantes do quarto ano de enfermagem matriculados em um curso de Espanhol Básico em uma universidade pública na cidade de Cebu, Filipinas, durante o ano letivo de 2022-2023. As construções de frases dos estudantes e as interações em sala de aula envolvendo vocabulário espanhol foram analisadas para identificar padrões de afixação e ajustes morfológicos. Os resultados revelam que os empréstimos linguísticos do espanhol sofrem mudanças morfológicas flexionais e derivacionais — como a adição de sufixos (-han, -hin) e prefixos (mag-, nag-, i-) — que permitem que essas palavras funcionem naturalmente como substantivos, verbos e adjetivos em filipino. Algumas palavras emprestadas mantêm suas categorias lexicais originais, enquanto outras adquirem novos significados matizados, refletindo a adaptação contextual. Esse processo dinâmico de afixação ilustra a evolução contínua do léxico filipino, moldado por influências históricas e sociolinguísticas. O estudo destaca o papel crucial da afixação no enriquecimento do vocabulário filipino e oferece perspectivas práticas para o ensino de línguas e o planejamento curricular em salas de aula multilíngues.

Introduction

A significant portion of the Filipino lexicon, particularly in the educational context, has Spanish roots. Many of these words have been used for so long in Filipino that they have become natural-sounding to native speakers. This is because the Philippines and Spain have a long history of cultural and linguistic influence that has shaped not only the language but also the way Filipinos communicate. However, despite this significant influence on the Filipino language, there has been little research on the adaptation of these Spanish loanwords morphologically, particularly through affixation, into the Filipino language in actual usage, particularly in educational and professional contexts.

Previous research has shown that morphology, or the study of word formation and change, is a significant area of development for languages. Researchers such as Booij (2012) have clarified that morphology is concerned with the parts of speech and their role in word meaning, while Crystal (2008) has pointed out that nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs have different roles in forming sentence meaning.

However, most studies would rather focus on the aspect of borrowing as merely the addition of vocabulary, without probing much deeper into the processes by which borrowed vocabulary is adapted and developed in Filipino through affixes. Contemporary debates (Sandoval, 2017; Mabaquio, 2021) indicate that with the increasing advancements in technology and connectivity around the world, the comprehension of such adaptation processes has never been more crucial.

In Filipino, affixation, or the addition of prefixes, suffixes, and infixes, is a natural process of borrowing words from other languages, particularly Spanish. Gonzales (2008) specifically states that affixation is a process that helps foreign words become part of the Filipino language by adapting and integrating them properly. Omil (2009) also states that when the Filipino language borrows words from other languages, it takes into consideration the appropriateness of the word, the clarity of its meaning, and its prestige.

Borrowing words is not only about copying; it is also about adapting and making them fit naturally into the new language. This is about selecting the right affixes to ensure that the borrowed words feel right at home in the Filipino language. This is an important aspect that highlights the dynamic relationship between the languages and how the vocabulary of the Filipino language becomes richer while still following the rules of the language.

The study will try to delve deeper into this phenomenon, specifically on the affixes that the Filipino language uses for Spanish words, based on the data gathered from nursing students who learned basic Spanish. Since these students are the ones who use the adapted words in their studies and practice, they are very important in understanding how the Filipino language continues to adapt and absorb foreign influences even in a changing world. This study builds upon existing research on Spanish loanwords in Filipino by focusing on their adaptation

within a specific and practical context: the Filipino language classroom, particularly among nursing students. Unlike more general studies, this research investigates real classroom interactions and sentence constructions, providing empirical data on how affixation and nativization operate in natural language use. Such an approach offers important insights into the processes that facilitate the integration of Spanish loanwords into Filipino vocabulary. This classroom-based focus not only contributes to the body of linguistic knowledge but also serves practical purposes for educators aiming to provide more effective language instruction and support to learners.

Related Studies

According to Gonzales (2015), borrowing words from other languages allows a language to acquire more words and concepts. Through the appropriation of words from other languages, the meanings of words in a language become broader and deeper. This results in a more profound understanding and expression of ideas and thoughts. Furthermore, Yip, Smith, Gonzales, and Brown noted that borrowing words from various languages expands and facilitates communication using the language. Through borrowing, an individual or a language itself develops a richer vocabulary. Borrowing enhances vocabulary because it adds words and concepts that may not be original to a language. When words are borrowed from another language, they become part of the vocabulary of the borrowing language. Instead of being limited to words created solely within their own language, words gain deeper and richer meanings through the appropriation of terms from different cultures and languages.

Fernandez (2016) adds that in the context of grammar, the collective categorization of words according to their use and lexical meaning plays an important role in constructing sentences, and their arrangement clarifies the intended message. Smith (2014) taught that nouns and adjectives express the characteristics of a thing, person, or concept. Meanwhile, García (2016) mentioned that adverbs provide meaning to a sentence and show the relationship between words. Overall, the studies by Fernandez, Smith, and Garcia are significant because parts of speech represent an expansion of language based on its context. They provide extensive knowledge about language use in different contexts and enrich the meanings derived from the source language to its application in the target language.

It is a reality that the Filipino language needs to borrow from Spanish and other languages to address the widespread influx of new cultural items and concepts brought about by modernization and technology. Additionally, the average Filipino often code-switches and freely borrows words regardless of the language variety used, whether spoken or written. Notably, the 2001 Revision states that the equivalent lexicon or Filipino terms should be used in borrowing, and if there are indigenous words that can contextualize them, those should be utilized. The two mentioned steps are part of the process of adapting borrowed words into Filipino; however, these efforts often go unnoticed and underutilized (Napoleon, 2017; xii).

In Sandoval's study (2007; 9), the topic "Guide or Manual on Spelling" is discussed, comparing guidelines for correct spelling in meticulous writing manuals and the editing guide of SWF. In her analysis, she noted that the 2001 revision on borrowing foreign words laid out steps that should be followed. According to the guide, the first step is to use the Filipino lexicon as a substitute; if that is not available, one should look for equivalents in other indigenous languages. If no equivalent can be found, it should be written in Filipino based on the original pronunciation, and if that is still not possible, it may be borrowed without changes under the following conditions: it must be a proper noun, a technical or scientific term, a word with a unique cultural meaning, and words with irregular spelling.

According to Almario (2014; ii), the 2001 Revision has limitations, described in the project as an unfinished endeavor aimed at providing comprehensive guidance for an active and evolving language. Each rule is temporary and requires broader thinking from language advocates to understand the changes occurring. The manual demonstrates the capacity to address potential issues that may arise and changes in meaning. Therefore, understanding the earlier changes and reforms brought about by the development of the Filipino language is essential.

Meanwhile, in the Editing Guide, the guidelines for adapting the spelling of borrowed words from Spanish into Filipino are thoroughly described. For borrowing from Spanish, the correct spelling of words is emphasized, and the conventional method of spelling should be used. It is taught that it is important to maintain the original spelling of terms used in academic and professional contexts, as well as words with special cultural meanings, words that would lose their identity if their spelling were altered, and words that are recognized in their original form.

From this, it can be determined that the discussion on borrowing and the methods of spelling in the mentioned books is not very in-depth. The deeper discussion in the Spelling Guide focuses on borrowing from Spanish, which has a significant part in the Filipino language, while the 2001 Revision clearly outlines the steps for borrowing foreign words. There are indeed guidelines for writing in Filipino regarding borrowing, but these create confusion, as stated in the KWF manual, which requires that borrowed words be presented in Spanish and pronounced according to the alphabet.

In emerging discussions, especially in technology, education, commerce, and economics, the method of writing is often not prioritized, as attention is more focused on effective communication (Mabaquio, 2021). In summary, when following the rules based on the two writing guides, the natural process of language development currently emerging is overlooked, and the expansion of Filipino seems constrained by the aforementioned rules, particularly in borrowing. Therefore, this current study will examine the natural process of adapting borrowed Spanish words into Filipino based on their usage and the affixation applied to them within actual classroom discussions.

Katamba (1993) stated that morphology is a branch of linguistics that develops knowledge and study about the structure of words. This means that morphology encompasses concepts and terminology related to the formation and analysis of words. In this field, morphologists view words as units composed of morphemes. A morpheme is the smallest unit of sound that carries meaning within a word. By studying morphemes, one can identify and understand the changes and differences in the meanings and structures of words.

Morphology encompasses various aspects of a word, including changes in the form of words (such as the addition of affixes or alterations in sounds), methods of word formation (such as combining morphemes), and categories of words (such as nouns, verbs, pronouns, and others). Through the study of morphology, it becomes possible to conduct informative descriptions and analyses of words and how they are formed. This allows us to understand and explain the regularities and rules governing word formation in a language.

In general, what Katamba stated indicates that morphology is a discipline of linguistics that develops knowledge and study about the structure of words. It enables us to understand the combination and organization of morphemes to form words and provides a deeper understanding of language as a system of communication.

On the other hand, derivational morphology is a type of morphology that examines the rules by which words are formed without specific grammatical functions within a sentence. It studies the processes of word formation through the addition of affixes or the removal of parts of words. Examples include the formation of root words, the use of affixes such as nouns and pronouns, or other processes that change the form of words. Derivational morphology is concerned with the study of words that have related origins or words that have different forms, meanings, or uses.

In summary, the two traditional types of morphology-inflectional morphology and derivational morphology—aim to understand the various ways in which words are formed and changed in a language. Inflectional morphology focuses on studying changes in form related to the grammar of sentences, while derivational morphology concentrates on the processes of word formation without specific grammatical functions. These types of morphology provide a deeper understanding of the structure and development of words in a language.

According to Bauer's paradigm (1983), morphology consists of two main aspects: word formation and inflection. These aspects are further divided into two parts: (a) derivation and (b) composition. Derivation is a process in morphology where words are formed by adding affixes or altering parts of words to create new words with different meanings or words related to a root word. Through derivation, words with various forms, such as nouns, verbs, and others, are derived from a single root word.

Composition, on the other hand, is a process in which words are formed by combining two or more words to create a new word with a meaning different from the original words. In composition, words come together to form compositional words that have meanings that are

combinations of the root words. An example of this is the combination of "gabi" (night) and "lakad" (walk) to form the word "gabing-lakad" (night walk).

Bauer's paradigm emphasizes two main aspects of morphology: word formation and inflection. Word formation is further divided into derivation and composition, where derivation aims to create new words by adding or changing parts of words, while composition seeks to form words by combining two or more words.

This division provides a deeper understanding and study of the processes involved in word formation within a language. In response to Chomsky's (1965) invitation, his article "Remarks on Nominalization" discusses the importance of morphology, particularly the process of word formation, in the context of transformation theory. In his article, Chomsky illustrates the significance of morphology in the study of language and understanding the processes of word change. It is said that morphology reflects the regulations and changes occurring in the structure of language at the word level.

In the field of transformation theory, the process of word formation describes the mechanisms and development of words in a language. Through the study of morphology, one can understand the fields and methods by which words are formed from root words, the use of affixes, and other aspects of word formation. Studies in morphology provide information and contributions to transformation theory, which aims to understand the processes of development and change in languages over time. By analyzing the process of word formation, one can realize the changes in the structure of language and their implications for understanding and studying language. Overall, Chomsky's invitation to discuss the importance of morphology, particularly the process of word formation, emphasizes its role in understanding the mechanisms of change in language. Research in this area aims to comprehend the processes of development and change in languages, which has profound implications for language theory and the overall study of languages worldwide.

In general, the studies and related literature mentioned above are a significant part of the path taken by this paper.

Methodology

The research method used in this study was qualitative, with a descriptive-qualitative design, to examine the data in depth. Using this design, the objective of this research was to gain in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon by describing in detail the context, experiences, and use of Spanish-borrowed words prefixed in Filipino, specifically among nursing students.

The data gathered from the research was collected using questionnaires and class interaction records from seventy (70) fourth-year nursing students taking the Basic Spanish course during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023 at a public university in Cebu City, Philippines. These students, mostly female, belonged to different ethnic groups such as Cebuano, Samareño, Leyteño, Boholano, and Mindanaueño.

The participants were engaged in classroom exercises that involved constructing sentences or questions using Spanish lexical items, which were later adapted into Filipino through the use of affixes. These exercises mimicked real-life situations such as discussing occupations, household items, things, and actions, hence providing authentic data to study the processes of affixation and adaptation.

This research is based on Mr. Booij's (2002) Construction Morphology Theory, which studies the morphological construction of words and the structure of language through meaningful constructions in their context. This theory was used to study the morphological process of affixation by which Spanish loanwords are adapted into naturalized Filipino words.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was done at a public university in Cebu City, Philippines, which is known for having a diverse student population. The participants of the study were seventy (70) fourth-year nursing students taking the Basic Spanish course during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The majority of the participants were females, and they belonged to Cebuano, Samareño, Leyteño, Boholano, and Mindanaueño ethnicities.

Data-Gathering Instruments

The data were collected mainly through a questionnaire and through class interactions and activities in Spanish. The participants created sentences or asked questions using Spanish vocabulary adapted with Filipino affixes. The data collected included contexts such as asking questions, giving directions, talking about professions, persons or objects, parts of the house, tools, workplaces, and using Spanish verbs.

The data was also collected through actual classroom discussions where students used Spanish loan words and their adapted Filipino forms, among others.

The data was collected through administering questionnaires in class, actual classroom interactions, and written exercises involving Spanish loan words with Filipino affixes.

Data Validation and Analysis

Data triangulation was used to confirm results by comparing data from questionnaires, tape-recorded verbal interactions, and written products. Debriefing sessions with Filipino linguistics specialists assisted in examining morphological categorization and ensured the rigor of analysis.

Analysis included qualitative content analysis on morphological patterns based on Construction Morphology Theory. This entailed:
1. Identifying Spanish loanwords and analyzing their affixed Filipino counterparts.
2. Categorizing affixes as either derivational or inflectional.
3. Analyzing phonological changes like reduplication and segmental changes.

4. Investigating changes in lexical classing or categorization after affixation.
5. Contextual analysis of semantic expansion or adaptation.

Manual coding with the aid of qualitative analysis software supported in-depth examination of morphological patterns and affixation mechanisms.

Replicability

The level of detail in describing participants, data sources, validation procedures, and analysis methods has created a replicable framework for future research on affixation in Filipino or other languages that have been influenced by Spanish borrowings.

Delimitation of the Study

The study only focused on the analysis of Spanish loan words adapted into Filipino using affixes in the context of interactions among nursing students in one public university in Cebu City. The study only focused on fourth-year nursing students since their Basic Spanish course offered a convenient context for data gathering due to their active use of Spanish loan words in their professional and social communication.

The study is limited to the identification of affixes and the analysis of morphological shifts observable in words used by the students within a semester (2022-2023, second semester). It did not cover other universities, other fields of study, and other periods of observation. Further, the adaptation processes were limited to the Cebuano-dominated sociolinguistic environment and could differ in other regional or ethnic environments in the Philippines.

Although the sample is fairly homogeneous with respect to course and year, the ethnic diversity represented in the sample does provide a certain amount of depth to the data, although care must be taken not to generalize the results too widely. Finally, it should be noted that the processes of affixation were examined exclusively in the context of Spanish loanwords, without regard to syntax, phonology, or semantics.

Results

The table below shows the words borrowed from Spanish and the affixes used to contextualize them in Filipino. Based on Martin's study (2005), affixation is an important mechanism for expanding the lexical structure of the Filipino language. It demonstrates that the acceptance of borrowed words into the Filipino vocabulary is part of the expansion and intellectualization aimed at connecting the thoughts of each field using the National Language.

Below is the table of words (morphemes in Spanish) that have been affixed as observed in actual discussions.

Table 1.

Affix Type Frequency and Token Frequency

Affix Type	Morphological Function	Token Frequency (n)
-han	Locative / Collective	7
nag-	Agent Focus	4
mag-	Agent Focus	2
-in	Verbalizer	2
-hin	Verbalizer	1
i-	Verbalizer	1
na-	Verbalizer	1
Total		**18**

The suffix -han has the highest frequency with 7 occurrences. The suffix -han is a locative/collective suffix that usually forms a noun indicating a place or area related to the root word (e.g., sine → sinehan).

The high frequency of the suffix -han (7 out of 18) shows that the strategy of nominal extension by locative formation is productive in extending Spanish-derived roots to Filipino. It should be noted that the suffix -han does not change the part of speech of the word: (Noun → Noun), but rather its scope.

The Spanish words that have been Filipinized and augmented with the suffix -han are shown below.

Table 2.

The Spanish words that have been Filipinized

Root	Filipino	-han	Lexical Category
cine	sine	*sine + -han > "sinehan"*	noun
tienda	tinda	*tinda + -han > "tindahan"*	noun
café	kape	*kape + -han > "kapehan"*	noun
lata	lata	*lata + -han > "latahan"*	noun
candado	kandado	*kandado + -han > "kandadohan"*	noun
sampaguita	sampagita	*sampagita + -han > "sampagitahan"*	noun
carne	karne	*karne + -han > "karnehan"*	noun

It can be observed that there is no lexical change in the words from their original lexical class. The words cine, tienda, café, lata, candado, sampaguita, and carne are used as nouns in Spanish, but they undergo inflectional changes when translated into Filipino and added with -han. This is a way of expanding words in Filipino while contextualizing them without changing their nature, yet they carry new meanings.

Agent-Focus Prefixes: nag- and mag-

The total number of occurrences of the agent-focus prefixes nag- and mag- is 6 out of 18. The agent-focus prefixes nag- and mag- are used to transform nominal roots into verbs. This indicates that Spanish nouns were incorporated into the Filipino verb system to denote actions (Noun → Verb shift).

The frequency of the agent-focus prefixes indicates that the process of verb creation through agent-focus constructions is another productive pattern in the corpus.

In Agent Focus, the subject or topic performs the action expressed by the verb. The affixes **mag-** and **nag-** are attached to the verb.

(1) **Nag-**kotse   si   Kevin.
      Perf. Agent-salita   NOM.Sing.   Kevin
      'Nagkotse si Kevin.'

(2) **Nag-** paplato   ang   tita.
      Imperf. Agent-salita   NOM.Sing.   tita
      'Nagpaplato ang tita.'

(3) **Mag-**sisilya   sila.
      Contemplative Agent.-salita NOM.3rd pers. Pl
      'Magsisilya sila'

Verbalizing Affixes: -in, -hin, i-, na-

Four other affixes in the data are verbalizers, namely -in (2 instances), -hin (1 instance), i- (1 instance), and na- (1 instance). Taken together, these make up five instances in the data. Like the agent-focus prefixes nag- and mag-, these affixes turn Spanish loan nouns into verbs, thus changing their category from Noun to Verb. The occurrence of these affixes in the data further supports the idea that the role of derivation, especially verbal derivation, in the morphological incorporation of Spanish loanwords into Filipino cannot be overemphasized.

Of the total 18 affixed tokens identified in the dataset, 7 are instances of nominal retention via the suffix -han, while 11 are instances of derivational verbalization via the suffixes nag-, mag-, -in, -hin, i-, and na-. This pattern is evident enough to show that verbalization is more common than nominal retention in the dataset. This means that Spanish-derived nouns are more likely to be verbalized than nominalized.

The results show that the Spanish lexical elements are not only borrowed and retained in their original grammatical patterns. Rather, they are incorporated into the Filipino morphological patterns in a more active manner. This is done through three major processes: the locative nominal formation with -han, the agent-focus verbalization with nag- and mag-, and the transitive or derivational verb formation with -in, -hin, i-, and na-. The greater use of verbal forms indicates that the Filipino grammatical system does not accept the borrowed roots passively but rather transforms them according to its own productive morphological patterns.

A great number of Spanish nouns are actually reanalyzed and used in the Filipino verbal forms so that they can be used actively in the language.

Morphological Classification

The data reveal that of the total 18 affixed tokens, 7 are categorized as inflectional, and 11 are considered to be derivational. The only inflectional affix that has been found is -han, which comprises all seven instances of this category. In these cases, the lexical form of the word is not altered (Noun → Noun). The affix -han is generally used as a locative or collective suffix, adding to the meaning of the root noun without changing its grammatical function.

Table 3.

Inflection vs Derivation

Category	Affixes	Token Frequency
Inflectional (N→N)	*-han*	7
Derivational (N→V)	*nag-, mag-, -in, -hin, i-, na-*	11
Total		18

On the other hand, the other eleven instances are categorized as being part of the derivational morphology group. These include the affixes nag-, mag-, -in, -hin, i-, and na-. The derivational category involves a change in the lexical form of the word, from noun to verb (Noun → Verb). This means that the Spanish-derived nouns were converted into verbs by the addition of Filipino affixes. The greater number of instances of the derivational category suggests that the morphological adaptation of the data is more verb-oriented than noun-oriented.

Derivation of Words

The table shows the derivation of words from nouns. It can be observed that the prefixes -in, mag-, and i- are used with the root when converting them into verbs. In the word sapatos (zapatos), there is a reduplication of the first syllable when prefixed with mag-; "mag + sa + sapatos." A similar process occurs with the word casar – kasal, where the prefix i- is added and the first syllable of the root is reduplicated; "i- + ka + kasal - ikakasal."

Table 4.

Derivation

Root	Stem	Lexical Category
tenedor (noun)	*tenedorin*	verb
ventana (noun)	*namintana*	verb
zapatos (noun)	*magsasapatos*	verb
cochillo (noun)	*kutsilyuhin*	verb
gastos (noun)	*gastosin*	verb
casar (noun)	*ikakasal*	verb

The table shows the derivation of words from nouns. It can be observed that the prefixes -in, mag-, and i- are used with the root when converting them into verbs. In the word sapatos (zapatos), there is a reduplication of the first syllable when prefixed with mag-; "mag + sa + sapatos." A similar process occurs with the word casar – kasal, where the prefix i- is added and the first syllable of the root is reduplicated; "i- + ka + kasal - ikakasal."

On the other hand, the word ventana becomes bintana in Filipino. Although it follows the manual process as a guide for writing, there are omissions and additions of morphemes when it is converted into a verb. When the prefix na- is added, the /b/ is removed and replaced with /m/ in the root word.

Similar to the suffix *-han*, the suffix *-hin* is attached to the root word when it is used as a verb in a sentence. An example of this is the word cochillo, which is a noun that takes on the suffix *-hin* to become a verb when Filipinized.

Reduplication

Reduplication appeared in 16.7% of the overall tokens and was found only in agent-focus constructions. Although it appeared in a limited number of instances, its occurrence is of linguistic importance in the sense that it shows that Spanish-derived stems are amenable to prosodic and morphological operations that are native to Filipino. In particular, the borrowed forms indicate phonological accommodation, compatibility with the morphological pattern of Filipino, and full integration into the aspect-marking system via rule-based reduplication. The extent of integration here is such that the borrowed lexical items are not viewed as foreign additions but are instead incorporated into the pre-existing grammatical patterns.

Table 5.

Reduplication in Corpus

Reduplication Occurrence	Token Frequency
With Reduplication	3
Without Reduplication	15
Total	18

nagpaplato	**magsisilya**	**magsasapatos**
nag- paplato -plato	mag.si.silya	mag.sa.sapatos
AF.IPFV-RED -plate	*AF.CONT-RED* -chair	*AF.CONT-RED* -shoes
'is plating' / 'is using plates	*'will use a chair'*	*'will wear shoes'*

Ambiguous Cases

The following decision rules were used to handle ambiguous cases: (1) phonological/orthographic modifications without productive Filipino affixes were not to be counted in affixes (e.g., vowel marking or spelling modification); (2) lexicalized historical

variants were considered established lexemes and not productive affixation; (3) reduplication was marked only if it was a recognized aspect marker in Filipino verbal morphology; and (4) orthographic variants were normalized before counting to prevent double-counting of the same lexical entry.

Example:

cruel - kruwel - "malupit" > adjective
serio - seryoso - "seryoso" > adjective

Phonological/Orthographic Adaptation

For instance, serio becomes seryoso in Filipino. Although there is an added vowel (-o), this is a case of phonological adaptation and not the addition of a productive Filipino affix. Since no productive affix like *mag-, nag-, or -han* was added, seryoso was not included in the count of affixes. Also, cruel becomes kruwel, which is an adaptation of spelling to conform to Filipino orthography.

Lexicalized Historical Forms

The term lamesa, which comes from the Spanish word *la mesa*, is already lexicalized in Filipino. Since it is used as a fixed lexical item and not as a product of affixation, it was considered as an established lexeme and was not included as an affixed form.

Reduplication

The reduplication in the form of *nagpaplato* has reduplication (pa-) as part of the imperfective aspect. Since reduplication is a morphologically functional process in the Filipino language, it was considered a valid morphological process. But if it were merely repetition (stylistic repetition), it would not be counted.

Orthographic Normalization

The words *"zapato"* and "sapatos" were first normalized based on the spelling rules followed in Filipino orthography. This prevented variant spellings of the same word from being double-counted in the frequency calculation.

All potentially ambiguous words were carefully screened before being included in the analysis. Words that had only changes in pronunciation or spelling, such as seryoso (from serio) and kruwel (from cruel), were eliminated as they did not have productive Filipino affixes. Lexicalized historical forms, such as lamesa, were considered established words rather than newly affixed words. Reduplication was considered only when it was a grammatical marker for aspect in Filipino. Finally, spelling variants (such as zapato and sapatos) were normalized to avoid double counting.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the role of affixation in the Filipino adaptation of Spanish loanwords. Using a qualitative descriptive approach framed by Construction Morphology Theory, data were gathered from seventy nursing students at a university in Cebu, who actively used Spanish terms in class-generated sentences and interactions.

The analysis focused on the morphological processes that loanwords undergo in Filipino, particularly inflection and derivation using affixes such as *-han, -hin, mag-*, and *nag-*. Results demonstrate that affixation enables Spanish loanwords to be naturally incorporated into Filipino vocabulary, preserving or expanding their meanings while conforming to Filipino grammatical norms.

These findings confirm that affixation is a vital linguistic tool contributing to vocabulary expansion and lexical integration influenced by historical Spanish presence. The study also emphasizes practical relevance for language educators and a deeper understanding of language evolution driven by cultural and social dynamics. Furthermore, the mechanism of affixation facilitates deeper intellectualization and expansion of thought across various fields using the National Language. These changes demonstrate the ability of the Filipino language to adapt and evolve in response to societal and cultural changes, resulting in inflectional and derivational modifications of words.

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