

Arabic Influence on the Spanish Language



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Introduction

Castellano. Español. Spanish. An offshoot of Vulgar Latin now spoken by over 400 million people around the globe [15]. This particular language grew out of the northern region of Iberia, surviving peninsular conquest by both Visigoths and Moors. Yet it did not survive these eras unaltered. And so this report looks at the particular influences that Arabic, brought by the Moors, has had on the evolution of Spanish. After a brief discussion of the relevant history, including the mingling of Romance and Arabic seen with the Mozarabs, we will take a look at the most prominent contribution of Arabic to Spanish, which is vocabulary. Then we will work our way through the structural levels of linguistics – semantics, syntax, morphology and phonology – and explore some of the more subtle interactions of these two languages.

History

This paper is not directly concerned with the historical events surrounding Arabic rule in the Iberian Peninsula, but a brief summary of that history is necessary to provide a context for the linguistic concerns at hand. Before the arrival of the Moors in the eighth century, the peninsula had accommodated Celtic, Roman and Germanic peoples, each adapting to or replacing the language and culture of their predecessors to varying extents. Then in 711, driven by the directives of Islam, Moors from Northern Africa came across the Strait of Gibraltar and, over the next couple decades, usurped virtually the entire peninsula from Visigoth rule. As shown in Figure 1, the Franks repelled the Moors' push into the rest of Europe. So the Moors settled down in the land they had already conquered, and there their kingdom of Al-Andalus stood for the next several centuries.

Figure 1 – The Moorish Conquest of Iberia



For the first part of Moorish rule, the Hispano-Roman Christians and Jews were allowed to freely continue their religious practices, resulting in some form of Arabic-Romance bilingualism among the non-Moorish people. These people were called *Mozarabs* from the Arabic word for ‘one who imitates Arabs’. Eventually, this linguistic encounter resulted in the now-extinct language of *Mozarabic*. Having grown under Arabic domination, Mozarabic did not develop its own orthography, but rather was an *aljamía* (i.e., used Arabic script) [4]. The primary extant examples of Mozarabic are *Jarchas* – poems of Arabic-origin that were written in Arabic or Hebrew. Figure 2 shows one such Jarcha and its Spanish and English translation.

Figure 2 – A Mozarabic Jarcha

Transliteration from Arabic Script	Transcription (approximate)	Spanish Translation	English Translation
mw sīdī 'ibrāhīm y' nw'mn dl̄y f'nt myb dy n̄jt in nwn š nwn k'rš yrym tyb grmy 'wb 'f̄rt.	meu 'sidi 'Ibrahim, ya 'nuemne 'doltše, 'fente mib de 'nojte. in non si non ker'iš ir'eime tib 'garne a ob. a fer-te.	Señor mío Ibrahim, oh nombre dulce, vente a mí de noche. Si no, si no quieres, ireme a ti; dime adónde a verte.	My lord Ibrahim, oh name so sweet, come to me by night. If not, if you do not wish, I'll go to you; tell me where to find you.

In this Jarcha, we see that Mozarabic is notably similar to Spanish, particularly by Mozarabic-Spanish word pairs such as *doltše-dulce* (line 2), *fente-vente* (line 3), *keriš-quieres* (line 5) and *ireime-ireme* (line 6). There are several evident ties to both Arabic and Latin as well. Notably, we have from Arabic the word *sidi* ('lord') and the particle *in* (with *non*, 'if not'). An artifact from Latin – less visible in Spanish than Mozarabic – is the form of the personal object pronouns *tib* (line 6) and *mib* (line 3), which are from the Latin *tibi* and *mihi*. [7,9,18]

With the arrival of more radical Muslim tribes, the Almorávides and Almohades in 1090 and 1146, respectively, religious intolerance drove the Mozarabs out of Al-Andalus [4]. Many of them fled to Asturias, beyond the Cantabrian Mountains (see Figure 1), where other Hispano-Goths held their ground against the Moorish Invasion. It is often argued that the several-century growth of Mozarabic, followed by the coexistence of Mozarabs with the early Castilians in Asturias, is the major channel by which elements of Arabic entered Spanish. Regardless, the remnant of Mozarabs was later wiped out during the Christian Reconquest. [18]

The Asturian defense against the Moors gradually became the offensive campaign known as the Reconquest of Spain. Within 300 years of the Moors entering Spain, six distinct kingdoms had arisen from the small, unconquered region in the north and had reconquered a third of the peninsula (Figure 3a). The progress of the Reconquest was aided by the dissolution of the central political power of Al-Andalus. By 1150, the Moors controlled less than half of Iberia, and the Kingdom of Portugal came into existence (Figure 3b). Castile became the predominant Kingdom by 1300, at which point the Moors had been pushed back to an area no bigger than Asturias, from whence the reconquerors had begun their campaign (Figure 3c). [18] Granada, the final stronghold of the Moors in Spain, is taken in 1492. Furthermore, all the kingdoms of the peninsula, except Portugal, were united under Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, and so became the Spanish Empire. [5]

Figure 3a – Reconquest by AD 1000



Figure 3b - Reconquest by AD 1150



Figure 3c - Reconquest by AD 1300



Lexical Influence

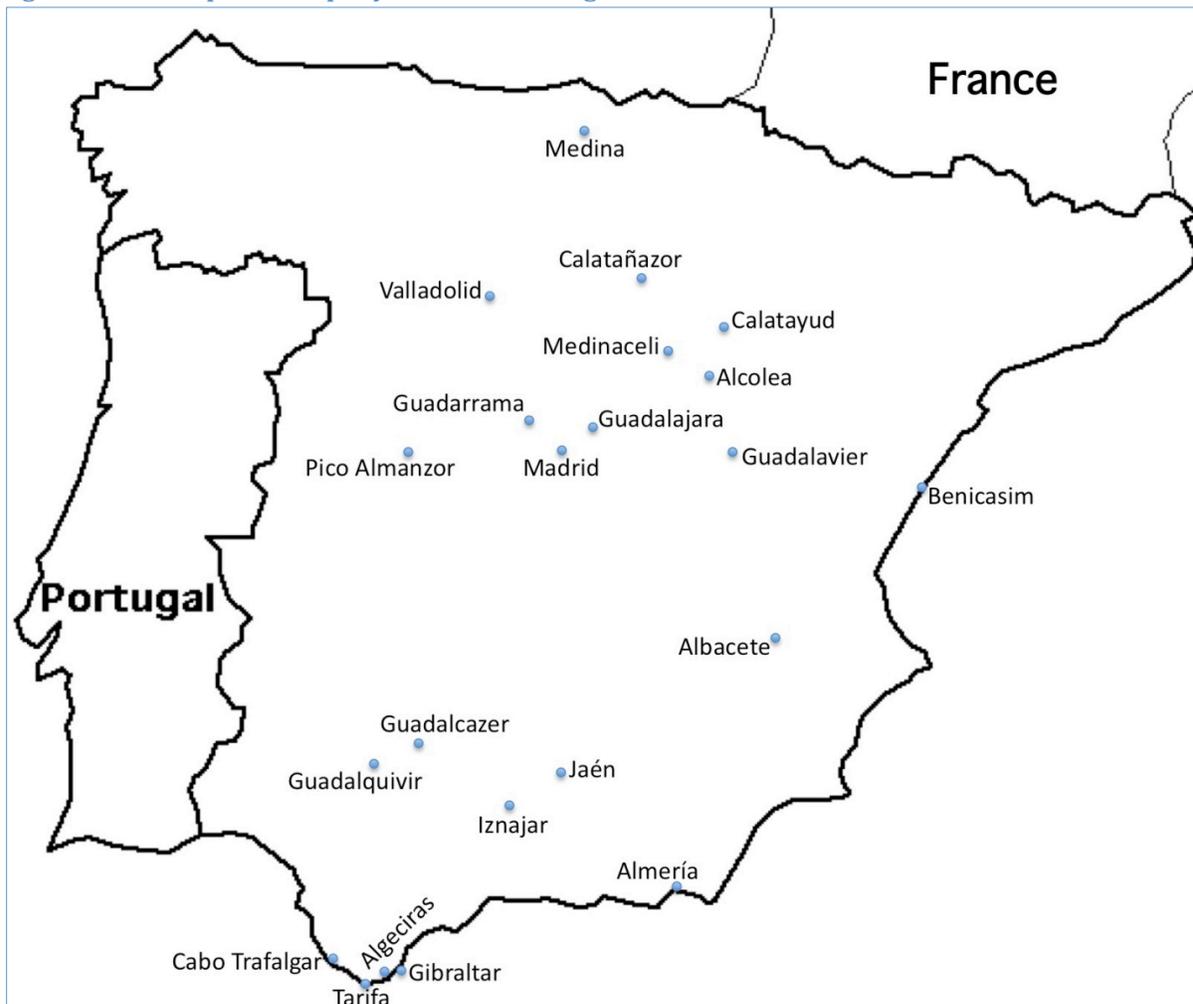
There is no doubt that the greatest linguistic influence of Arabic is lexical. Some 8% of Spanish vocabulary is of Arabic origin [19]. This includes some hundreds or thousands of modern locations and geographic features that still hold the place-names they received from the Moors. Figure 4 shows only 22 of these toponyms¹, including Tarifa, Gibraltar, Cabo Trafalgar and Algeciras in the area where the Moors first entered the peninsula. Tarifa is named after *Tarif*, the first Muslim in Spain. Gibraltar comes from *jabal Tariq*, meaning ‘mountain of Tariq’ and named after the Muslim general who led the attacks on the peninsula [9]. Between Tarifa and Gibraltar is Algeciras, from the Arabic for ‘the (green) island’ - *al jazeera (al khadra)*. Throughout Spain, it is commonplace to find toponyms contain “Guada-”, which comes from the Arabic word *wadi* meaning ‘river’ or ‘valley’. Some examples are Guadalajara (*wadi al-hijarah*, ‘river/valley of stone’), Guadalcazar (*wadi al-qasr*, ‘river/valley of the castle’), and Guadalaviar (*wadi al-abyad*, ‘white river’). The Arabic word *wadi* was even paired with a Latin word *lupus* to produce the toponyms Guadalupe (‘wolf river’). The name given by the Moors to their entire peninsular domain was *Al-Andalus*, meaning ‘the Vandals’, in reference to the Visigoths that had ruled the land before them. During the Reconquest, Al-Andalus was retaken by the Romance people in the north, and eventually became Andalucía, the southernmost autonomous community of peninsular Spain. For more Arabic and partially-Arabic toponyms, including all shown in Figure 4, see Appendix 1.

Along with the locations that were established or renamed by the Moors during their conquest, Spanish is filled with military words that reflect the means by which they took control, as well as the administrative and infrastructural words that reflect their continued

¹ Locations found via Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com>)

control. The military-related words Spanish gained include: weaponry, such as *adarga* ('shield') from Arabic *ad-daraqah* and *alfanje* (a type of sabre) from *hanğar*; people, such as *alférez* ('lieutenant') from *al-fāris* ('the gentleman') and *algara* ('cavalry') from *al-gārah*; and structures, such as *alcázar* ('fortress') from *al-qaṣr* and *atalaya* ('watchtower') from *at-ṭalā'i*. Spanish words that came from the continued Moorish rule include: officials, such as *alcalde* ('mayor') from *al-qāḍī* and ('bailiff') from *al-wazīr*; and administrative areas, such as *aldea* ('village') from *al-ḍay'ah* and *arrabal* ('suburb') from *ar-rabaḍ*.

Figure 4 - Some Spanish Toponyms of Arabic Origin



Furthermore, the immense influence that the Moors had on architecture, economics, and agriculture are monumental topics in their own right. But here, we continue to focus on the vocabulary that came into Spanish as a result of that influence. From architecture, for example, we have: buildings, such as *fonda* ('inn') from *funduqah*; and structural elements, such as *zaguán* ('hallway') from *uṣṭuwān[ah]* and *zaquizamí* ('attic') from *saqf shami*. Some Arabic-origin terms in economics include: words directly regarding currency, such as *alcancía* ('money-box') from *al-kanz* ('the treasure') and *arancel* ('tariff') from *al-inzāl*; as well as relevant people and places, such as *azogue* ('market') from *as-sūq* and *zarracatín* ('profiteer') from *sāriqu ttīn* ('fig thief'). The agricultural terms that Spanish gained from Arabic are bountiful, including: plants, such as *algodón* ('cotton') from *al-quṭn* and *limón* ('lemon') from *laymūn*; animals, such as *acémila* ('mule') from *az-zāmilah* ('beast of burden'); people, such as *arriero* ('muleteer') from *harr* (an expression used to urge on a camel) and *rabadan* ('head shepherd') from *rabbu ḍḍa'n* ('man/lord of sheep'); and appliances, such as *almazara* ('oil mill') from *al-ma'ṣarah* and *noria* ('water wheel') from *nā'ūrah*.

The occurrence of Arabic words also reaches into the domestic and personal lives of the Iberian people. The lexical impact on domestic life is seen in: food, such as *albóndiga* ('meatball') from *al-bunduqah*, *café* ('coffee') from *qahwah* and *taza* ('cup') from *ṭassah* or *ṭast*; clothing, such as *albornoz* ('bathing robe') from *al-burnūs* and *camisa* ('shirt') from *qamis*; and craft, such as *recamar* ('embroider') from *raqm* and *alcántara* (a part of a yarn loom) from *al-qanṭarah* ('the bridge'). In the more social part of life we find: instruments, such as *aldufe* ('tambourine') from *al-duff* and *guitarra* ('guitar') from *qitarah*; and other terms found in festive occasions, such as *alcohol* from *al-kuḥl* and *zahora* (a wild/festive party) from *saḥūr* or *suḥūr* (a meal taken during Ramadan).

One interesting aspect of the era of Arabic rule in Iberia is that, although the Moors held to extremely orthodox forms of Islam, they accepted, and even encouraging, all manner of open science and philosophy among the great thinkers [3]. And so, while the rest of Europe entered the Dark Ages, the Iberian Peninsula acted as a center of culture and learning, especially translating Greek writings. With the rise of intellectual centers in Al-Andalus such as Córdoba came concepts of: mathematics, such as *álgebra* from *alğabru walmuqābalah* ('reduction and comparison') and *cifra* ('zero') from *şifr* ('empty'); astronomy, such as *cenit* ('zenith') from *samt* and *almanaque* ('calendar') from *munāh* ('above the caravan', stars were compared to camels en route); physical sciences, such as *azogue* ('mercury') from *az-zāwq* or *az-zā'ūq* and *alquimia* ('alchemy') from *al-kīmiyā*; and medicine, such as *alferecía* ('epilepsy') from *al-fāliğ* and *elixir* from *al'iksīr*.

One exceptional influence of Arabic in more modern times is the toponym Zahara de los Membrillos, which combines Arabic *zahra* ('flower') and Spanish *de los Membrillos* ('of the quinces'). Another is the Spanish word for air stewardess (*azafata*), derived from an antiquated Spanish word for a tray or a low basket (*azafate*), which comes from the Arabic word *as-safat* meaning 'the (wicker) basket'. As with *azafate*, many more Spanish words that came from Arabic – although they remain in the official dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy [21] – have gone out of common use. This was particularly the case after the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609, whose practices and customs has sustained the relevance of Arabic-origin words [16]. Furthermore, according to Arnold,

words borrowed from Arabic, which have survived in literary Spanish, are gradually dropping out under the influence of journalism. Spanish journalism, and particularly Spanish-American journalism, is strongly influenced by Paris, and the so-called 'Latin press'

(prensa latino) has no love for words which are not immediately intelligible in any Latin country. [3]

Regardless of their diminished popularity, Spanish words with Arabic origin still abound. For a far more extensive – yet far from comprehensive – list of these words than what has been mentioned up to this point, see Appendices 2.

Semantics

Along with the large proportion of Spanish vocabulary borrowed directly from Arabic, there exist abundant words and phrases whose meaning is derived from Moorish idioms, concepts of Islam, and other semantic characteristics of the Arabic language. Since these expressions can require extensive context or subtle cultural understanding, and since the origins of the particular connotations of a word or phrase can be nigh impossible to trace, it is far more difficult to create the sort of catalogue of expressions as we have for specific words (Appendices 1-2). Nevertheless, we will describe a few of the more prevalent examples here.

In Arabic, as with other Semitic languages, the word for ‘son’ (*ibn*) can be used to express someone’s nature, rather than just their biological heritage. For example, the phrase “son of wealth” refers to a rich man. This use of ‘son’ is not commonly found in Romance languages, except in the Iberian Peninsula. In Spanish, for example, the word for nobleman or gentleman, *hidalgo* (also *hijodalgo*, *fidalgo* and *fijodalgo*), is literally translated “son of something [of value]”. [4,5]

We also see in Spanish, but not in other Romance languages, an additional meaning of the word for ‘shame’ (*vergüenza*), which appears to be Arabic in nature. Castro gives the following translation for a line from the *Crónica de Alfonso XI* in *Bibliotexa de Autores Españoles*, LXVI: “And those few companions who stayed with the King were knights and

squires, and the others whom the King had reared in his house and in his grace; but they were all men of good heart, and in whom there was shame [vergüenza].” Here, the word is of a virtue, implying loyalty and honor. We see this sort of meaning also in the use of the Arabic word *ḥayyat*, which means ‘to live, to protect life, to be ashamed’. [5]

A variety of Spanish proverbs can be traced to sayings in the Qur’an. For instance, the phrase *burro cargado de ciencia* (“ass burdened with knowledge”) is used to express how a person’s knowledge, no matter how extensive, is relatively naught. This is seen in the following passage in the Qur’an (62,5): “The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah and then did not take it on is like that of a donkey who carries volumes [of books].” (Sahih International Trans.) [4,20]

Within numerous expressions of casual Spanish conversation, there often exists a strong likeness to Arabic expression. Probably most well-known is the interjection *¡Ojalá!*, which is derived from the phrase *law šá lláh*, meaning “if Allah wills [it]”. In similar form to this, Spanish has received from the Moors *si Dios quiere* (“if God wills [it]”), *Dios mediante* (“by means of God”), and *Dios te ampare* (“[may] God protect you”) [16]. After picking up bread that has fallen on the floor, a person in Andalucía might say *es pan de Dios* (“It is God’s bread”), which was a practice among the Moors (*‘āysh Allāh* – “Allah’s bread”) [4,22]. When visiting somebody in Spain, one might be told *ya sabe que ha tomado posesión de su casa* (“know that you have taken possession of your home”), which can also be traced back to Moorish practice [22]. These are all just a few prime examples of how the language, culture, and religion of the Moors have influenced Spanish semantics.

Syntax

Unlike the case with semantics, there is hardly any notable syntactic influence on Spanish from Arabic. Aside from a few function words, some correlation is found between the Iberian languages and certain phenomena. For example, the subject generally precedes the object in Romance languages, but there appear to be more verb-subject occurrences in Spanish and Portuguese than elsewhere in Europe; Arabic has verb-subject word order. However, that such correlations imply causation is only theory until more rigorous studies take place. [13]

The function words in Spanish that have origins in Arabic include the preposition *hasta*, which is generally traced to the Arabic word *ḥattá*, though it also has ties to Latin *ad ista*, meaning ‘to this’. Also, the adverbial phrases *de marras* (referring to something already know or stated), *de balde* (for free), and *en balde* (in vain) come from Arabic *murrah* (“once”) and *bāḥil* (“useless”); these are sometimes considered particles. The indefinite pronouns *fulano/a* and *mengano/a* are from Arabic *fulān* (“that one”) and *man kān* (“the one who is” or “the one who would be”), respectively. Recall in the early discussion of idiomatic expressions, we mentioned that the interjection *Ojalá* is from Arabic; the interjections *hala*, *arre*, *harre*, and *guay* are also sometimes attributed to Arabic origin. [13,16] Most of these contributions to Spanish, however, are as much lexical as they are syntactic.

Morphology

It is difficult not to notice a frequent presence of *a-* or *al-* at the start of so many Spanish words of Arabic origin. These come from the Arabic article *al*. The occurrence without the *l* is due to the allomorphs of /al/ that occur in Arabic when the article is directly followed by a “solar letter” (dentals, sibilants, approximants, and /n/). In this case, the /l/ is assimilated to its

subsequent solar letter. [13] For example, *ad-dalīl* (> *adalid* = ‘leader’), *az-zahr* (> *azahar* = ‘citrus blossom’), *ar-rubb* (> *arrope* = boiled down fruit juice), and *an-naḥr* (> *añafil* = a Moorish trumpet). Since the words that came into Spanish from Arabic were transferred orally, sometimes the article was picked up as part of the word. There are even scattered examples of *al-* prefixed on other words and toponyms of non-Arabic origin, such as: *alcanzar* (‘to reach’) from Latin *incalciare*, *almena* (‘battlement’) from Latin *minae*, and *Almonaster* from Latin *monasterium* (‘monastery’). The important thing to note is that the addition of *a-* or *al-* at the start of words occurred while the Moors were still in the peninsula. These words in modern Spanish are now solitary lexical units; the initial syllable does not provide any additional information, either syntactically or lexically, to the rest of word and the rest of the word does not mean anything in Spanish without it. Any semblance of a productive morpheme the *al-* might have possessed in the early Castilian language is now gone, and thus it is not generally considered an affix in Spanish.

Along with the abundance of *a-* and *al-* words in Spanish, there are numerous words that end in *-í*. If we ignore the preterit first person singular conjugation of *-er* and *-ir* verbs, we find that many of the words ending in *-í* are of Arabic origin: *jabalí* (“wild boar”), *marabedí* (an Arabic coin), *baladí* (“worthless”), etc. Although they appear to be completely unrelated words, the similar ending comes from a common source in Arabic – the genitive case. The word *jabalí* is from the Arabic word *ḡabalī* meaning “of a mount”. *Marabedí* was a gold coin, and is a shortened form of the Arabic *mitqāl murabiṭī*, meaning “dinar of gold”. Finally, *baladí* used to mean “of the land” or “of the country”, which was the meaning of its Arabic source *baladī*. [16] Also, in the 13th century, the era of Alfonso X was referred to as “*la era alfonsí*”; and in 1951,

Menéndez Pidal used the word *andalusí* (‘regarding Al-Andalus’) in contrast to *andaluz* (‘regarding Andalucía’). [13]

More notably, the *-í* ending that resulted from the Arabic genitive case can be found in Spanish demonyms or gentilics (words for a person’s location or origin). A person from the Spanish city Ceuta in Morocco is a *ceutí*. A person from Marbella in Andalusia is a *marbellí*. And a person from Santa Coloma de Queralt in Catalonia is a *colomí*. Spanish also uses demonyms ending in *-í* for a good portion of the Arabic-speaking nations of the world. For example, a *bahreíní* is from *Bahréin* (Bahrain), a *marroquí* is from *Marruecos* (Morocco), and a *yemení* is from *Yemen*. With many more examples (Figure 5), *-í* is a fairly commonly recognized allomorph of the Spanish morpheme for creating demonyms.

Figure 5 - Spanish Demonyms Ending in -i

Demonym in Spanish	Location in Spanish (details in English)	Official Language(s) in English
bagdadí	Bagdad (in Iraq)	Arabic
bahreíní	Bahréin (Bahrain)	Arabic
bengalí	Bangladesh	Bengla
catarí	Qatar	Arabic
ceutí	Ceuta (of Spain, in Morocco)	Spanish
colomí	Santa Coloma de Queralt (in Catalonia, Spain)	Spanish
iraquí	Iraq	Arabic
israelí	Israel	Hebrew/Arabic
kuwaití	Kuwait	Arabic
magrebí	Magreb (a region of North Africa)	Arabic
malauí	Malawi (Malawi)	English
malí	Malí	French
marbellí	Marbella (in Andalusia, Spain)	Spanish
marroquí	Marruecos (Morocco)	Arabic
nepalí	Nepal	Nepali
omaní	Omán	Arabic
pakistaní	Pakistán	Urdu
saudí	Arabia Saudí (Saudi Arabia)	Arabic
somalí	Somalia	Somali
tunecí	Túnez (Tunisia)	Arabic
yemení	Yemen	Arabic

Some of the more common gentilic allomorphs are *-ano*, *-ense*, *-eño*, *-ero*, and *-es*. The major difference between *-í* and the other suffixes is that *-í* is relatively unproductive. In almost every occurrence, even those for non-Arabic-speaking locations, the demonym was taken entirely from the language of the locale. Suffixes such as *-ano* (e.g., *peruano*) and *-eño* (e.g., *puertariqueño*), are commonly affixed to Spanish toponyms to create demonyms, and can be used when new toponyms enter the language – thus they are productive. One of the few examples that can be used to support the productivity of *-í* is the replacement of *nepalés* with *nepalí* for a person from Nepal. However, even this change could be influenced by the demonym used in Nepal: नेपाली, /nēpālī/ [2]. Likewise, aside from the two aberrant occurrences mentioned at the end of the previous paragraph, *-i* is unproductive for non-demonymic use. [11,13]

Phonology

Although it is argued that Arabic did not contribute any distinctly novel phonetic units to the Romance languages developing in the Iberian Peninsula, the phonological differences between Arabic and early Castilian can explain some of the alterations to pronunciation that occurred, both in new words from the Moors and in preexisting words of Greek or Latin origin. We will discuss a variety of examples, regarding first vowels, then consonants. In this section, languages are abbreviated when demonstrating the evolution of a word: GR for Greek, LAT for Latin, AR for Arabic, ARSP for the Romance language that existed during the Moorish Rule, OSP for Old Spanish, and SP for Modern Spanish.

There is a well-documented phonological phenomenon that occurs with Arabic vowels called *'imāla*: partial or complete assimilation of /ā/ to the /ī/ of an adjacent syllable, resulting in /ē/ or /ī/ rather than /ā/. An example of this is in the toponym: LAT *Hispalis* > ARSP *Isbilīa* > SP

Sevilla. [14] Some other changes occurred due to different vowel inventories. Arabic has three locations (/a, i, u/), two levels of openness, and a distinction of duration (e.g., /a/ versus /a:/). The Latin-based language present in the peninsula, however, had 3 levels of openness and no distinction of duration. We also see the modification and substitution of some Arabic diphthongs. For example: /aw/ became /o/, as with AR *al-ḥawz* > SP *alfoz* ('set of towns in a single jurisdiction') and AR *as-sawṭ* > SP *azote* ('whip'); and /aj/ became /e/ or /ej/, as with AR *al-mays* > SP *almez* ('nettle tree') and AR *al-bayṭar* > SP *albéitar* ('veterinarian'). [13,16]

Changes also occurred due to difference in available consonants and consonant use between the Arabic and Spanish. First of all, the unvoiced alveolar fricative /s/ of Castilian was often mispronounced by the Moors as the unvoiced affricate /š/, represented by *x*, which later became /x/, represented by *j*. Thus: LAT *sapōnis* > OSP *xabon* > SP *jabón* ('soap'); LAT *sepīa* > O. Sp *xibia* > SP *jibia* ('cuttle fish'); LAT *satureia* > ARSP *aššatrīyya* or *aššitrīyya* > SP *ajedrea* ('savory', a flower); LAT *Salonem* > OSP *Xalon* > SP *Jalón* (in Valencia); and LAT *Saramba* > SP *Jarama* (by Madrid). Though the Moorish invasion affected many preexisting toponyms, others locations were retaken quickly enough by the Christian Reconquest to avoid it. [7,17]

Since Arabic contains many uvular and pharyngeal sounds that were not present in early Castilian, these were changed to one of /f, x, g/ or dropped altogether: AR *al-ḥarakah* > SP *alharaca* ('fuss'), AR *al-ḥinnā'* > SP *alheña* (a shrub), AR *raḥl* > SP *rafal* ('farm/house in a field'), AR *al-hury* > SP *alfolí* or *alholí* ('warehouse/barn'), AR *al-ḥarrūbah* > SP *algarroba* ('carob bean'); AR *al-‘arrādah* > SP *algarrada* (a war machine), AR *al-‘arīf* ('expert') > SP *alarife* ('architect' or 'master of arts'). [16]

Furthermore, some word-final consonants and consonant clusters that exist in Arabic, including the ending of masculine nouns, did not exist in early Castilian pronunciation. The

result was generally epenthesis of a vowel or substitution of the consonant(s) with /n/: AR *suq* > SP *zoco* ('market'), AR *al-'ard* > SP *alarde* ('show'), AR *al-ğubb* > SP *aljibe* ('well'), AR *al-'aqrab* > SP *alacrán* ('scorpion'), AR *al-muhtasib* > SP *almotacén* ('market inspector'). [16]

Other evident changes that occurred during the Moorish era include /b/ > /p/: LAT *pastināca* > SP *biznaga* ('Bishop's weed'), LAT *Ostippo* > SP *Teba* (in Málaga, Andalusia), and GR *Περσικόν*, /persi'kon/ > SP *albérechigo* ('apricot'). Also, /st/ > /z/ or /s/: LAT *Basti* > SP *Baza* (in Granada, Andalusia), AR *musta'rab* > SP *mozárabe*, AR *ustuwān* > SP *zaguán* ("hallway"), and LAT *Caesar Augusta* > ARSP *Saraqusta* > SP *Zaragoza* (in Aragón). And finally, /k/ > /tʃ/ or /s/: LAT *acetařia* > SP *acedera* ('vinegar'), and LAT *Ilice* > SP *Elche* (in Alicante, Andalusia). [13,16,17]

Conclusion

Although the abundance of Arabic words present in Spanish is the most notable linguistic influence left by the Moors in the Iberian Peninsula, we also find a handful of semantic, syntactic, morphological, and phonologic characteristics that can be traced to the Moors. The semantic influences can be hard to trace, the syntactic influences are relatively minimal, the morphological influences lack productivity in modern Spanish, and the phonological changes are no more extreme than what might be encountered over the history of a much more isolated language group. Nevertheless, each level of influence from Arabic contributes to the characteristics that make Spanish, as well as Portuguese, so wonderfully distinct from other Romance Languages.

Appendix 1 – Spanish Toponyms of Arabic Origin

Spanish Toponym	Arabic Source	English Translation
Albacete	al-basit	the plain
Alcalá	al-qal'ah	the fort/castle
Alcolea	al-qal'ah	the fort/castle
Algarbe	al-garb	the west
Algeciras	al-jazeera (al-khadra)	the (green) island
(Pico) Almanzor	Al-Mansur Ibn Abi Aamir	(de facto ruler of Al-Andalus c. 1000)
Almedina	al-madīnah	the city
Almería	al-mirayah or al-Meraya	the mirror or the watchtower
Almonaster	al [Latin: monasterium]	the monastery
Alpuente	al [Old Spanish: puente]	the bridge
Alpujarras	al-bashurah	the bastion/news
Andalusia	Andalus	Vandals (i.e., the Visigoths)
Benicasim	Bani Qasim	son of (Ar. name)
Calatañazor	qal'at al-nasur	fort of the eagles
Calatayud	qal'at Ayyub	fort of Job
Gibraltar	jabal Tariq	mountain of (Arabic general)
Guadalajara	wadi al-hhijarah	valley/river of stone
Guadalcazar	wadi al-qasr	valley/river of the castle
Guadalén	wadi [???	fountain river
Guadalquivir	wadi al-kabir	great river
Guadalupe	wadi al [Latin: lubb]	wolf river/valley
Guadalviar	wadi al-abyad	white river
Guadarrama	wadi [???	??? river/valley
Iznájar	hisn	fortified zone/place
Jaén	jayyen	crossroads of caravans
Madrid	majri	(a type of breeze)

Spanish Toponym	Arabic Source	English Translation
Mancha	mandza	high plateau
Maqueda	makādah	firm/stable
Medina	madīnah	city
Medinaceli	madinat Sa lim	city of (Arabic name)
Tarifa	Tarif	(first Muslim in Spain)
(Cabo) Trafalgar	Taraf al-ghar	(Arabic name)
Valladolid	balad al-Walid	town of (Arabic name)
Vega	buq'ah	field
Zahara de los Membrillos	zahara [Spanish: de los membrillos]	flower of the quinces

Appendix 2 – Spanish Words of Arabic Origin²

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
aceifas	[a summer military expedition]	šā'ifah	summer expedition / harvest
aceite	olive oil	azzayt	
aceituna	olive	zaytūnah	
acelga	chard	silqah	
acémila	beast of burden / mule	zāmilah	beast of burden
aceña	water/flour mill	sāniyah	elevated / lifted
acequia	ditch	sāqiyah	irrigated
acicalar	adorn	šiqāl	tool for polishing/burnishing
adalid	leader	dalīl	
adarga	shield	daraqah	
adarme	[weight/measure]	dirham	
adarve	path behind a parapet	darb	
adarve	a defensive wall	darb	
adelfa	rosebay	diflā	laurel
adobe	sun-dried mud brick	ṭūb	
aduana	customs	dīwān	
aduar	gypsy camp	duwwār	
ajedrez	chess	šīṭranġ	
ajimez	arched	šams	
ajorca	anklet	šuruk [pl. of širāk]	thick (leather) strip/cord for tying
alacena	cupboard	ḥizānah	
alacrán	scorpion	'aqrab	
alajú	[a honey treat]	ḥašw	fill(ing)
alambique	(alcohol) still	inbīq	
alamín	clerk who checks weights	amin	
alarde	show / parade	'arḍ	
alarife	architect / master of art	'arīf	expert
albacea	executor of a will	wasiyah	
albanega	hair net	banīqah	
albañil	bricklayer / mason	bannā'	
albarda	saddle [for cavalry]	barda'ah	
albaricoque	apricot	burqūq	
albayalde	[a white, lead-based paint ingredient]	bayāḍ	
albéitar	veterinarian	bayṭar / bayṭār	
alberca	artificial pool	birkah	
albóndiga	meatballs	bunduqah	
albornoz	bathing robe	burnūs	
alboronía	made into stew	būrāniyya	[a stew name after Būrān]
albricias	[a gift for good news]	bušrā	

²The etymology of every word (except Proper nouns) has been verified using the Spanish Royal Academy's Dictionary of the Spanish Language [21].

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
albufera	lagoon	buḥayrah [dim. of baḥr]	(small) sea
alcachofa	artichoke	ḥuršūf(ah)	
alcaide	governor / warden	qā'id	
alcalde	mayor	qāḍī	
álcali	alkali	qily	soda
alcancía	money-box	kanz	treasure
alcándara	perch [for a bird]	kandarah	
alcandía	sorghum	quṭniyyah	
alcanfor	camphor	kāfir	
alcántara	[part of a loom for yarn]	qaṭarah	bridge
alcaraván	stone-curlew [a tropical bird]	karawān	
alcatifa	tapestry	qaṭifah	
alcázar	fortress	qaṣr	
alcoba	bedroom	qubbah	
alcohol	alcohol	kuḥl	
alcorque	overshoe	qurq	
alcotán	lanner falcon	qaṭām	
alcuza	olive oil can	kūzah	
aldaba	door knocker	ḍabbah	lizard
aldarga	[a leather shield]	daraqah	
aldea	village	ḍay'ah	
Aldebarán	[a constellation]	Al-dabarān	the follower
aldufe	tambourine	duff	
alerce	[a conifer]	arz(ah)	cedar(s)
aleve	treacherous	'ayb	defect / blemish / mark of disgrace
alfahar	craft of a potter	faḥ ḥār	ceramics / pottery
alfajeme	barber	ḥaḡḡām	
alfalfa	alfalfa	fiṣfiṣah	
alfanje	[a sabre]	ḥanḡar	
alfayate	tailor	ḥayyāt	
alféizar	flared opening	ḥā'izah	that which takes possession
alferecía	epilepsy	faliḡ	
alférez	lieutenant	fāris	gentleman
alfiler	needle	ḥilāl	
alfócigo	pistachio	fustuq	
alfolí / alholí	barn / warehouse	hury	
alfombra	carpet	ḥumrah / ḥanbal	redness / used fur-lined coat
alfoz	[a set of towns in a single jurisdiction]	ḥawz	
algalia	civet oil	ḡāliyah	
algara	cavalry	ḡarah	
algarrada	[a war machine]	'arrādah	
algarroba	carob (bean)	ḥarrūbah / ḥarnūbah	
álgebra	algebra	alḡabru walmuqābalah	reduction and comparison
algodón	cotton	quṭn	

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
algoritmo	algorithm	ḥisābu lġubār	calculation by means of Arabic numerals
alguacil	bailiff / constable	wazīr	
alhaja	jewel	ḥāġah	something necessary/valuable
alharaca	fuss	ḥarakah	
alhelí	[a wallflower]	ḥīrī	
alheña	[a shrub]	ḥinnā'	
alhóndiga	public house for wheat sales	funduq	
alicate	pliers	laqqāt	tongs / pliers
aljibe	well	ġubb	
aljófar	pearl	ġawhar	
aljuba / jubón	men's jacket	ġubbah	
almacén	storehouse	maḥzan	
almadén	mine/mineral of some metal	ma'din	
almagre	red iron oxide	maġ(a)rah	red earth
almalafa	woman's robe	miḥafah	
almanaque	calendar	munāḥ	above the caravan [stars were compared to camels en route]
almarraja	plant watering bottle	miraššah	
almazara	oil mill	ma'šarah	
almeja	clam	majjah	
almejía	short coat	mawšīy	embroidered for enhancement
almenara	surplus water channel	manārah	
almez	nettle tree	mays	
almíbar	[a quince drink]	maybah	
almirante	admiral	amīr	
almizcle	musk	misk	
almogávar	raider	muġāwir	
almohada	cushion	miḥaddah	
almohade	of the Almohades	muwaḥḥid	monotheist
almojábana	[a bread made with cheese]	ġubn	cheese
almojarife	royal treasurer / finance minister	mušrif	
almoneda	auction	munādāh	
almoradux	marjoram	marzanġūš	
almotacén	market inspector	muhtasib	
almud	[weight/measure]	mudd	
almunia	farm	munyah	wish / desire
alquería	farm / rural farm area	qaryah	
alquermes	[an alcoholic drink]	qirmiz	
alquiler	rent	kirā'	
alquimia	alchemy	kīmiyā(')	
altramuz	lupine	turmus	
alubia	(kidney) bean	lúbiyā'	
ama	mistress of the house	umm	
anafe	small stove	nāfiḥ	blower
añafil	[a Moorish trumpet]	naḥr	

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
añil	indigo	nīl(ağ)	
arambel	wall hanging	ḥanbal	used fur coat
arancel	tariff	inzāl	
arcaduz	bucket	qādūs	
argolla	iron sheep fence	ḡull	[a trap/tool made with two heavy logs]
arrabal	suburb	rabaḍ	
arrayán	[a shrub]	arrayḥān	
arrecife	stone paved road	raṣīf	paved / cobbled
arrede	[weight/measure]	raṭl / riṭl	
arriero	muleteer	harr	[expression used to urge on camels]
arroba	[weight/measure]	rubʿ	
arrope	boiled down fruit juice	rubb	
arroz	rice	āruz(z) / aruz(z)	
arsenal	arsenal	dār aṣṣināʿah	house of the industry
atalaya	watchtower	ṭalāʿiʿ	
atanor	pipe	tannūr	furnace / culvert / curbstone
atarjea	small drain	tašyīʿ	accompaniment
ataujía	an inlaid design	tawšiyah	
atún	tuna	tunn	
auge	apogee	awğ	
azafate	tray / low basket	safaṭ	(wicker) basket
azafrán	saffron	zaʿfarān	
azagaya	light spear	zağáyah	
azahar	citrus blossom	zahr	flowers
azar	chance / coincidence	zahr	flowers
azogue	mercury	zāwq / zāʿūq	
azogue	market	sūq	
azote	whip	sawṭ	
azotea	terrace roof	saṭḥ	terrace
azúcar	sugar	sukkar	
azucena	white lilies	sūsanah	
azud	waterwheel	sudd	
azul	blue	lāzaward	
azulejo	tile	zulayğ	
azumbre	[weight/measure]	ṭum[u]n	eighth part
babucha	slipper	bābūš	
badana	poor-quality leather	biṭānah	lining / cover
baladí	of little importance / of the earth/country	baladī	of the county
baldío	untilled	bāṭilah	something empty/vain
baldosa	paving tile	balat	
barbacana	[a low wall]	bāb albaqqāra	cattle door
barrio	neighborhood	barrī	wild / savage
berenjena	eggplant	bāḍiṅḡānah	
café	café / coffee	qahwah	

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
califa	caliph	ḥalīfah	vicar
camisa	shirt	qamis	
carmesí	crimson	qirmizi	
ceca	currency mint	sikkah	
celemín	[weight/measure]	thumni	
cenit / cénit / acimut	zenith	samt / assumūt [pl.]	
chirivía	parsnip	jiriwi ya	
chupa	dress	ḡubbah	
cifra	zero / digit	ṣifr	empty
daza	panic grass	duqsah	
elixir	elixir	al'iksīr	
escabeche	brine	sikbāḡ	
espinaca	spinach	isbānah / isfānah	
estragón	tarragon	ṭarḥūn	
fanega	[weight/measure]	fanīqah	[bag for carrying soil]
fonda	inn	funduqah	
fulano	chap	fulān	
gandul	loafing	ḡundar	spoiled / pampered
garrafa	carafe	ḡerraf	
garrido	elegant	gharī	
gazpacho	[a Moorish soup]	khabz mushrib	soaked bread
guadamecí	embossed leather	ḡadāmisī	from Ghadama [in Libya]
guarismo	cipher	Khuwarizmi	
guitarra	guitar	qītarah	
halagar	flatter	jalaqa	pigeon thief
hasta	until	hatta'	
hóndiga	grain exchange	funduq	
horro	free / liberty [exclamatory]	ḥurr	free
jabalí	wild boar	ḡabalī	of a mount
jaharro	plaster	hawarh	
jara	rockrose [a shrub]	ša'ra'	earth full of vegetation
jarabe	[a drink]	šarāb	
jarifo	showy	šarīf	noble
jarra	earthen jar	ḡarraḥ	
jazmín	jasmine	yāsamīn	
jofaina	washbasin	ḡufaynah [dim. of ḡafnah]	
laúd	lute	'ūd	
limón	lemon	laymūn	
maquila	[weight/measure]	makīlah	measured thing
marabedí	[ancient Spanish coins/monetary unit]	mitqāl murabiṭī	dinar of gold [an Arabic coin]
marlota	outer skirt	mallūṭah	
medina	old neighborhood [in an Arabic city]	madīnah	
mezquino	wretched	maskin	palace subject
mozárabe	Mozarab	musta'rab	one who imitates Arabs

1. Spanish Word	2. English Translation	3. Arabic Source (Transcribed)	4. English Translation (If Different from Column 2)
muladí	[Spanish Christian who embraced Arabic rule]	muwallad	born of a non-Arabic mother
nadir	nadir	naẓīr	homologous
naranja	orange	nāranġ	
noria	water wheel	nā'ūrah	
Ojalá		insha' Allah	if God wills
olé	[injection like 'bravo']	wa-Allah	
quilate	karat	qīrāṭ	
quintal	[weight/measure]	qīntar	
rabadan	head shepherd	rabbu ḍḍa'n	man/lord of sheep
rábida	[a Muslim fort]	ribāṭ	[Muslim station for one dedicated to holy war/piety]
rafal	farm/house in a field	raḥl	point of encampment
rahez	vile	raḥīṣ	cheap
rebato	central/community alarm of danger	ribāṭ	
recamar	embroider	raqm	
redoma	flask	raṭúm	narrows of the vulva
rehala	combined flock	riḥālah	camel saddle
rehén	hostage	riḥān	
retama	[a bush]	ratamah	
robda	riders acting as castle watch	rubṭ	
robda	tax on cattle herding	rutbah	
sofá	couch	ṣuffah	
tabique	thin wall	tašbīk	to place/install grates
tambor	drum	tanbur	
taracea	inlaid	tarṣī'	encrusting
tarea	task	ṭrḥ	to throw / to put
tarifa	price list	tacrifah	
taza	cup	ṭassah / ṭast	
trafalmejas	empty-handed	atraf al-nas	
turjimán	interpreter	turjuman	
zabra	frigate	zawraq	
zaga	defense / behind	sāqah	
zagal	young shepherd	zuġlūl	boy/young man
zaguán	hallway	uṣṭuwān(ah)	
zahora	[a wild/festive party]	saḥūr / suḥūr	[a meal taken during Ramadan]
zalmedina	lord of the city	ṣāḥību lmadīnah	boss of the city
zanahoria	carrot	safunnárya	
zaque	wineskin	zīqq	
zaquizamí	attic	saqf shami	
zaragüelles	breech	sarāwīl	
zaratán	breast cancer	saraṭān	crab / crayfish
zarracatín	profiteer	sāriqu tīn	fig thief
zoco	market	suq	
zorzal	thrush	zurzūr	
zubia	water channel	zubyah	

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