

# Corpus-based Lexicography: Insights into the Use of *Otaku* in Mexican Spanish

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## Abstract

Cultural media exchanges between Japan and Mexico have led to the incorporation of numerous Japanese loanwords into Mexican Spanish. In this paper, we explore the loanwords adopted due to the cultural influence of Japanese animations broadcast in the early '90s on Mexican public television. It is noteworthy that these lexical borrowings have not yet been addressed in current lexicographic studies, and these lexical units are absent from both printed and online dictionaries, including pan-Hispanic and loanword dictionaries.

To stimulate the study of Japanese loanwords in Mexican Spanish from a lexicographic point of view, this paper is dedicated to a general exploration of the lexical units that pertain to the semantic field of entertainment, specifically animation and light novels. We focus in the analysis of a single word, which is the most recognizable modern Japanese loanword in Mexican Spanish: *otaku*. Furthermore, we have identified examples in which *otaku* has a negative connotation and can be used as a derogatory term. This phenomenon is further explored for its relevance to both the fields of sociolinguistics and lexicography, the latter being our main focus. To help understand the nuances of the LU we attempt to present the data found in a lexical entry for *otaku* based on the ECD (Explanatory Combinatorial Dictionary) text-to – meaning definition and Mel'čuk's lexicographic theory. This will serve as a ground for developing entries for general dictionaries.

**Keywords:** Corpus-based Analysis, Loanwords, Semantics, Mexican lexicography

## Introduction

With the rise of Japanese soft power, there has been a parallel increase in the use of Japanese words in Mexican Spanish. It is, therefore, not uncommon to hear these words on a day-to-day basis (e.g., *maruchan*, *kawaii*, *emoji*, *bento*, etc.) which have not been included in dictionaries. Users of this newly adopted lexicon are noted to be in age groups ranging from those born in the late 80's to the newest generations. Among these words, none carries as much polarity as the main focus of our study: the word *otaku*, which roughly translates as a person who has a deep interest in Japanese (or Asian) culture. Initially, we associated this term with negative connotations, as if the speaker were using it disapprov-

ingly or derogatorily to refer to this particular type of person. This observation is based on our lexicographic intuition.

In the next segments of this paper, we will consider some of the potential limitations and the methods we have chosen to address them. Additionally, we will discuss the state of the art in the study of lexical borrowings for Mexican Spanish. Furthermore, we will examine the characteristics and particularities of the Lexical Unit in question, including the newly adopted nuances that have developed during its assimilation into Mexican Spanish compared to its equivalent in the source language (SL) and other aspects such as its morphological properties.

Based on the above, this paper will be organised as follows:

1. Framework and Data: This section delimits the study's scope. It also explains the need for the subsequent point.
2. Corpus: The characteristics and compilation of a corpus that can provide the required data for this study.
3. Loanwords: Specifically, we examine the nature of lexical borrowing phenomena between Japanese and Spanish.
4. Morphological Characteristics: This section explores features related to lexical borrowing.
5. The Semantic Range of 'Otaku': Continuing our focus, we delve into the semantics and range of the term 'otaku.'
6. Text to Meaning Approach: Here, we propose a lexicographic approach.
7. Conclusion: We wrap up the current exploration.

## 1. Framework and Data

In the present study, we do not concern ourselves with the success rate of these loanwords, or in other words, how well adapted and assimilated these loanwords are in Mexican Spanish. This also includes raw frequencies, which do not contribute to the objective of this paper. Instead, our focus lies specifically on the semantic and synonymic properties of the lexical units that accompany the word *otaku*. Despite its recent adoption, it appears that this lexical unit's characteristics are more informal and predominantly used in spoken language. As a result, there is a lack of documentation for its usage in written form, which impedes a complete and thorough analysis. For this reason, the compilation of a new corpus is required (Section 2), although it might not fully capture the aforementioned polarity of the word *otaku*. A diachronic study might provide a better understanding of its complete scope.

Even though many Japanese loanwords have permeated Mexican Spanish, we will focus on the entertainment context due to the existing literature of an academic and journalistic nature that deals directly with the *otaku* semantic field and related topics. This focus, however, is not without risks, and the existence of a thematic bias must be recognized, as it could lead to a skewed analysis and "does not necessarily mean that this lexical item has become more entrenched in the receptor language (RL) vocabulary" (Zenner et al. 2012:752). Henceforth, we will employ the term 'receptor language' (RL) to denote Mexican Spanish, in accordance with Zenner's theory. Rather than focusing on the success of appropriation

in the RL, we will examine the semantic application given by speakers. Furthermore, we highlight the lack of lexicographic research in this context and present other lexical units of Japanese origin in Mexican Spanish found throughout the ongoing research, which can be considered for future studies.

As for similar research, most existing studies are case studies conducted in very specific settings (see: Carrillo & Valderrama, 2020; Pignata & Menti, 2021) that do not have the same focus as our study. To our knowledge, there is no lexicographic research on Japanese loanwords within the Mexican context or in the broader pan-Hispanic framework. An exception to this is the work of Fernández-Mata, who has conducted extensive research into these lexical borrowings. His studies are, in our opinion, the most exhaustive in the modern lexicography of loanwords for the broader Spanish-speaking context. For this reason, we refer to Fernández-Mata's studies (2017, 2019) on current Japanese loanwords. However, we believe his research adopts a very Spanish-centric point of view, as it does not account for dialectal variations such as the Mexican context or any other regional differences. Despite this limitation, we consider his work a valuable starting point, from which we draw differences that apply directly to Mexican Spanish. Thus, we decided to build a new corpus to analyze our objectives specifically within the Mexican lexicographic field. It is important to note that Fernández-Mata's research does not entirely correlate with our study due to the differences between Mexican and Spanish lexicons. Nevertheless, we consider his research valuable for setting our framework and formulating a more comprehensive study.

## 2. Corpus

Mexican Spanish has undergone its particular development and evolution, so we aimed to build a corpus that is intrinsically Mexican (created by national researchers and speakers) and separated from other variations. This approach helps to avoid the "lack of acknowledgment in our cultural specificity" (Trigo, 2012), especially since other supposedly "pan-Hispanic" dictionaries often have a Eurocentric view and frequently overlook Latin American variations.

This corpus (CJMX) has been compiled from various text sources, including books, theses, scientific papers, and journalistic articles in fields such as social anthropology, communication, sociology, literature, and language, among others. These texts deal with core aspects of the *otaku* sociocultural phenomenon. It is worth noting that a large percentage of these texts do not focus particularly on this phenomenon but reference aspects of *otaku* culture in a passing manner. Taking this into account, our corpus cannot reflect all the borrowings from Japanese present in Mexican Spanish but rather a fragment of the loanwords from the entertainment semantic field, with a focus on light novels, graphic novels, animation, and related works. Furthermore, considering the nature of several of these terms as mentioned in the introduction, we initially attempted to incorporate this aspect. However, the conspicuous lack of data has dissuaded us from doing so, leading us to focus primarily on written data.

The corpus of the CJMX comprises over 950k words. After compilation, our focus shifted to extracting a word list based on least frequency, omitting several terms using a specific stopword list—apart from grammatical words—such as *agenciamiento*, *americanización*, *argot*, and *cholos*, which, though infrequent, are irrelevant to our study. Subsequently, we manually filtered out non-Spanish words not established in lexicographic works, limiting

our consideration to those of Japanese origin. This led to the exclusion of other non-Japanese words. We identified a total of 145 Japanese words, among which 39 relate to our primary lexical unit (LU) and the entertainment semantic field. These were categorized into four semantic groups. The first category encompasses Japanese animation genres, totaling 18 units, which have retained their specificity and thus require no further lexicographic treatment. Notably, we excluded the “hentai” genre, as it is already included in general dictionaries. The second category comprises art and writing styles, ranging from historical to contemporary concepts, with 6 lexical units. The third category delineates concepts associated with industry personnel or characteristics, comprising 7 units. Finally, the fourth category comprises 8 concepts either too specific or common expressions not confined to the entertainment semantic field.

These lexical units could be further classified based on their usage characteristics, distinguishing between those that have transitioned into general language usage and those confined to specific contexts within particular social groups. With the aim of making our study more concise, corpus findings have been cross-referenced with Mexican Spanish and pan-Hispanic dictionaries (DEM, DEUM, DREA) to discard any lexical units that already have received lexicographical treatment (See Table 1 for the final list). Additionally, the purpose of such a comparison is to highlight the fact that the loanwords we are dealing with in this study have only recently come into use and consequently, these have begun to receive attention from linguists in our country for even less time.

### 3. Loanwords

We draw mainly from Haugen’s (1950) typology of loanwords in which he defines three different lexical borrowings: 1. Loanwords, 2. Loanblends, and 3. Loanshifts. According to the nature of phenomena occurring between Japanese and Mexican Spanish (cf. point 4) we focus mostly on the first type, in which Haugen classifies the lexical importations (meaning) with a varying degree of phonemic substitution with the speaker’s own native phonemes. Furthermore, we also consider Myers-Scotton’s (2002, 2006) idea of core borrowings, when a native setting already has a designated term for a specific meaning but a foreign word with the same connotation is absorbed into the language with new specific semantic properties, which correlates to Serigos study (2016) of loanword specificity (upcoming). This phenomenon is especially observable in the case of *otaku*, which will be addressed later in point 6.

As mentioned before, we have identified several loanwords found in the corpus of CJMX compiled particularly for the present research that occurs within the semantic field of entertainment, these can be observed in the following table.

| Lexical Units  |       |           |       |           |       |
|----------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| animegao       | [O]   | josei     | [AG]  | romakome  | [AG]  |
| baka           | [O]   | kameko    | [PE]  | Seinen    | [AG]  |
| bara           | [AG]  | kawaii    | [PE]  | seiyuu    | [PE]  |
| burikko        | [O]   | kirei     | [O]   | sentai    | [AG]  |
| chibi          | [AG]  | kodomo    | [AG]  | shōjo     | [AG]  |
| cosmaker       | [PE]  | lolicon   | [PE]  | shōnen    | [AG]  |
| dōjin/dōjinshi | [AWS] | mahou     | [AG]  | shōnen-ai | [AG]  |
| doramas        | [AWS] | mangaka/s | [PE]  | shotacon  | [AG]  |
| ecchi          | [AG]  | mecha     | [AG]  | spokon    | [AG]  |
| fujoshi/s      | [PE]  | moe       | [O]   | tankoubon | [AG]  |
| gekiga         | [AWS] | nekketsu  | [AG]  | tsundere  | [AWS] |
| henshin        | [O]   | otaku/s   | [PE]  | ukiyoe    | [O]   |
| jidaimono      | [AG]  | ranobe    | [AWS] | yaoi      | [AWS] |

Table 1. Contemporary loanwords

Moreover, we posit that of the three main reasons for lexical borrowing considered by Breiter (1997:90): 1. Lack of correspondence in the RL (Recipient Language), 2. Establishment of positive/negative connotations not present in the RL, and 3. Establishment of stylistic effect, Only the second phenomenon —the establishment of positive or negative connotations— can be considered to have an impact on the appropriation of terms like ‘otaku’ and other loanwords into Mexican Spanish. For instance, someone considered an *otaku* might be seen positively, as someone who is ‘in the know.’ However, further analysis is necessary to reach conclusive results on this point. Interestingly, Breiter’s study does not mention the phenomenon of specificity, which we believe is more relevant for understanding the nature of the discussed loanwords. To address this gap, we consider Serigos’s (2016) study, where she introduces the concept of a ‘high degree of semantic specificity’ for loanwords compared to their existing equivalents in the RL. Bearing in mind this line of thought it is possible to state that of this list (Table 1) of lexical units, several have permeated into Mexican Spanish as a LU which holds a higher specificity than already existing senses (especially those under [AG] tagging). Consequently, this can also be observed in *otaku* which will be discussed later in the paper, after overseeing some characteristics of this LU that are important to understand the state and process of its borrowing into the RL.

#### 4. Morphologic Characteristics

Similar to many loanwords integrated into the Spanish lexicon, the term *otaku* undergoes morphological adaptations, such as adopting the Spanish plural form [-s]. However, unlike certain Spanish words that exhibit gender agreement, such as the adjectives *aficionado* and *aficionada*, *otaku* maintains a neutral grammatical gender. We attribute this to the atypical ending of [-u] in *otaku*, which assumes a gender-neutral stance akin to the [-e] ending seen in words like *estudiante*, applicable to both masculine and feminine contexts.

When a lexical borrowing has considerable time to settle into the new language it acquires morphological characteristics of the target language to which it has been introduced. In this case, corpus findings have shown that in the use of *otaku*, this LU acquires in some cases Spanish plural.

| Gender and number  | Examples   |
|--|--|
| Feminine (a) / Singular  | Cosas que una <u>chica</u> otaku ha vivido.<br>Things that an otaku girl has lived.  |
|  | Una Otaku de Chihuahua nos comentó...<br>An otaku from Chihuahua told us...  |
| Feminine (a) / Plural (as / s)<br>Notice how otaku remains singular (without "s"): | Para <u>algunas</u> <u>mujeres</u> otaku, tener rasgos asiáticos es una ventaja.<br>For some otaku women, it is an advantage to have Asian features.   |
| Feminine (a) / Plural (as / s)<br>Notice how otaku becomes plural (with "s"):      | <u>Las</u> Otaku <u>s</u> de Chihuahua que disfrutan del Yaoi no tienen problema con aceptar que son Fujoshis.<br>The otakus from Chihuahua who enjoy the yaoi don't have a problem accepting that they are Fujoshis   |
| Masculine (o) / Plural (os)<br>Notice how otaku remains singular (without "s"):    | En definitiva, los otaku serían la figura japonesa del consumidor globalizado.<br>Ultimately, the otaku would be the Japanese figure of the globalised consumer.   |
| Neutral  | – La cultura cosplay se diferencia de la otaku al ser no solo espectador de eventos.<br>The cosplay culture is different to that of the otaku because it is not only a spectator of these types of activities.<br>– La cultura otaku, símbolo de la libertad.<br>Otaku culture is the symbol of freedom. |

Table 2. Examples of morphological uses

The singular masculine is not included in the previous table due to the linguistic properties of the language; the masculine grammatical gender in Spanish is non-marked (Harris, 1991) and even if only by a technicality it functions as neutral.

#### 4.1 Nature of Loanwords from Japanese to Spanish

Taking a look at the several borrowed Japanese LUs already in modern dictionaries of Spanish, phonological importations rarely happen from Japanese into Spanish. It is possible to state that this happens due to its similarities, both share the same number of vocals and out of 17 consonants existing in Spanish 15 are also shared with the Japanese phonetic system (see Guirao, 1984:128-129). Therefore, most borrowings that come into Spanish from Japanese do not change their original phonetics.

## 4.2 Assimilation of *Otaku*

Moreover, it is possible to consider *otaku* to be a concept and not a calque which has a synonymous relationship with being a fanatic (of something). However, its original meaning in Japan differs from the one it has in Mexico. Thus, making it clear that this LU has gone a step further, since the speakers in the RL have expanded on the original meaning. Interestingly enough, the same lexical borrowing occurs in English, although the assimilation of the noun *otaku* is unchanged from Japanese into English, it seems that this does not happen in the borrowing into Mexican Spanish.

As mentioned above, the *otaku* LU has obtained more meanings throughout its use in Mexico (cf. point 5). Consequently, it has been observed and it is relevant to stress that this LU has acquired a second grammatical category as opposed to the SL. Originally, it was used only as an adjective like in the original SL, however, in Mexican Spanish, a different notion for this loanword has developed as a noun.

## 5. Semantic Range of *Otaku*

We have looked into the meaning of *otaku* in a sort of diachronically way. The word was coined by the Japanese journalist Akio Nakamori in 1983 in his article “Otaku Research” for the magazine Manga Burikko (Onaha, 2021), and its first meaning was: fan of something. Over time, according to the online Japanese dictionaries consulted – Jisho and Aulex-, this word evolves to include the nuance of being a nerd in addition to the base meaning of fan. As we can see, there is no compelling evidence that the word has pejorative connotations in its language of origin, except for one instance in which the term was seen in a negative light, due to an 80’s serial killer nicknamed the *otaku* murderer. Although, it would seem that this did not cause a permanent change in the word and continued to be more of a neutral denotation for fans.

With the loan of *otaku* into Mexican Spanish its meaning has undergone some changes. The first one: the sense of fan is reduced to fanaticism over cultural Japanese products; this reduction can be found in the word’s translation to other languages, such as English. The second change happens in relation to the connotation of nerd, because here it focuses more on the sense of social misfit, of being a freak and, therefore, it becomes negatively polarised. It has not been until recently, after 2010, due to the consumption of anime and manga being more common, that *otaku* has become a popular domain among the younger generations.

### 5.1 Synonymy

There seems to be a group of words that can be considered synonyms up to a certain degree, based on our understanding of what has been read regarding the concept of *otaku* and its use as shown in the corpus. One of the main findings is the phenomenon of synonymic relationship between *otaku* and eight other LU’s. Within these, we have found Spanish and even lexical borrowings from English. Furthermore, there is evidence that these eighth LUs are used to paraphrase the meaning of *otaku*, as a way to avoid repetition in the texts compiled for the corpus. In all instances of synonymy occurring for *otaku*, we have calculated the frequency with each of them appearing in our corpus and we have obtained the percentages that appear in the following table (Table 3). In almost all cases these LUs found



in the corpus are being used interchangeably between one and another. However, we argue that the specificity of their semantic range varies as we intend to demonstrate next.

| Percentage of synonymy use |       |                     |       |
|----------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| Fan                        | 32.3% | Freak               | 18.3% |
| Aficionado (Enthusiast)    | 28.2% | Geek                | 5.6%  |
| Fanático (Fanatic)         | 11.4% | Nerd                | 1.1%  |
| Admirador (Admirer)        | 2.2%  | Inadaptado (Misfit) | 0.8%  |

Table 3. Percentages of synonymic use

Without delving too deep into frequencies and other statistics, we can claim that the higher the frequency of use in a paraphrase (of those found within CJMX), the closer to L. Thus, making these words *paradigmatic lexical correlates* of *otaku* {L'i} which Mel'čuk (1996) describes as a "loose qualification of '(quasi) synonymous'".

Furthermore, the previous table shows two very distinct semantic directions of L: the sense of 'enthusiast' (*fan, aficionado, fanático, admirador*), and the sense of 'freak' (*freak, geek, nerd, inadaptado*). In the following table, there is evidence representative of the aforementioned statement, these are examples collected from the CJMX.

| Sense                     | Example   |
|---------------------------|---|
| I. <i>otaku</i><br>Fan    | <i>Things that an otaku girl has lived.   How to define the otaku boy's personality   These otakus boys are interested in becoming cartoonists.   One of the symbols which can be observed among Otakus is the anime.   In the side of the subcultures the otaku are dedicated to consuming these products in an important way.   The distinction between what otakuness is and the otaku people.   The otaku in his particularity seeks to be recognized by the other and his peers, encountering a group of individuals who share manga-anime as an artistic object, giving way to the social bond and the possibility of building a discourse.   The otaku collective can be defined as a neotribe or tribe of the contemporary world.   Anime goes through the so-called "Latinization", touching far beyond the otaku subculture in Latin America.   The most common cosplay at Otaku events is the student one.</i> |
| II. <i>otaku</i><br>Freak | <i>Although she believes that the term "otaku" is still used in a derogatory way, Alejandra maintains that the rise of anime in Mexico has brought many more people closer to Japanese culture and cosplay.   Also they tend to be stigmatised by everything that is assumed as Otaku, and especially by the negative aspects that are associated with this cultural group.   Otakus are a group which is hermetic in their interaction with other personality types different from themselves; they do not have the social skills to establish other kinds of different social relationships.   For some people, an otaku is considered an abnormal person.   The lack of information available about this youth culture has caused the otaku to be attacked within the work and school sectors.</i>   |

Table 4. Corpus evidence (translated)



## 6. Meaning-to-Text Approach

The *Meaning-Text Theory* (MTT) by Mel'čuk & Žolkovsky (originally, 1965) has been chosen for its exhaustive nature; it presents a way to uncover the intrinsicality of a lexeme. Moreover, it helps solve the issues that come with the newness of lexical borrowings and lack of diachronic data; in this way, even if a LU does not have a clear and delimited set of *collocates* it is possible to at least draw some differences between nuances.

Due to the extensive development of the theory, especially by Mel'čuk (1987, 1988, 1996, and 2006, to name a few) and in collaboration with Žolkovsky (1965, 1984), and Polguère (1995, 1999, 2007), it would not be possible to explain its entirety in this paper, therefore we will focus in applying the relevant characteristics to our proposal. Accordingly, we focus mainly on the results and use them to showcase our findings in a comprehensible manner. However, given the nature of the present study, this presents its complications. It has to be considered that the representation of an ECD-style entry entails the analysis of a large number of sources to detail in-depth aspects of a well-established lexicon. Contrastingly, the LU presented so far has not been defined as clearly. Thus, we proceed in a manner that leaves space for improvement but still helps elucidate some of the semantic delimitations present in this loanword.

### 'Enthusiast' OTAKU

- I. 1.a (X<sup>1</sup>)<sup>n</sup> enjoys Y to a larger degree than X<sup>2</sup> [*Un otaku prefiere mil veces ver anime que salir de casa.*]
- 2.a X modifies N [*Hay una convención otaku en el auditorio.*]

### 'Freak' OTAKU

- II. 1.a X<sup>1</sup> conducts itself in an unusual behaviour to X<sup>2</sup> [*Los otakus no tienen las habilidades sociales para establecer otro tipo diferente de relaciones sociales.*]
- 1.b Person X<sup>1</sup> shows unsociable and/or obsessive traits ... [*La otaku de María solo habla de caricaturas*]
- 2.a N has qualities of X<sup>1</sup> [*Él tiene una mochila muy otaku.*]

Regarding L I.b, initial contemplation suggested it to be semantically distinct from L I.a due to the variance in associated collocations, prompting consideration of a third sense under L I. However, upon closer examination, the differences were found to be minimal. It thus seems more logical to include L I.b under the first sense of L, albeit with a disjunctive definition.

As shown in the following proposal, the most relevant, in our estimation, are the adjectives (A) I.2.a and II.2.a which possess different characteristics of use even looking past the polarity; whereas the first can be used for events, abstractions or for a collective of *otaku*, the latter is used for tangible things and people, such as in the above example (II.2.a): 'the backpack is otaku' meant in a judgemental or negative way. Furthermore, the use of L in daily life has started the development of L in a way that not only counts as the most specific term for {L'i} (see Table 3) but is used for a person who is not agreeable or charismatic (II.1b).

Moreover, considering the limitations of the available data, note that the following is but a proposal.

## 'Enthusiast' OTAKU

'Person' OTAKU(masc/fem)<sup>1</sup>

### I.1a

#### Definition

$X^1$  enjoys  $Y > X^2$  : Person ( $X^1$ )<sup>n</sup> who enjoys  $Y$  (media entertainment and products of East Asian origin, especially Japanese) to a larger degree than  $X^2$ .  
[An otaku prefers to watch anime a thousand times more than go out.]

**Syntactic Information:** [ARTmasc({s<sup>i</sup>})/ARTfem({s<sup>i</sup>})] +  $\sim$

#### Lexical functions:

**Syn** : aficionado, fanático, admirador

**Syn<sub>0</sub>** : fan

**Oper<sub>1</sub>** : ser [ART]  $\sim$ , hacerse  $\sim$ , convertirse en  $\sim$

'Quality of' OTAKUA(masc/fem)

### I.2a

#### Definition

$X$  modifies  $N$  : N(collectives, abstractions or gatherings) which pertains to  $X$ .  
[There is an otaku convention.]

**Syntactic Information:** [ARTmasc({s<sup>i</sup>})/ARTfem({s<sup>i</sup>})] +  $\sim$ {s<sup>i</sup>}

#### Lexical functions:

**Bon** : orgullo  $\sim$

**Oper<sub>1</sub>** : pareces  $\sim$ , [ART] + convención  $\sim$

## 'Weird' OTAKU

'Weird' OTAKUN (masc/fem)

### II.1a

#### Definition

$X^1$  enjoys  $Y > X^2$  :  $X^1$  conducts itself in an unusual behaviour to  $X^2$   
[For some people, an otaku is considered an abnormal person.]

#### Lexical functions:

**Syn** : inusual, anormal, inadaptado/a

**Syn<sub>0</sub>** : raro

**Anti** : normal, adaptable

**Magn** : medio  $\sim$ , pinche  $\sim$

**Oper<sub>1</sub>** : ser [ART]  $\sim$ , pasarse de  $\sim$

- 
- 1 These signs follow the MTT and the ECD theory:  
 — {L<sup>i</sup>} stands for the paradigmatic lexical correlates of L.  
 — if L is a lexeme, then L 1.b would be the second entry for the first sense of L.  
 — [ART] stands for a grammatical determiner of the language that is necessary syntagmatically in the predicate or sentence.  
 — if 'masc' and 'fem' stand for grammatical genders then '{s<sup>i</sup>}' denotes the inflexion that can occur with L, including but not limited to the grammatical pronoun, conjugation and number.

'Socially Awkward' OTAKUN (masc/fem)

## II.1.b

### Definition

$X^1$  enjoys  $Y > X^2$

: Person  $X^1$  shows unsociable and/or obsessive traits.  
[*María the otaku only talks about animated cartoons.*]

### Lexical functions:

**Syn** : *freak/friki, antisocial, traumado/a*

**Syn<sub>n</sub>** : *nerd*

**Anti** : *carismático, sociable, amigable*

**Magn** : *~ como la chingada, súper ~*

**Oper<sub>1</sub>** : *ser [ART] ~ / pasarse de ~*

'Quality of' OTAKUA(masc/fem)

## I.2a

### Definition

$N$  has qualities of  $X$

:  $N$  (a person or object) that has characteristics of  $X^1$ .  
[*He has a very otaku backpack.*]

**Syntactic Information:** [ARTmasc({ $s^i$ })/ARTfem({ $s^i$ })] +  $\sim\{s^i\}$

### Lexical functions:

**Syn** : *raro, friki*

**Magn** : *es demasiado ~, exageradamente ~*

**Oper<sub>1</sub>** : *se ve muy ~, parece ~*

## Conclusions

It is important to underscore that our work, due to the lack of prior research on the use of *otaku* in Mexican Spanish within the lexicographic field, lacks references to existing studies. Moreover, the methodology employed may not be as exhaustive, given the pioneering nature of this research. Delving into the study of this loan phenomenon necessitated, first and foremost, an examination and definition of its current state in our language.

Once the corpus data has been analysed, it has been possible to observe the influence of the Japanese entertainment industry within the Mexican Spanish context. It has allowed us to identify the linguistic relevance of such studies and contribute to a rather lacking state of art in the lexicographic studies within the framework. Not only were we able to discover many more loanwords than expected but helped discern the phenomena barely explored so far. Thus, enabling us to conduct better and more thorough research in the future.

Furthermore, our exploration revealed that the lexical borrowing of *otaku* in Mexican Spanish acquires a particular and distinct nuance compared to its original meaning in the source language. Recognizing that the lexical unit in Mexican Spanish encompasses meanings beyond mere *fanaticism*, we conducted a semantic analysis with the assistance of the CJMX. Within the corpus, we observed various paraphrases and synonyms of the main lexical unit, indicating the presence of polarity in its meaning and suggesting a more firmly established state of assimilation than previously believed.

Additionally, closer scrutiny unveiled different uses of *otaku* depending on its placement, which could imbue the term with either positive or negative connotations. This variability may stem from the appropriation of the term by different groups of speakers, with self-identified *otaku* potentially attributing a neutral or positive meaning to the term while others perceive it negatively or neutrally based on their empathy towards them.

From a syntactic perspective, the morphological changes applied to *otaku* in Spanish indicate a higher degree of assimilation compared to other loanwords discussed earlier in the paper. Importantly, this lexical unit exhibits semantic developments not present in the source language, likely influenced by its popularization in entertainment media. Future research may be necessary to delve deeper into these semantic nuances of *otaku*.

In contrast to what was expected, the main lexical unit (and the most likely to stay in use): *otaku*, has more depth and connotations than thought in the beginning. This exploration has mainly showcased briefly the polarity of its use, as seen in the draft of an ECD entry previously presented. For the most part, further inspection is necessary to improve on the proposal, especially since diachronic data could improve the results. Although there is a clear distinction between nuances, considering that these changes are not final, since this loanword may undergo further semantic variations. In addition, the study has focused only on a small context within the Mexican Spanish language, meaning that much more loanword phenomena is happening outside of this semantic field.

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