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Neologisms. The influence of English on Catalan

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ABSTRACT

In a globalized world, the influence of English on Catalan becomes apparent when we thoroughly explore social networks and those internet platforms targeting adolescents. This paper analyses the social motivations of language change, and more specifically how the opportunities social media afford for language contact may trigger linguistic changes that are generation-specific. It also studies to what extent neologisms derived from English borrowings formally contribute to the updating of the Catalan lexicon. Drawing on the analysis of several neologism databases and a qualitative analysis of a sample of neologisms commonly used by adolescents over the internet, results show that English is a major source of neologisms in Catalan. Data also suggest that these new neologisms are mainly non-adapted and do not cluster around specific semantic fields. Their presence in more formal registers, such as newspapers, is quite limited, which might explain why their use has not been officially standardized in Catalan.

Key words: language change, digital native generation, English borrowings, neologisms, Catalan lexicon.

SINOPSI

En un món globalitzat, la influència de l'anglès en el català es fa evident quan ens endinsem en les xarxes socials i en aquelles plataformes d'internet dirigides als adolescents. Aquest treball analitza els factors socials que contribueixen al canvi lingüístic, i més concretament, com les oportunitats que ofereixen les xarxes socials per afavorir el contacte entre llengües, podria influir en canvis lingüístics generacionals. També estudia en quina mesura els neologismes provinents de manlleus de la llengua anglesa contribueixen, formalment, en l'actualització del lèxic català. En base a l'anàlisi de diverses bases de dades sobre neologismes i a l'anàlisi qualitativa d'una mostra de neologismes utilitzats pels adolescents a internet, els resultats indiquen que l'anglès és una font important de neologismes pel català. Les dades també suggereixen que aquests nous neologismes són principalment no adaptats i no s'agrupen en camps semàntics específics. La seva presència en registres més formals, com els diaris, és força limitada, fet que pot explicar per què l'ús d'aquests neologismes en català, no s'ha normalitzat oficialment.

Paraules clau: canvi lingüístic, generació digital, manlleus de l'anglès, neologismes, lèxic català.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we live in a global and technological world where the internet, and especially social networks, seem to be essential for almost everybody and everything. There is also a generation of people called the ‘digital natives’ (generation Z or zoomers) – people between 11 and 30 years old who have grown up in a context where communicating, not only within the closest environment but worldwide, seems to be as important as breathing. The consequence of all the above is that this kind of global communication, where different languages are in contact, leads to language change. The problem is that those who are not playing an active part in this new context, and those who have not grown up being part of the digital native generation, meaning they belong to a different social group, may not be aware of this change in language, and therefore they may not understand part of the expressions or the new lexicon that is used. There exists a gap in communication, not only because of generational differences, but also because of the influence of different languages which exist in today’s globalized world.

Focusing on the Catalan language and on how it is used on different internet platforms targeting adolescents in particular, e.g. online programs, youtubers, interactive gaming applications, or even chats, a lot of English words can be found in many expressions – a fact that makes its comprehension difficult even for those who are competent in English. With regard to the sentences *Tinc un hype* “I have a hype” and *El meu crush em fa ghosting* “My crush is ghosting me”, the message they convey is confusing, perhaps because the context in which they are expressed is unknown, or simply because of a generational gap. With all of the above, what is clear is that many English words are used in Catalan, and that different generations communicate in different ways because language is constantly changing as the world does.

This project will focus on the influence of English on Catalan, taking into account the relation between language change and social groups, especially teenagers – the group that is part of the digital native generation. The main objective is to analyze why and how English words were and are borrowed and included in the Catalan lexicon. Through an analysis of real data, we will see the important role that neologisms derived from English borrowings have nowadays.

2. CAUSES OF LANGUAGE CHANGE: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Historical linguistics was born as a field of study in the 19th century. At that point, language change was mainly attributed to endogenous factors – internally-triggered changes independent of external disturbances. In this context, the focus was on language itself, specifically the understanding that change is part of its nature. Social changes and other basic elements in a communicative interaction, such as the communicator, the receiver, or the context, were not taken into account: “The ‘external’ agency of speaker/listeners and the influence of ‘society’ on language change have tended to be seen as secondary and, sometimes, as not relevant at all” (Milroy 2004:143).

This conception of language change excludes the direct observation, and the identification of language changes is mainly based on data comparison. For example, we can see the changes that the Proto-Indo European plosives underwent in Germanic, as described by Grimm’s and Verner’s law. However, a complete description and understanding of these changes calls for attention to external factors to explain why said changes took place. These factors include the effect of the speaker and the listener, as well as the influence of society. Since the birth of historical linguistics, several methods have been developed to approach the study of language variation and change (quantitative, qualitative or multivariate analysis), all of which have proved that there is not a single cause of language change, but instead several factors may be involved, including social ones. As Chambers (2013:2) states, “the study of socially conditioned variation in language is relatively recent”. It was introduced by William Labov, who presented the first sociolinguistic research report at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America (December 1962) and published “The social motivation of a sound change” (Labov 1963) in the early sixties of the last century. According to Chambers (2013), Labov introduced several innovations in relation to the variables that have to be considered when analysing language change: social attributes such as class, sex or age, the register of the interaction, and also time.

The consideration that variation in language was not only caused by endogenous factors but also by external ones led to the need to resort to communities of speakers to analyse the communicative interactions that took place. It then started to be common, in many studies of language change, for scholars to focus on different social groups, and concepts such as social networks or communities of practice, where individuals interact and develop certain

interdependency between them. Meyerhoff and Strycharz (2013:431) define the notion *community of practice* as “an aggregate of individuals negotiating and learning practices that contribute to the satisfaction of a common goal”, that is, a group of people who gather for a concrete common purpose, which offers the opportunity to understand the social meaning of language. When an individual is part of a group, he or she must shape an identity within this group. Having to establish said social identity implies the need for differentiation from the larger community and from other groups, and language plays an important role in this differentiation. Language varies in the speech of speakers according to different social variables, and by means of this linguistic variation the individual shapes his or her identity and social interactions. The speaker will use different linguistic patterns depending on the context in which discourse is produced, on the audience, on the social groups, and on the topic, as well as on how the speaker wants to show him or herself. Schilling (2013:332) defines this fact as stylistic variation and considers it “as a primary means for the creative performance of personal identity, interpersonal relations, and social categories and meanings”.

It is in communities of speakers where changes in language can be analysed by observing the interactions between speakers and listeners in different contexts. In this sense, we can talk about social factors, external to the language itself, as a driving force for language variation and change.

2.1. Social motivations of language change

Social factors play an important role in language change. According to Labov (2010:185), “The sociolinguistic work of the past half century has identified a wide variety of social structures that correlate with a particular linguistic structure”. As the author establishes, changes in society and cultural patterns lead to changes in language. Local identity and the sense of belonging to a place may result in language change. A clear example is found in the Martha’s Vineyard study published by Labov in 1963¹. That study showed that among those who had permanent residence on the island, the centralization of the diphthongs /ay/ and /aw/ was far more frequent; it also illustrated that the degree of centralization varied as a function of speakers’ distance to the local site. Other studies show that social differentiation related to

1. The Martha’s Vineyard study was Labov’s master’s thesis published in 1963 in an article in *Word*, the journal of the Linguistics Circle of New York.

socioeconomic class (i.e. power, wealth and status) also results in differences in linguistic behaviour. Speakers may align themselves with different identity values depending on their interests; as a consequence, it can be stated that personal identities are not permanent. Thus, as Labov (2010:193) puts it, “The individual creates his systems of verbal behaviour so as to resemble those common to the group or groups with which he wishes from time to time to be identified”. In this sense, linguistic variation is correlated with different social variables such as gender, social class, or age.

2.2. Adolescence and language change

Adolescents are a clear example of a social group in which individuals not only try to shape their identity within the group or to find their role in it, but also seek to differentiate themselves from the community at large as well as from the life stages of childhood and adulthood. Kirkham and Moore (2013) emphasize the fact that this period implies an increase in the frequency of interactions within the group, and as a result the influence of the peer network and the sense of rebellion that characterizes the adolescence period are both decisive in the development of a personal identity away from what they consider the common. One effective way to achieve this differentiation is to resort to linguistic variation. If we focus on different communicative interactions between people from this life stage we can perceive a sense of rebellion and innovation in the way they communicate, use different lexicons, create new expressions, and incorporate new vocabulary which is often the consequence of the influence of the internet, the social networks and the contact with other languages in today’s globalized world.

3. LANGUAGE CONTACT AND LINGUISTIC BORROWINGS

Language contact, and in particular linguistic borrowings, represents a major domain where the inherent tendency of language to change becomes manifest. According to Turell (2002:237), a language has the “ability to generate new linguistic units, basically new lexical items, which consequently enlarge its linguistic system and repertoire”, and this process takes place in order to adapt to “the social changes occurring in the outside world”. This capacity of adaptation and “enlargement” can be achieved through internal and external means: through the capacity of the language itself to generate new forms by resorting to its own internal linguistic resources, and through the borrowing of forms and meanings from other cultures and languages with which the recipient has come into contact.

3.1. Factors that contribute to language contact

Crystal (2003) argues that cultural globalization has a significant influence on world languages, thus leading to language changes within these languages. This is due to the idea that there is a correlation between language and culture, and therefore changes in cultural patterns lead to linguistic changes. In this sense, technology and the use of the internet and social networks represent one of the major factors contributing to language contact, as these tools are global and powerful resources. Nowadays, the internet is a basic and global source of knowledge and entertainment, as well as a tool for communication and social networking. The impact of online games and youtubers is very significant, especially within the adolescence world. According to Turell (2002:248), “The Internet involves an immediate and spontaneous context of language production and use”, thus also making it an important and global source of borrowings.

The current position of English as the world’s lingua franca is another important factor when discussing language contact and its consequences. Its outstanding position is driven by two major forces; on the one hand, American computer- and Internet-based technologies dominate the market, and on the other hand, English is present in films, recorded music, social media and broadcast media looming large in the cultural landscape, while it is also taught as a second or foreign language in many countries.

3.2. *Why are words borrowed?*

When two languages come into contact, the factors that lead to these languages borrowing words from one another may be different. There are functional and social reasons to explain the fact that a language resorts to a foreign language to update its vocabulary.

3.2.1. Functional motivation

The vocabulary has to adapt to our changing world. Words which refer to obsolete objects may be lost, while new words may be introduced to refer to new concepts or objects. Borrowings have a need-filling function. This is particularly common in the case of technology. Many words filling gaps, for example in Catalan, are technical terms for new technology, especially computer technology because, as mentioned previously, the American computer- and Internet-based technologies dominate international markets. Among those words, we can find terms such as *App* or *dot-com*.

3.2.2. Social motivation

Words are sometimes borrowed even though there is not a lexical gap to fill. Resorting to foreign lexicon would not be necessary because there already exist more accurate understandable words in one's own language. In these cases there is a social motivation such as prestige, fashion, differentiation, or identity. The conclusions on some studies on borrowings cited in Omar (2015) show that "the tendency towards cultural emulation of some prestigious, admired, or dominant culture plays a substantial role in lexical borrowing from that culture" (2015:28). For example, the use of English loanwords by Japanese speakers that consider the Western lifestyle a symbol of internationalism. Fashion might also impose certain linguistic habits and make particular linguistic forms become obsolete; as such, this need of being fashionable implies the need for resorting to the fashionable language of the moment to find new linguistic forms.

4. THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH ON CATALAN

According to a study conducted between 2008 and 2010 by the ‘Observatori de Neologia²’ (Bastida 2014), borrowings (basically related to sports, technology, music and culture) represented 28.6% of the total of neologisms found in written press, out of which 44% came from English, followed by 32% of borrowings from Spanish. This means that 11 years ago English was a major source of borrowings in Catalan. But how are these borrowings integrated into Catalan, the recipient language? Linguistic systems react in different ways (Termcat 2005); it is possible to incorporate borrowings into the language by adapting them to the rules of the language system, at that moment or gradually over time. In this case they are named adapted borrowings such as for example *disc jockey* “discjòquei” or *fitness* “fitnes”. There are also non-adapted borrowings which are adopted in their original form without any change, which is the case of *best-seller* or *blog*, and others that are replaced by alternative forms of the recipient language as in *brainstorming* “pluja d’idees” or *coach* “entrenador/a”.

There are quite recent studies that try to provide an account of the influence of English on Catalan by means of collecting, analysing, and publishing data, and in this sense, some research institutions have been created in order to make a formal register, not only of those adapted borrowings or Anglicisms introduced in the Catalan language, but also of those neologisms or non-adapted borrowings of common use that appear in press and in oral language interactions, which are not registered formally in any dictionary. One of the first inventories of Anglicisms in Catalan (Pujol 1993) defines and categorizes them into different types, including adapted and non-adapted borrowings, taking into account their semantic, morphological and orthographic characteristics. The above-mentioned inventory was a work of reference for further studies aimed at analysing the impact of English on the Catalan language and determining to what extent it implied an update of the vocabulary.

Around 20 years ago, a research project, conducted from the perspective of the vitality of a language, proved that ‘formation neologisms’ (those that derive from the internal processes of the Catalan language) which were found both in spontaneous data, such as the data in a Press

2. *Observatori de Neologia (OBNEO)*

As defined on its webpage, it is a project created in 1988 at the University of Barcelona and later incorporated into the Institut Universitari de Lingüística Aplicada of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Its aim is to analyse the presence of new terms or neologisms that are used in the Catalan language and also in Spanish, which are not registered in dictionaries but appear in press and in oral language use.

corpus, and in a more formal register, namely the data gathered by Termcat³, represented approximately 80% of the total. The rest were ‘borrowed neologisms’ (Cabré 2000). Two years later, and focusing on spontaneous data, research proved again that most of the neologisms in Catalan that appeared in written discourse (press and internet) came from the internal resources of the language rather than from non-adapted English borrowings (Turell 2002). This means that although the influence of English was evident in the formation of neologisms, it was not as relevant as the capacity of the Catalan language itself when it came to creating new terms by means of internal resources. Nowadays, due to cultural globalization, the media and social networks, neologisms derived from English borrowings are introduced extremely rapidly and on a mass scale (Termcat 2005).

Focusing on the context in which these non-adapted neologisms derived from English borrowings appear, and on the purpose of their adoption, a study conducted between 2008 and 2010 (Gené-Gil 2014), which analysed data from several Catalan written media from different territories (Barcelona, Illes Balears, Andorra, Lleida, Girona, Tarragona and Alacant) with the aim of establishing similarities and differences between Catalan dialectal modalities, proved that Catalan neologisms derived from English borrowings were quite productive and used for specific purposes and contexts because they did not appear systematically in the press that was analysed. The study also determined that the most predominant thematic areas where they appeared were sports, technology, music and culture.

3. *TERMCAT*

This is a Department of Studies created in 1985 by the agreement of de Department of Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya, and the Institut d’Estudis catalans. It contributes to the updating of Catalan through the compilation of borrowed words from other languages, by adapting and fixing them in accordance with the linguistic requirements of the Catalan language; it also contributes to the diffusion of Catalan later on.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. Materials and method

This study provides a descriptive qualitative analysis of a sample of Catalan non-adapted neologisms borrowed from English and used by the so-called digital native generation in spontaneous communicative interactions within the social networking context. This analysis explores the way such borrowings are integrated into Catalan; their meanings, semantic clustering and degree of conventionalization by exploring their use beyond social media and their acceptability and inclusion in official databases such as Termcat. The analysis is framed by a brief overview of the role of English as a source of neologisms in Catalan over the last 10 years.

The aim of this analysis is to answer the following questions/hypothesis:

1. Has there been an increase in the number of non-adapted neologisms coming from the English language in the last years? Is their use more frequent and more generalized (i.e. not restricted to specific semantic fields) now than it was in 2010?
2. Are the neologisms used by the so-called digital native generation adapted or non-adapted? Do these borrowings cluster around specific semantic areas? What is their degree of conventionalization?
3. Has the pragmatic meaning of some neologisms (i.e. their intended or inferred meaning according to the context in which they are used) changed through time due to the constant updating of vocabulary because of the influence of the internet and social networks?

This analysis will allow to make a comparison between the present data and the conclusions that were established in previous studies regarding the influence of the English language on the updating of the Catalan lexicon.

To achieve this goal, in a first approximation, the extent to which English is a source of borrowings in Catalan will be determined by checking the entries of adapted and non-adapted neologisms registered in the Bank of Neologism of the *Instituto Cervantes (Centre Virtual Cervantes 'CVC')*⁴ from 2009 to 2019.

4. An online resource where different types of neologisms in the Spanish language but also in Catalan, including those that are borrowed from other languages, can be found in press. It was created in 1997, by the Instituto Cervantes, to contribute to the diffusion of the language. It covers data until 2019.

In a next step a sample of 15 non-adapted neologisms that are commonly used nowadays by adolescents will be analysed. These words have been selected from the following informal sources found on the internet, television and radio programs, mostly aimed at a teenage audience: *Diccionari Adolescent-Adult* in the youtube channel of *Catalunya Ràdio*⁵ “Adolescent-Adult dictionary”; *27 mots per entendre el llenguatge adolescent*⁶ “27 terms to understand the adolescent language”; *Diccionari ‘millennial’: 50 paraules que has de saber però que no has de fer servir si ets un ‘boomer’*⁷ “Millennial dictionary: 50 words you have to know but that you don’t have to use if you are a *boomer*”.

The selected data (the 15 non-adapted neologisms) will be analysed in four different respects:

- a) Their current meaning in Catalan and strategy of integration: adapted or non-adapted.
- b) Their use beyond social media, that is, its presence in more formal domains, in particular the written press. In this case, the number of entries included between 2009 and 2021 in three different online Banks of Neologisms that collect those neologisms that appear in press will be analysed. Those databases are: the *Bank of Neologisms* of the *Instituto Cervantes (Centro Virtual Cervantes ‘CVC’)*; *Observatori de Neologia OBNEO*; and *Cercatem* from *Termcat, Centre de Terminologia*).
- c) The acceptance of these terms in a formal register of the Catalan lexicon. To evaluate the actual integration and inclusion into Catalan, their presence in the neologism library that contains all neologisms standardised in Catalan by the TERMCAT Supervisory Council (*Neoloteca Termcat, Centre de Terminologia*), that is, the Department of Studies that contributes to the updating of Catalan, will be analysed.
- d) A final analysis of the changes in their pragmatic meaning. It will be conducted by examining the examples registered in the three online Banks of Neologisms mentioned above, paying special attention to the meaning of the terms and the context in which they appear over time.

5. A compilation of videos where two members of the online program ‘Adolescents iCat’ explain these new terms in an amusing way for those adults who don’t want to be linguistically outdated.

<https://www.ccma.cat/catradio/adolescentsicat/catalunya-radio-estrena-la-serie-de-videos-diccionari-adolescent-adult/noticia/3000825/>

6. An article in *betevé.cat*. (Grifol, 2021) <https://beteve.cat/cultura/diccionari-llenguatge-adolescent/>

7. A section in the radio program “La primera hora de Rac105” in *Rac1*.

<https://www.rac1.cat/societat/20200520/481298446539/diccionari-millennial-paraules-boomer-la-primera-hora-rac105-llengua-joves.html>

5.2 Hypothesis number 1

As far as the first hypothesis is concerned, the analysis of the entries in the Bank of Neologisms of the *Instituto Cervantes* registered from 2009 to 2019, shows that English is a major source of borrowings in Catalan, as it also was 11 years ago (Bastida, 2014).

| | ADAPTED ENGLISH BORROWINGS | NON-ADAPTED ENGLISH BORROWINGS | | ADAPTED ENGLISH BORROWINGS | NON-ADAPTED ENGLISH BORROWINGS |
|------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2009 | 78 | 677 | 2015 | 84 | 1228 |
| 2010 | 39 | 563 | 2016 | 101 | 1653 |
| 2011 | 61 | 940 | 2017 | 91 | 1753 |
| 2012 | 49 | 1032 | 2018 | 69 | 1093 |
| 2013 | 46 | 980 | 2019 | 59 | 927 |
| 2014 | 56 | 815 | | | |

Table 1. Research from Bank of Neologism of the *Instituto Cervantes* (*Centre Virtual CVC*)

The number of Catalan press registers in which a neologism derived from English appears, amounts to 12394. Only 6% (733 entries) are adapted neologisms. The rest 94% are non-adapted. Thus, there is a clear difference between the amount of adapted and non-adapted English borrowings, a large majority are non-adapted. But does this show that there has been an increase in the number of non-adapted neologisms coming from the English language in the last years?

Although the table shows a slight rise in 2016 and 2017, the increase is not steady because the number of entries registered, in comparison with the rest of years, levels off again in 2019. Furthermore, the database consulted focuses on the written press (either online or printed), it does not include other sources widely used by the digital native generation such as twitter, youtube channels, online platforms, or social digital gaming, among others. Hence by now, it is not possible to know if the neologisms used by adolescents are part of the non-adapted neologisms registered in table 1, and therefore, the previous question cannot be answered.

5.3. Hypothesis number 2

As stated in previous sections, the language of teenagers contributes to the emergence of new constructions and neologisms most of them drawn from their interactions on the internet

where English is a lingua franca. Just a brief survey of the neologisms that are in vogue among Catalan teenagers shows that English is also a major source of new words, but what are the type of neologisms that they use and how are they integrated into Catalan?

What follows is a description of 15 common neologisms used by the digital native generation whose current meaning and use in Catalan is exemplified.

| NEOLOGISM | MEANING AND EXAMPLES IN CATALAN |
|------------|--|
| Chill | Relaxed and quite atmosphere. It replaces the term <i>guai</i> “cool”. It is also used to refer to a relaxed state of mind. E.g. Ens posem molt <i>chill</i> . “We are getting very <i>chill</i> .” |
| Cringe | Someone or something that disgusts you or that makes you feel embarrassed about. It is also used in the expression <i>fer cringe</i> “it is cringing”. E.g. No para de fer el ridícul, és molt <i>cringe</i> . “He keeps making a fool of himself, he is very <i>cringe</i> .” |
| Crush | Platonic love. Also used when someone catches your eye or you like him/her a lot. E.g. Aquest cantant és el meu <i>crush</i> . “This singer is my <i>crush</i> .” |
| Fail | A failure, a failed attempt, a disaster. For example, when someone falls, he or she says ‘ <i>fail!</i> ’ |
| Ghosting | Not showing any interest in someone who likes you. It also means disappearing. E.g. El meu <i>crush</i> em fa <i>ghosting</i> . “My crush is <i>ghosting</i> me.” |
| Hater | It refers to a term used on the internet to name those users that are constantly slandering, scorning or destructively criticizing people, companies, products, or any particular concept, on the internet. E.g. En Pol és un <i>hater</i> del Nadal. “Paul is a Christmas <i>hater</i> .” |
| Hype | To have really high expectations for something. For example, when you find a television series very intriguing, you say it has caused you a <i>hype</i> . |
| Looser | Being a failure. E.g. No n’aprendrà mai, és un <i>looser</i> . “He will never learn the lesson, he is a <i>looser</i> .” |
| Mood | A state of mind. It also defines a situation or a thing that influences your state of mind. E.g. Avui no està en el su millor <i>mood</i> . “She is not in her best <i>mood</i> , today.” |
| Plot twist | A change in the plot. It is used to express something that you don’t expect. E.g. La seva relació ha estat un <i>plot twist</i> . “Their relationship has been a <i>plot twist</i> .” |
| Random | An unexpected and arbitrary thing. E.g. Que <i>random</i> que hagi vingut a la festa, pensava que estava enfadat. “I thought he was angry, but he has come to the party. How <i>random</i> it is.” |

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Retweet | A reposted or forwarded message on Twitter. E.g. M’ha semblat un twit increïble i li he fet un <i>retweet</i> . “In my opinion, it has been an amazing tweet and I have posted a <i>retweet</i> .” |
| Shippejar/ xipejar | It comes from the term “relationship”. To match someone with another person. To think that two people could be a great couple. E.g. A aquests dos els <i>xipejo</i> molt. “I ‘ <i>xipejo</i> ’ these both, a lot.” (Wigetta is one of the most famous ‘ <i>xipejos</i> ’, composed of the youtubers Willyrex and Vegetta777). |
| Spoiler | To advance the content of a TV series or a film to someone that is not at the same point, yet. It is considered an action that cannot happen under any circumstance. E.g. No em facis <i>spoiler</i> que encara no he vist la sèrie. “Don’t make any <i>spoiler</i> because I haven’t watched the program, yet.” |
| Stalker | A person who uses social media to spy or to look for information about other people in an anonymous way without saying anything. E.g. És un <i>stalker</i> , no contracta ningú si no l’ha cercat abans per la xarxa. “He is a stalker, he never hires anyone without searching for him or her through the networks.” |

Table 2. Selected data.

Table 2 shows that in most cases, their meanings in Catalan correspond with the meanings, often informal or slang, that these terms have in English. In other cases there is a difference. *Chill*, for example, is associated with coldness, so its use in Catalan seems to be an adaptation of the term chill-out; *shippejar/xipejar* is a new term created from the English word relationship; and *stalker* has a more negative connotation in English.

Except for the word *shippejar/xipejar*, which has been formed by derivation with the addition of the suffix *-ejar* causing a change of class from a noun to a verb, and with two alternative written forms, one of them adapted to the Catalan orthographic system, the rest of terms are non-adapted. They maintain their original form without any change.

Table 2 also shows examples of how these borrowings are used in Catalan. The context in which they appear is not specific, it is very general, varied and informal. They are used in spontaneous conversations of any kind, thus they do not belong to specific semantic areas.

Beyond social media, the presence of these more spontaneous non-adapted neologisms in a more formal domain, in particular newspapers, is quite limited.

The three different online Banks of Neologisms consulted, which record the non-adapted neologisms that appear in press, show that most of the terms in the sample are barely present, between 2009 and 2021, in any of the three databases. Table 3 illustrates that 10 out of the 15

terms (66%) are recorded in press. The rest, 33%, is not. But in general terms, there is not a massive presence of these words in written press (i.e. in a more formal context than that from where they were selected) because the number of entries registered is very limited.

| NEOLOGISM | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Chill | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | - | - | - |
| Cringe | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Crush | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Fail | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ghosting | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Hater | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 5 | - | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Hype | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Looser | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Mood | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Plot twist | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Random | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| Retweet | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| Shippejar / xipejar | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Spoiler | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Stalker | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - |

Table 3. Research from Bank of Neologism of the *Instituto Cervantes* (*Centro Virtual Cervantes 'CVC'*), *Observatori de Neologia OBNEO*, and *Cercatem* from *Termcat*, *Centre de Terminologia*.

The samples with more presence in the consulted sources, and therefore, more commonly found in press, are *chill* (mainly in the form *chill-out*), *hater* and *hype*, followed by *crush* and *mood*. They do not belong to a common and concrete semantic field, but they all have to do with communicative interactions that express a kind of feeling and perception. They are clearly expressive terms used in spontaneous conversation (oral or via social networks) rather than in written press, either online or printed. It may indicate that the use of these non-adapted neologisms responds to a social motivation, either fashion, differentiation, or identity (Labov 2010; Omar 2015).

Considering that one of the facts that characterizes the adolescence period is the achievement of differentiation, and that a way of attaining this goal is by resorting to linguistic variation (Schilling 2013), the use of these more informal non-adapted neologisms borrowed from

English may imply only a short-term fashion. This, together with the fact that these type of neologisms are mainly used in communicative interactions within the social networking, which is a very spontaneous context, would derive into the impossibility of being formally incorporated into the accepted Catalan lexicon by virtue of their presumed non-permanent status.

Evidence for this suggestion is found in Neoloteca Termcat, the Department of Studies that contributes to the updating of Catalan. An analysis of the information included in the following table (table 4) illustrates that very few terms (4 out of 15) have been formally conventionalized. The neologisms *chill*, *retweet*, *ghosting* and *spoiler* have been studied in order to be accepted in any of the three modalities, adapted, non-adapted, or by resorting to a Catalan term.

| | CHILL (APPROXIMATION TO CHILL-OUT) |
|------------------------|--|
| Meaning | Electronic music from the early nineties of the 20th Century characterized by its smoothness and its moderate tempo. Other music styles such as new-age are associated with this type of music. |
| Catalan alternative | CHILL-OUT |
| Type of borrowing | Non-adapted borrowing. |
| Reasons | No alternative options have been found to express the same meaning. |
| Date of the resolution | [Minute 584, 18th of December, 2014] |
| | RETWEET |
| Meaning | A reposted message in twitter that a user publishes in response to a tweet of another user. |
| Catalan alternative | REPIULADA o RETUIT |
| Type of borrowing | Adapted borrowing. |
| Reasons | To complete the conceptual framework of an already normalized term widely used on the net, <i>tuit</i> or <i>piulada</i> . |
| Date of the resolution | [Minute 634, 21st of March, 2018] |
| | GHOSTING |
| Meaning | A breakup of an emotional or sexual relationship, mainly through the internet, in which one of the members interrupts the communication with the other, in an unexpected way and without any kind of |

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| | explanation. |
| Catalan alternative | RUPTURA A LA FRANCESA |
| Type of borrowing | An alternative form of the recipient language. |
| Reasons | The direct adoption of the borrowing or its adaptation are discarded. A Catalan term is used to avoid the new form. The option is to rephrase the term by using a concept that has a certain use in Catalan. |
| Date of the resolution | [Minute 639, 4th of July, 2018] |
| | SPOILER (1) |
| Meaning | <u>Option 1. <i>Espòiler</i></u> . Aerodynamic element integrated in a vehicle as an appendix which is fully in contact with part of the bodywork, mostly the bumpers or the side of the machine, that is used to improve the drag coefficient by reducing the turbulences on the air flow caused by the vehicle movement. <u>Option 2. <i>Aleró</i></u> . Aerodynamic element that consists of a flat surface horizontally fixed, by means of stands, to the bodywork of a vehicle, mostly in the back part of the car, that is used to increase the tire grip at high speed by adding aerodynamic load. |
| Catalan alternative | ESPÒILER, ALERÓ |
| Type of borrowing | The first is an adapted borrowing, and the second is an alternative form, an extension of a term from the recipient language. |
| Reasons | To fix the semantic difference between <i>aleró</i> and <i>espòiler</i> in order to preserve the specific meaning of the Catalan term <i>aleró</i> and avoid generalization. |
| Date of the resolution | [Minute 666, 25th of June, 2020] |
| | SPOILER (2) |
| Meaning | <u>Option 1. <i>Espòiler</i></u> . Early disclosure of a decisive part of the plot of a literary or audiovisual work that breaks the element of surprise and the pleasure of discovering, and that can derive into a loss of interest in the rest of the work. <u>Option 2. <i>Fer un espòiler</i></u> . To reveal in advance a decisive part of the plot of a literary or audiovisual work. |
| Catalan alternative | ESPÒILER, fer ESPÒILER / fer un ESPÒILER |
| Type of borrowing | Adapted borrowings |
| Reasons | There has been a reconsideration about a previous decision of using the Catalan alternative form <i>filtració</i> . The English word is widely |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | used and common, and the alternative does not reflect the correct meaning, it is only associated with the disclosure of secret information. |
| Date of the resolution | [Minute 647, 27th of February, 2019] |

Table 4. Research from *Neoloteca Termcat, Centre de Terminologia*.

Only the term, *chill*, has been incorporated into the Catalan lexicon without any adaptation, but its meaning differs from the inferred meaning it has when used by the digital native generation. In the case of *retweet* and *spoiler*, they have been accepted with the same meaning but after being adapted to the Catalan orthographic system. Finally, with the term *ghosting*, an alternative form of the recipient language has been chosen.

Overall, this analysis highlights that the spontaneous and non-permanent nature of these common neologisms used within the social networking context, makes it difficult to accept or adapt them to be part of the Catalan language, at least at the same pace as they appear. It seems that the rate they emerge in communicative interactions differs from that of the normalization process. In many cases this fact may derive in synchronic variation. For example, the new terms *mood*, *looser* and *fail*, mostly used by adolescents, coexist with their Catalan forms “*humor*, *fracassat* and *error*”, mostly used by adults. Are these neologisms going to be part of the accepted Catalan lexicon? It is something that cannot be predicted right now.

With regard to the generalized use of non-adapted neologisms coming from the English language, previous studies, conducted between 2008 and 2010 (Gené-Gil 2014), show that English borrowings were used in specific domains such as sports, technology, music and culture. The analysis provided here suggests that non-adapted neologisms are currently used in more spontaneous interactions between social groups and do not seem to cluster in specific semantic fields. However, these results need to be interpreted with caution owing to the limitations of the study. On the one hand, this study focuses on a very small sample of neologisms, which necessarily limits predictions regarding semantic clustering. On the other hand, it deals with data extracted from social media, where the words that are analysed here are used in oral interactions.

5.4. Hypothesis number 3

As far as the third hypothesis is concerned, the meaning and the context in which the 15 selected terms appear have been analysed in depth in order to establish changes in their pragmatic meaning. The data registered in the three online Banks of Neologisms consulted, in reference to the number of entries that these non-adapted neologisms have in written press, provide information about 9 terms out of a total of 15. Table number 5 illustrates the fact that 3 of these terms (*chill*, *hype*, *spoiler*) have undergone changes in their pragmatic meaning during the ten year period analysed here.

| ANALYSIS OF THE PRAGMATIC MEANING OF THE DATA |
|---|
| The first register where chill appears alone, and not as part of the term <i>chill-out</i> , dates to 2005 and defines a style of music. It is not until 2018 that the term appears alone again, but in this occasion its meaning corresponds to the one indicated in table 1. Ex. <i>Tu tens una ànima 'chill', nosaltres només som la fàbrica</i> ⁸ . (La Vanguardia (LV). Centro Virtual Cervantes (CVC). OBNEO) |
| The first register of Crush appears in 2010. Ex. [...] <i>a la Via Catalana</i> –, <i>la veu en primera persona del narrador relata, en primera instància, el *crush* que té amb la desconeguda a qui li toca agafar-li la mà en aquesta convocatòria;</i> [...] ⁹ (El Periódico (EP), CVC, OBNEO, CERCATERM). The term has the same meaning as in the last entry from 2021. Ex. <i>Ja hem estat prou depressives tot l'any amb els nostres *crushes* confinats durant mesos;</i> [...] ¹⁰ (Premsa digital Núvol, OBNEO) |
| Both registers of ghosting have the same meaning. Ex. <i>Al cap i a la fi, quanta de l'anticipació sensual de la pandèmia ha acabat desvirtualitzant-se, i quanta ha acabat en *ghosting*?</i> ¹¹ (Premsa digital Núvol, OBNEO. 2021) |
| The 12 entries of the term hater convey the same meaning. Ex. <i>Però sobretot refermant la seva identitat, i la seva autoritat, igual que fan els anomenats *haters* a les xarxes, els qui viuen en contra de tot i de tots</i> ¹² . (LV, CVC, OBNEO. 2017) |
| All the entries of hype have a different meaning from that formulated in table 1. They refer to advertising and promotional claims. Ex. <i>En aquest país, en aquests moments, s'està produint música com arreu del món, amb fenòmens nous, *hypes*, rock'n'roll i Verdaguer elevat a estrella de la cançó</i> ¹³ . (Diari AVUI, CVC, OBNEO. 2009) |

8. “You have a chill soul, we are only the factory”

9. “[...] in the *Via Catalana*, the narrator’s voice, in the first person, reports at first instance the crush he has with the stranger whose hand he has to hold in this event; [...]”

10. “We have been depressed enough all year with our *crushes* confined for months; [...]”

11. “At the end of the day, what amount of the sensual anticipation of the pandemic has ended up distorted, and which amount has ended up in *ghosting*?”

12. “But above all, reaffirming his identity and his authority in the same way *haters* do in the net, those who live against everything and everybody.”

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| All the entries of the term mood have the same meaning. Ex. <i>Per seguir amb el *mood* de les tradicions, decideixo anar al quiosc més de tota la vida que conec</i> ¹⁴ . (Diari ARA, CVC, OBNEO, CERCATERM. 2016) |
| All the entries of the term retweet have the same meaning. Ex. <i>Hi va contribuir que periodistes catalans de renom fessin un *retweet* de la piulada de Miralles i mencionessin directament a Maestre</i> ¹⁵ . (EP, OBNEO. 2014) |
| The 3 entries of spoiler from 2015 to 2020 have the same meaning as in table 1, Ex. <i>Disculpin un *spoiler* del 2007, el retorn d'un personatge a qui havien matat ensenyant-nos el seu cap dins d'una caixa</i> ¹⁶ . (El Temps, OBNEO. 2015). However, between 1989 and 1996 there are 6 examples in which the meaning of spoiler is completely different. In these cases the term <i>spoiler</i> refers to a part of a car, with the actual meaning of the word in English.. Ex. <i>La graella, esmolada, suporta unes òptiques allargades molt a l'estil de l'aire de la família Citroën, subratllada amb un *spoiler pintat amb el mateix color que la carrosseria</i> ¹⁷ . (Diari Avui, OBNEO. 1996) |
| Both entries of the term stalker have the same meaning, Ex. <i>En l'era d'Instagram els *stalkers* ho tenen fàcil. Una història que us farà repensar la vostra vida a Internet</i> ¹⁸ . (Guia Time Out Barcelona, CVC, OBNEO. 2019) |

Table 5. Analysis of the pragmatic meaning of the data.

The amount of registered changes in meaning are not significant. This low rate of variability may be explained considering the fact that most of the terms are relatively recent, and their meanings still remain stable. According to Labov (2010), changes in society and cultural patterns lead to changes in language. In this case, the few differences in meaning that have been found may be caused by generational factors, or other adjustments that the analysed data cannot explain.

This scarce change in meaning may show that adolescents do not tend to change the inferred meaning of those neologisms borrowed by other generations (i.e. neologisms registered in the three online Banks of Neologisms consulted with examples previous to 2009), they use new words. The tendency of the digital native generation is to borrow new terms from English,

13. "In this moment, in this country, music is being produced as everywhere in the world, with new phenomena, *hypes*, rock'n'roll and Verdaguer coming up a music star."

14. "To continue with the *mood* of tradition, I decide to go to the lifelong kiosk that I know."

15. "It had an important influence the fact that renowned Catalan journalists posted a *retweet* on Miralles' tweet making a direct reference to *Maestre*."

16. "I apologize for a *spoiler* of 2007, the return of a character who was killed and whose head had been shown in a box."

17. "The sharpen grill stands elongated lights that take after the style of that cars in the Citroën family, it is highlighted with a spoiler with the same colour as that in the bodywork."

18. "In today's era of Instagram, stalkers have it easy. A story that will make you reconsider your life on the internet."

which is considered the fashionable language of the moment for its status of lingua franca (Omar 2015). Right now, there is no evidence to suggest that the pragmatic meaning of some neologisms may change through time due to the constant updating of vocabulary because of the influence of the internet and social networks.

6. CONCLUSION

Research shows that English continues to be a major source of borrowings in Catalan, but they are not used in specific domains as the previous studies referred in this study argued. Their scant presence in formal registers such as written press, indicates that non-adapted neologisms derived from English are part of more spontaneous interactions, such as the language used in social networking sites by adolescents. They seem to emerge very fast in the immediate and global context that the internet offers to the new generations, including generation Z, a fact that suggests that their use is spontaneous and may have a non-permanent nature. This characteristic contributes to the difficulty of tracing or documenting them. As a consequence, they cannot be adapted or formally integrated in the Catalan lexicon.

Present-day situation shows that many English words are used in Catalan, but predominantly in specific environments related to the digital native generation and the internet. It proves that not only internal factors but external, in this case social motivations and context, contribute to language change, and sometimes, it may cause a communication gap between different generations and social groups. It is clearly exemplified in an article in the online newspaper 'elnacional.cat' (Buesa 2019) where it was commented how Rosalia's tweet '*si el teu crush et fa ghosting nivell llegendari*' (If your platonic love is not showing any interest on you in a radical way) had grown old 75% of the world population, basically because people over 30 were not able to understand its meaning.

What is clear is that language is constantly changing at the same pace as the world does. The question is to what extent this change, and more specifically, the impact of English on the Catalan language, implies a formal update of its lexicon. At the moment, current data provide no evidence for significant changes, but maybe in a ten year period the situation is different, and new studies can be carried out in order to shed light on the topic.

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