ROMANIAN VLOGGERS AS TRENDSETTERS FOR THE USAGE OF UNADAPTED ANGLICISMS

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Abstract: *Vlogs as "video collections that serve both as an audiovisual life documentary and as a vehicle for communication and interaction on the Internet. Internet can be used to connect, share and exchange developing a participatory culture, is used by the vloggers to approach the relation with the audience. The vlogger becomes a trendsetter, an example, a peer to be followed. The acceptance of English, as a language capable to relate the speakers and settle an in-group mentality according to their esteem needs, leads to a higher frequency of unadapted English loans in common usage of non-native speakers.*

Keywords: *vlogger, participative culture, unadapted anglicisms.*

Introduction

Many definitions have been provided for *vlog*, considering the video and blogging components. Generally, researchers place emphasis on both aspects of the vlogs as they consider vlogs as "video collections that serve both as an audiovisual life documentary and as a vehicle for communication and interaction on the Internet" (Biel&Gatica-Perez, 2010:211). In fact, they make a substantial analysis of the non-verbal cues and popularity attached to the vlogs.

A vlogger's ability to build community through the shared experience is rewarded by a higher degree of visibility and popularity. The popular videos show us the things we would like to see, giving the majority of viewers what they want and ignoring the rest. The metadata of popular videos is compounded of the number of views, which is in its own turn fuelled by its popularity (Goosen, 2015:10).

Ben Michaelis, a clinical psychologist[1] interested in the intersection of psychology and media explains the mechanism behind human interaction and communication: "Face-to-face is the way evolution has shaped us to interact with one another; it's how we know one another and how we build empathy for one another." Although vlogs are obviously not face-to-face conversations, it is still clear that vloggers often behave as if they were having a conversation with their audience (e.g. on Skype) (Biel &Gatica-Perez, 2010:211) which makes the viewers get strongly attached to vloggers, whether stars, public or regular persons.

The idea that the Internet can be used to connect, share and exchange developing a participatory culture, is used by the vloggers to approach the relation with the audience. The

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[1] https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/articles/201705/the-vlogging-cure.
Michaelis emphasizes the fact that empathy-based interaction can transform from peer-to-peer to a deeper but one-sided emotional attachment of the audience

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vlogger becomes a trendsetter, an example, a peer to be followed. “The vlogger functions as the flagship of *participatory culture*, in which every civilian is able to share their thoughts and ideals, and thus become active participants in forming our ideas of ourselves and our society.” (Goosen, 2015:14) The position of the individual within the speech community and the interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs (Gumperz, 1968:381) generates constitutive elements of group interaction and communication. Language is an expression of culture. It is well known that a group intending to display its identity designs a type of language to represent and individualize it as the “language a person speaks is part of the culture in which she or he grew up” (De Mooij, 2005:42).

Vlogging and English Borrowings

To preserve a language’s ability to continue changing, means to continue to be used functionally by a community. (Friedrich, 2012:23). The globalization turned English in a necessary instrument of communication worldwide. English is the *de facto* language of international communication today (Tsuda, 1999:153). Thus, the assimilation of unadapted linguistic borrowings and their penetration in the daily usage generates interferences with the borrowing languages.

The inflow of Anglicisms in Romanian has been utterly researched for more than thirty years. Nevertheless, the unstoppable phenomenon of borrowing English words will acquire new directions as English still holds a prominent position in science and technology a well as in international business relations. The psychological motivation for the acquisition and usage of unadapted English loans in everyday language by the Romanian speakers (based on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs) is that their usage implies social and cultural connotations of modernity, trendsetting influences and prestige within their social groups and speech communities.

Although many of the Anglicisms in circulation were borrowed due to the specific referential and communicative needs in various compartments of the Romanian society, e.g. economy, politics, culture, entertainment, science and technology, nowadays the unadapted English words in use are more likely to be associated with the idea of status. One of the most active forms of inducing status acquisition is transmitted through communication technologies which create space for interaction and participation. “Multiple users will present different linguistic features according to the situation of communication, educational background, geographical location, gender and age of participants” (Friedrich, 2012:21).

The source of the message will be of utmost importance in the case of vlogging. Having the power of persuasion already trained, the vlogger exerts a psychological “supremacy” over the *defenceless audience*[1] (Schrøder in Littlejohn, Foss, ed., 2009: 133). Being an expression of a self (Goosen, 2009:21) [....] a vlog provides the opportunity for a

[1] This notion of *defenseless audiences* has continued, though in less crude form, to influence the understanding of processes of mediated persuasion as many advertising and public information campaigns are still based on a strategy that seeks to change the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals by exposing them repeatedly to mass-communicated stimuli[...] (Schrøder in Littlejohn, Foss, ed., 2009: 133)

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"certain amount of self-promotion mediated through linguistic choices that language users can make" (Chapelle, 2015:6) which ensures the vlogger with a certain sociocultural status.

How are those choices realized in technology-mediated form? Conveying meanings in communication through language and other semiotic systems is a matter of choice. Language users make meaning of English words acknowledgeable in the right context considering vocabulary in connection with the linguistic context in which words are used and understood. "Such contexts are needed to account for the vocabulary choices made by language users in authentic communication in real time" (Chapelle, 2015:6). As long as the "language shapes culture and perception over world (McQuail, 1999:81)" the usage of the adequate means facilitates communication. The acceptance of English, as a language capable to relate the speakers and settle an in-group mentality (Tajfel and Turner, 1979:33-37) according to their esteem needs, leads to a higher frequency of unadapted English loans in common usage of non-native speakers.

Vlogs are an embodied form of online self-expression (Goosen, 201:17) on the one hand and markers of social interaction. "Conversation analysis investigates how language users organize naturally occurring social interactions in order to accomplish social actions through talk and bodily conduct such as hand gestures and eye gaze". Rather than generalizability, the claim is that such research provides an accurate description of how language is used to accomplish human social action in specific contexts (Chapelle, 2015:7). If a reference group expresses its identity through the usage of the unadapted English loans then, the in-group members will adhere to such practices for the sake of conformity. In the analysis of vloggers' language, it becomes obvious that the usage of English borrowings is a part of code-switching due to their desire of displaying a certain status. In social situations, as Goffman noted, people adapt their behaviour to their environment, adopting *predictive behaviour*: "… the more the individual is concerned with the reality that is not available to perception, the more must he concentrate his attention on appearances." (Goffman, 1959:249)

Because language changes in order to reflect social transformation as well as to affect such transformation, the usage English borrowing in vlogs demonstrates the language's capacity to bring people together through mimetic behaviour and due to spontaneous preference for these words in the sociocultural context such as professional interviews.

Research Methodology

The research targets at the identification of specific unadapted English loanwords connected to blogging/vlogging occurring during interviews with highly ranked vloggers. Such terms constantly used by the bloggers/vloggers are prone to be assumed by the subscribers or followers and spread within the community enlarging their circulation. The six interviews[1]are somehow informal taken on the run in a vlog-like setting (room, car,

[1] The interviews are to be found at the following addresses:
https://www.topvloguri.ro/de-vorba-cu-alin-pandaru-pandutzu-despre-cum-sunt-inceputurile-vlogging-i
https://www.topvloguri.ro/cu-gaben-despre-vloguri-si-planurile-personale

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studio, etc.) using unsophisticated technical equipment. The spontaneous attitude of the respondents augments the importance of English loanwords occurring in their discourse as markers of genuine code-switching in casual talks.

The topics are usually the same for the interviewees: when/ why they began this activity; what results they achieved in terms of subscribers/followers; the competition on the market and the improvement of the content; the relation they have with agencies, companies and other people involved; the financial outcome.

When analysing the English loanwords we shall consider only the terms with the highest degree of opacity for non-specialists and their grammatical category in the context. The main purpose is to approach the semantic aspects of their usage by selecting the appropriate meanings for the context (English source) and giving an equivalent for Romanian usage; where the equivalent is not found at least an explanation for the concept is provided.

Due to the structure of the questions and answers, there are to be considered two types of English loanwords: the first category includes the regular terminology associated with marketing and advertising that is now in general use *boom, marketing, show, brand, trend,video*, etc. Such terms as, are semantically adapted so that their meanings are devoid of hidden, metaphorical connotations.

*[…] Estimez că pe la începutul verii o să fie marele **boom**, așa. […]*
*[…] O parte din ceea ce fac se poate transforma și într-un **show** de televiziune. […]*
*Unde crezi ca greșesc **brandurile**? […]*
*Cel puțin pe partea **video,** nu face nimeni treaba asta.*
*Ce noutate va aduce această platformă de comunicare? Avem două zone: zona personala și zona de **marketing**.[…]*
*[…] ăștia care chiar fac, nu au alt **job**. […]*

There are also terms that belong to a more specialized usage but still accessible to the audience in terms of meaning, due to their long presence in speakers' vocabulary.

*Ieri am venit din **teambuilding** […]*
*Hai că-l pun și pe ăsta de **backup**, așa.*

Sometimes the meaning is inferred by a synonym currently in circulation inserted in the same context:

*Crezi că au nevoie de un impresar, […] un **middleman**?*

The second category refers to the field of media literacy implying either producer or consumer of such products as blogs and vlogs. The lexical items belonging to this category need an explanation for beginners or newbies. Dictionaries do not always include

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https://www.topvloguri.ro/o-discutie-cu-marian-ionescu-partea-doua
https://www.topvloguri.ro/mikey-has-%C3%AEntr-o-discu%C8%9Bie-despre-fenomenul-vlogurilor-partea-doua
https://www.topvloguri.ro/laura-giurcanu
https://www.topvloguri.ro/lauren%C8%9Biu-%C8%99i-marketingul-line-pe-vlog
The selection of the lexical items and the analysis is exclusively based on the transcripts of the above interviews.

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such specialised meanings and sometimes we need to look for further examples or to appeal to proficient users. For those terms for which we did not find an explanation or translation we make a proposal of our own according to the appropriate English meaning in the context.

advertorial (n.) – (E.): an advertisement promoting the interests or opinions of a corporate sponsor, often presented in such a way as to resemble an editorial
*A marketer can make use of such micro-moments to run short **advertorial** content that can be consumed through smartphones.*
(https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Want+to+reach+customers%3F+Go+mobile%2C+Google+tells+marketers-a0527001026)
Proposal (R.): - reclamă ascunsă
Un advertorial este pur și simplu o reclamă deghizată într-un conținut editorial.[1]
(http://cristi-ionita.ro/2017/05/19/ce-este-un-advertorial/)
content (n.) – **(E.):** the information, material, etc. presented on a website or other digital medium[2]
*Stars of **content** creation command thousands of loyal followers.*
(https://flexible.falmouth.ac.uk/red-smart-academy/courses/content-creation-blogging-vlogging-beyond.htm)
Proposal **(R..):** - text adaptabil conceput pentru a servi mai multor scopuri social media.[3]
*Te pune pe tine ca și **creatorul de content** într-o situație foarte dificilă.*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/mikey-has-%C3%AEntr-o-discu%C8%9Bie-despre-fenomenul-vlogurilor-partea-doua)
follower - (E.): one who has a strong interest or pays close attention to something:
a follower of new developments in technology.

[1] Cristi Ioniță provides a consistent explanation of the term (a blend between advertisement and editorial): *"Un advertorial este o piesă de marketing concepută ca un articol informativ. Cu un titlu care este provocator și convingător pentru publicul țintă dorit, acest articol angajează cititorii mai mult decât un anunț obișnuit intercalat printre alte anunțuri. Spre deosebire de alte forme de publicitate care se bazează pe text scurt și un apel puternic la acțiune, obiectivul și lungimea mai mare al unui conținut **advertorial** fac din acesta un mijloc bun de educare a clienților în legătură cu produsele sau serviciile unei companii"*.
(http://cristi-ionita.ro/2017/05/19/ce-este-un-advertorial/)
Also a very detailed presentation on advertorials https://cariera.ejobs.ro/ce-sunt-si-cum-se-folosesc-advertorialele/

[2] Also: information, such as text, video, and sound, usually as contrasted with its format of presentation: *a television producer looking for content that was more entertaining.*
https://www.thefreedictionary.com/content

[3] A more detailed presentation of the ways in which content may be adapted to channels of communication: *"Articolul respectiv poate fi transformat și adaptat pentru diferite canalele de comunicare: un infografic cu cele cinci abilități ar merge perfect pentru Pinterest; un citat din articol poate fi transformat într-o imagine și postat pe Twitter/Facebook, alături de un text scurt și la obiect și de link; articolul poate fi cu ușurință transformat într-o prezentare pentru SlideShare; ca scenariu de video, cea mai simplă soluție e și eficientă: înregistrează un audio track cu punctele principale din articol și acompaniază-l cu imagini relevante sau statistici."*
https://ctrl-d.ro/inspiratie/5-abilitati-la-care-sa-lucrezi-pentru-a-deveni-un-content-creator-de-succes-in-2017/

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(https://www.thefreedictionary.com/Follower)
(R.): adept, discipol, fan, prieten[1]
(https://hallo.ro/dictionar-englez-roman/follower)
*Ai timp să obișnuiești oamenii care sunt **followerșii**…*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/cu-gaben-despre-vloguri-si-planurile-personale)
*Cum are ăsta cinci sute de mii de **followeri**?*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/o-discutie-cu-marian-ionescu-partea-doua)
An interesting linguistic phenomenon is the presence of a double form of plural for *follower* in Romanian. This is a kind of *anomalous* breach of the usual practice of adding the plural ending to the singular form: *blogger-bloggeri, youtuber – youtuberi*, etc. Nevertheless, we have to recall that there are several examples of Romanian plural forms that double a plural English noun: jeans – jeanși, flip - flops – flip-flopși, businessmen – businessmeni, etc.
hater – (E.): (informal chiefly US and Canadian) a grudging or spiteful person, especially one who disparages others:
*Don't let the **haters** get you down.*[2]
(https://www.thefreedictionary.com/hater)
Proposal **(R.):** contestatar, critic
*Eu venisem pregătit pentru mulți **hateri** […].*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/lauren%C8%9Biu-%C8%99i-marketingul-line-pe-vlog)
inside (n.) – **(E.):** inward nature, thoughts, feelings, etc.
She from something from the inside. (https://www.thefreedictionary.com/inside)
(*Slang)* Confidential or secret information. *to have an inside on the new plans.*
(https://www.thefreedictionary.com/inside)
Proposal **(R.):** povestire a unei experiențe din viața personală a unui blogger/vlogger care poate include aspect personale sau fapte de interacțiune profesională și socială.
*Până acum au fost ei acolo pe YouTube cu glumele lor cu **inside-urile** lor. […]*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/de-vorba-cu-alin-pandaru-pandutzu-despre-cum-sunt-inceputurile-vlogging-i)
*Lumea este curioasă de **inside**-urile domeniului.* (https://katai.ro/podcast-stefan-asafti/)
mainstream (n.) – **(E.):** the prevailing current of thought, influence or activity[3].
"You need not accept the nominee's ideology, only be able tolocate it in the American main stream" (Charles Krauthamme)
(R.): trend majoritar[4], trend dominant.

[1] Also interesting discussions about the translation/equivalence for *follower* at https://www.proz.com/kudoz/english-to-romanian/it-information-technology/4898710-follower.html; the distinction between *friend* and *follower* is also explained by Andrew Chen in *Friends versus Followers: Twitter's elegant design for grouping contacts,* https://andrewchen.co/friends-versus-followers-twitters-elegant-design-for-grouping-contacts/

[2] A very detailed discussion and examples on https://www.proz.com/?sp=search and http://yttalk.com/threads/apparently-there-are-people-who-hate-vloggers.6565/page-3

[3] It is also used as adjective: *"None would have seen the light of day in mainstream media […]*" https://www.thefreedictionary.com/mainstream

[4] […] "*așa cum clasa de mijloc nu pare să se fi cristalizat complet în societatea românească, spațiul cultural românesc nu pare să fi atins un echilibru între cultura mainstream și elitismul cultural.*" https://www.bookaholic.ro/despre-elita-si-mainstream.html

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*Vlog-urile mele nu se adresează neapărat **mainstream**-ului.*
(https://theorphanpet.com/youtube-vloggers-dog-adoption/)
subscriber – (E.): someone who expresses strong approval; to feel or express hearty approval:
I am one of the subscribers[1] to your oppinion.
(https://www.thefreedictionary.com/subscriber)
(R.): abonat[2] (https://hallo.ro/dictionar-englez-roman/subscriber/30)
*Am muncit atât și am doar patru mii de **subscriberi** pe You Tube […], am doar șapte mii de fani pe Facebook[…], ce rost are?*
(https://www.topvloguri.ro/o-discutie-cu-marian-ionescu-partea-doua)

Conclusion

Nowadays culture of communicating and consuming developed strategies for interacting and socializing so that everybody could feel integrated in the huge global social family. A vlogger's ability to build community through the shared experience is rewarded by a higher degree of visibility and popularity. The usage of English loanwords by native speakers of a borrowing language attaches them with social and cultural connotations of modernity, trendsetting influences and prestige.

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[1] A more precise and targeted usage of the term can be found in connection to marketing strategies (https://subscribers.com/): *"Subscribers is my favorite marketing tool. It is simple, easy to use, and effective."* Neil Patel, Digital Marketing Expert

[2] Although it is difficult to find the word as entry in a specialised dictionary the following explanation is found (the address below) under the heading *Cuvinte de știut:''**Abonații** sunt spectatori care au indicat faptul că vor să vadă mai mult din conținut și au dat clic pe butonul **Abonează**-te de pe canal. **Abonații** sunt esențiali dacă vrei să ai succes pe YouTube, deoarece tind să petreacă mai mult timp pe canalul tău decât spectatorii care nu s-au abonat, iar dacă au activat notificările, vor fi alertați atunci când postezi ceva nou. Pot și să-ți vadă videoclipurile noi în feedul Abonamente''.* (https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/page/lesson/subscriber-advantage?hl=ro#strategies-zippy-link-2):

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