



On Political *dream teams* and Financial *killers*: Sports Anglicisms and Metaphorical Uses in Spanish Digital Press

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ABSTRACT

The presence of English borrowings is becoming frequent in Spanish. This paper deals with the use of Anglicisms, including some cases of pseudo-Anglicisms and hybrid formations, in sports. The analysis of the digital edition of various Spanish newspapers, using the Anglicisms search tool ‘Observatorio Lázaro,’ has revealed a variety of functions that are fulfilled by these English(-looking) lexical items, such as their metaphorical uses. This study provides examples of new compound terms as well as hybrid formations and clippings, among others, some of which intend to have certain pragmatic meanings, e.g. being euphemistic or producing ironic and humorous effects on the reader. In addition, it is worth mentioning the usage of English football nicknames that seem to be getting more and more familiar to the Spanish sports audience. The orthographic inconsistency of many of the collected sport-related words is also examined and evidences the recent incorporation of these terms into Spanish.

KEYWORDS: Lexical Anglicisms; Pseudo-Anglicisms; Hybrid Anglicisms; Spanish language; Digital press; Metaphorical uses; Sports nicknames; Orthographic inconsistency; Sports; Loanwords.

1. INTRODUCTION

The influence of English in Spanish is far from doubt. English has pervaded every single area of Spanish daily life, being sports one more of these fields teemed with English words. It is not a coincidence to designate different sports with English names or to attend a guided class in a Spanish gym which is called *stretching*, *strength*, *body balance*, *crossfit*, *total body*, *bike*, or *boxing*, among others. The fact is that the use of these Anglicisms has taken a step further in Spanish, and this may be observed not only in the metaphorical and figurative uses of some

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sports English lexical items –both around sports and in other domains–, but also in the new compound and abbreviated sports-related words that have emerged and are used by Spanish digital press. We seem to be living in a period of many changes and advances, and online media are a perfect vehicle to promote this linguistic creativity. Recently, Balteiro (2022: 5) confirmed that “[i]t is at those moments or periods of change where word inventiveness and lexical or word-formation mechanisms are rapidly activated to respond to and follow social developments and meet language users’ needs at various linguistic levels.” Measuring the degree of creativity of a neologism may be subject to subjectivity. In this sense, Hamilton and Foltzer assert that “the amount of creativity or originality in an example might be seen in the similarity or dissimilarity of the nouns in the nominal compound” (Hamilton & Foltzer, 2021: 15).

This paper examines the presence of Anglicisms in the area of sports –including also some cases of false Anglicisms and hybrid formations– and it intends to demonstrate how some of these English lexical items develop metaphorical meanings when used in Spanish digital press. Despite the field of sports being the object of several studies which analyze non-adapted lexical Anglicisms, the employment of pseudo-Anglicisms has not been the focus of many publications. Some of them have indeed explored the use of pseudo-Anglicisms in the field of sports (Campos-Pardillos, 2015; Rodríguez-Medina, 2021), but so far only a few studies have concentrated on the metaphorical uses of sports-related Anglicisms in Spanish. Although Rodríguez González (2016) conducted some research on these figurative uses of Anglicisms –in fields such as economics, politics, or the commercial sphere–, this author only focused on lexical items from the specific domain of football. This study by Rodríguez González has been taken as the starting point for the first category out of the five included in the present paper (see below). The analysis carried out in what follows intends to cover a more extended area dealing with various kinds of sports, addressing not only the uses of non-adapted lexical Anglicisms, but encompassing some cases of pseudo-Anglicisms and hybrid formations as well –some of which are employed with metaphorical purposes–, which aims at filling in a research gap.

The objectives of this paper are:

- a.) To examine sports-related Anglicisms that are used metaphorically in the Spanish press, be it in the same specialized area (i.e. sports) or in other domains.
- b.) To explore the use in context of sports-related clippings as well as innovative non-adapted and hybrid compound terms of an English origin/with an English appearance.
- c.) To spot instances of British football clubs nicknames as employed in the Spanish written media.
- d.) To show a present-day picture of the inconsistent orthography that characterizes the use of various sports-related Anglicisms in Spanish.

- e.) To delve into the implications that these phenomena entail – pragmatic meanings, lexical creativity, lack of stabilization in the recipient language.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Linguistic borrowing constitutes a widely discussed topic which has been dealt with from a variety of angles. Considering stylistic aspects, Galinsky's (1963: 134) study on American English elements in Modern German identified the following seven functions:

- (1) providing national American color of settings, actions, and characters, (2) establishing or enhancing precision, (3) offering or facilitating intentional disguise, (4) effecting brevity to the point of terseness, (5) producing vividness, often by way of metaphor, (6) conveying tone, its gamut ranging from humorous playfulness to sneering parody on America and 'Americanized' Germany, (7) creating or increasing variation of expression.

Point number five in the previous quotation refers to a highly relevant concept when it comes to stylistic aspects of borrowing: that of metaphor. The perspective from which this concept is approached in Cognitive Linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980a & 1980b; Ibarretxe-Antuñano, 2013; among many others) has brought metaphor out of the literary sphere where it used to be cloistered and has, therefore, paved the way for its study in everyday language.

As Gibbs Jr. (2023: 105455) aptly indicates, a metaphor entails "a mapping between two separate domains" whereas, in the case of metonymy, there is "a mapping from one part of a single domain to another." Nevertheless, these two figures sometimes become intertwined, giving as a result what Goossens (1990) labels a 'metaphonymy', which "sits along a continuum at one end of which metaphors are highlighted and at the other, metonymies are prominent" (Jin, Lin & Oakley, 2021: 2). Metaphonymy, thus, foregrounds the "continual nature of the metaphor-metonymy axes" (Jin, Lin & Oakley, 2021: 2).

Some of the stylistic functions listed by Galinsky (1963), such as humor or parody, are inherently connected to pragmatics. This leads us to consider the central role that context fulfils in the analysis of Anglicisms in use. To overcome the traditional simplistic classification of borrowings into necessary and luxury ones, Onysko and Winter-Froemel (2011: 1554) bring forward a distinction between *catachrestic* and *non-catachrestic* innovations. The former are those loanwords that fill in a lexical gap, i.e. they do not "compete with alternative expressions for the concepts" they name "at the time of innovation". The latter are those loanwords for which the recipient language "already had existing alternative expressions (...), which can equally refer to the same concepts" (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011: 1554). However, the existence of an equivalent lexical unit in the donee language does not mean the loanword be unnecessary, since the pragmatic meaning it conveys is different from that of the recipient language expression. For this idea to be grounded in a theoretical framework, Onysko and Winter-Froemel (2011: 1554) applied Levinson's (2000) theory of presumptive meanings to their *catachrestic / non-catachrestic* differentiation: according to Levinson, "(...) pragmatic

meanings divide into three basic types of generalized conversational implicatures, that is, into inferences of quantity, informativeness, and manner.” The last two types can be linked to the two kinds of lexical innovations, as the authors explain: *catachrestic* loanwords typically bear I-implicatures and are understood as unmarked forms – “if the innovation has become sufficiently conventionalized” (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011: 1555)–; *non-catachrestic* loanwords typically convey M-implicatures and are, therefore, pragmatically marked. Thus, the proposed model is rooted in semantics (existence or absence of a semantic equivalent in the recipient language) as well as in pragmatics (“pragmatic functions and specific usage contexts of an innovation”, Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011: 1563).

The *catachrestic* (bearing mainly I-implicatures) and *non-catachrestic* (conveying predominantly M-implicatures) taxonomy has been tested in 101 highly frequent Anglicisms in German (Onysko & Winter-Froemel, 2011) as well as in 100 highly frequent Anglicisms in Montenegrin (Đurčević & Kostić, 2021). The results of the empirical analysis in both studies show that such a basic categorization is possible; nevertheless, classifying the loanwords is not always a straightforward task, as intricate cases are found in both recipient languages.

In relation to Anglicisms in Spanish, Rodríguez González (1996) adapted the three functional components of a language stated by Halliday (1978) –i.e. ideational, interpersonal, and textual– to the analysis of the functions performed by English loanwords. According to this typology, several terms are stylistically marked and have an emotive connotation; in Rodríguez González’s words (1996: 7), “a meaning that expresses feelings or attitudes on the part of the speaker: irony, contempt, snobbery or affectation (prestige).” In line with this study, the focus of this paper is the metaphorical usage of some anglicized lexical items in the Spanish digital press.

Two other media –television and radio– were employed by Rodríguez Medina (2004) when she concentrated on humorous programs broadcast in Spain to examine the use of Anglicisms with expressive, ironic, or parodic purposes. The inclusion of these foreign elements in the Spanish audio-visual discourse proved to be a lasting sociolinguistic trend that fulfils the goal of attracting the audience’s attention. Humor can, indeed, be approached “via the paradigm of lexical creation, meant as a tool used to provoke laughter” (Bordet & Brisset, 2021: 1). It is not only about “playing on words”, but also about “playing with words, which implies a taste for lexical creativity” (Bordet & Brisset, 2021: 1). Furthermore, the great power of euphemisms as creative sources to produce humour can be highlighted (Hamilton & Foltzer, 2021).

González Cruz and Rodríguez Medina (2011a) administered a survey to a sample of young men and women to explore the use of Anglicisms by this segment of the population in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands, Spain). Results showed that the informants employed English loanwords with a pragmatic function in a relatively recurrent way, mainly

in informal contexts. The use of this expressive linguistic mechanism helps young people to “mark their identity as a group” (González Cruz & Rodríguez Medina, 2011b: 271).

As Shariffian (2011: 5) reported, “[c]ultural conceptualisations are developed through interactions between the members of a cultural group and enable them to think as if in one mind, somehow more or less in a similar fashion.” Discourse is used to maintain these cultural conceptualizations and negotiate through time and across generations. It means that an analysis like this needs to consider the interface between language, society, and culture. The use of Anglicisms is an expression of the interaction of languages in contact –English and Spanish– along with cultures in contact. In Balteiro’s (2011: 25) words:

English occupies not only a position of power or control over other languages like Spanish, but this also creates a situation of language contact, in which terms from two languages (in our case, English and Spanish) coexist in Spanish. These two different realities, however, basically converge into one and cause the growth of the recipient language vocabulary.

Following Balteiro’s assertion, it is undeniable that the situation of language contact between English and Spanish in Spain and several Latin-American countries allows the exchange not only of cultural aspects, but also of lexical items, consequently producing an enrichment of the recipient language’s vocabulary repertoire, Spanish in this case. Long time ago, Phillipson (1992) warned against the supremacy and linguistic imperialism of English over the rest of the languages. This powerful position is still maintained by English.

Regarding the pragmatic value of figurative language, Allan and Burridge (2006: 29) make a clear distinction among the three types, being *euphemism* defined as ‘sweet talking,’ in contrast with *dysphemism* as ‘unfavorable speech’, and *ortophemism* as ‘straight, neutral speech.’ In connection with Anglicisms in Spanish, euphemisms and sexual taboos have been the object of some recent research (Crespo-Fernández, 2021). Crespo-Fernández and Luján-García (2018: 22) pointed out that linguistic resources such as euphemisms and dysphemisms are mechanisms of meaning transfer that work differently on the taboo. Euphemisms eliminate or minimize, at least apparently, the offensive and negative connotations of some terms. In the case of dysphemisms, an intensification of these associations is applied aiming at degrading and insulting. Therefore, both processes have in common the fact that a concept is submitted to interdiction, but both mechanisms do it differently. The euphemistic expression intends to neutralize the lexical unit, whereas the dysphemism, far from disguising the taboo, aims at motivating and reinforcing those negative or offensive associations (Casas Gómez, 1986: 85-86). Thus, Casas Gómez (2009: 738) defines the concept of X-phemistic as “the cognitive process of conceptualization of a forbidden reality, which, manifested in discourse through the use of linguistic mechanisms (...) enables the speaker, in a certain ‘context’ or in a specific pragmatic situation, to attenuate, or, on the contrary, to reinforce a certain forbidden concept or reality.” On their part, Hamilton and Foltzer (2021) assert that forms of X-phemism may

occupy different locations on clines for register (from informal to formal) or directness (from literal to figurative).

In addition to the pragmatic approach, the study of Anglicisms has been delved into from other perspectives too. One of them is the thematic point of view, which analyzes English loanwords in terms of the specialized field –economics, sports, technology, fashion, etc.– where they are used. Specifically, the realm of sports has been widely investigated in different recipient languages (Bergh & Ohlander, 2017 & 2012; Bernard-Béziade, 2010; Bernard-Béziade & Attali, 2012 & 2009; Granvik, 2019; among others). Spanish is no exception, as is evidenced by the large number of papers which discuss this topic in several diatopic variants of the language (Eid, 2021; Ferro Bajuelo, 2014; González Gómez, 2005; Núñez Nogueroles, 2023; Rodríguez González, 2012; Rodríguez Medina, 2021 & 2016).

The present article displays a study of sports-related Anglicisms (thematic perspective) from a pragmatic point of view, covering a variety of areas of linguistic analysis: word formation (compounds, hybrid formations, clippings), onomastics (nicknames) and loanword integration (spelling variants).

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The lexical material for this study was excerpted from ‘Observatorio Lázaro,’ a search tool of Anglicisms which examines seven different Spanish digital newspapers (*elDiario.es*, *El País*, *El Mundo*, *ABC*, *La Vanguardia*, *El Confidencial*, *20minutos*) and the wire service *EFE*. This tool started being available in 2020, and it daily incorporates new pure or non-adapted Anglicisms extracted from these eight different media (Álvarez Mellado, 2020a).ⁱ

The compilation process, which was carried out manually, provided a total of 40 different English(-looking) lexical items, and a specific example was selected to illustrate each of them. The units analyzed in this paper were excerpted from the Anglicisms that are listed alphabetically in the section “Lexicon” of the automatic extractor website (Álvarez Mellado, 2020b). Due to the fact that the focus of the study was on the pragmatic implications of the lexical items used in context, the authors had to read each of the press examples provided by the search machine to collect those sentences in which the sports-related term was used with a metaphorical purpose and/or constituted a pseudo-Anglicism in the context of the piece of news. Other English lexical items that did not present a metaphorical use/meaning were not included in this analysis. It was a hard task, since this process implied careful reading of the sentences that surround the Anglicism to make sure that its use had metaphorical implications. The lexical units were looked up on lexicographical sources such as the online versions of *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Cambridge Dictionary*, *Collins Dictionary/ Collins Cobuild*, *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (DLE, 23rd ed.), or the *Diccionario de Anglicismos del*

Deporte (DAD), a reference work by Rodríguez González and Castañón Rodríguez (2021) which compiles more than 2,100 English terms used in the field of sports in Spanish.

This piece of research was conceived as qualitative in nature; therefore, any counting of the occurrences of the loanwords examined in this paper was beyond the scope of the present study. The period covered goes from the last semester of 2020 until the end of 2022.

4. CATEGORIES

In this section, the two key concepts under analysis will be defined. As far as the term pseudo-Anglicism is concerned, we follow Pulcini et al. (2012: 7): “[a] false or pseudo-loan or Anglicism is a word or multi-word unit in the RL [recipient language] made up of English lexical elements but unknown or used with a conspicuously different meaning in English.” For the concept of metaphor, the definition by Knowles and Moon (2006: 3, quoted in Aloairdhi & Kahlaoui, 2020: 1078) is considered: “the use of language to refer to something other than what it was originally applied to, or what it ‘literally’ means, in order to suggest some resemblance or make a connection between the two things.”

The following five subsections present a classification of the phenomena that have been found after analyzing the real uses of sports-related Anglicisms and some pseudo-Anglicisms in the contexts provided by the tool ‘Observatorio Lázaro.’ Each category is illustrated through examples that unveil the pragmatic force of these English(-looking) lexical units as employed in Spanish.

4.1. Metaphors in English used in the sports field and other spheres

Much has been written about the conceptual structures that constitute conceptual metaphors. Within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics, there is, as Kövecses (2017) states, a lack of consensus among scholars in relation with terms such as *domain*, *schemas frames*, *scenes*, *mental spaces*, etc. Leaving aside this variety of terminology, in the present study we will take as the starting point the following definition by Lakoff (in Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 1997: 281): “[a] metaphor has been defined as a set of correspondences (or conceptual mapping) between two conceptual domains where one of the domains (called the source) helps us to structure, understand and reason about the other (called the target).” In Ruiz de Mendoza’s (1997) words, “[i]n the cognitive perspective, metaphor is seen as the partial mapping of a source domain onto a target domain, with a set of correspondences between the source and the target. As a result of this process, we talk and reason about the target in terms of the conceptual (and inferential) structure of the source.” Nevertheless, to understand better the linguistic nature of metaphors, Steen (2008: 221) points out: “[w]hen metaphor is studied as part of actual language use, or events of discourse, it does not only manifest a linguistic form and a conceptual structure, but also a communicative function.” This author highlights the need for more research on the communicative aspects of metaphor. In his own words, “[q]uite a few

(...) publications have pointed to the need for cognitive scientists to pay more attention to the communicative aspects of metaphor if they want to make a connection with the use of metaphor in discourse” (Steen, 2008: 221). These uses of metaphor aim at producing a certain reaction or a different view of the topic in the addressee, or reader of the press in the case of this analysis.

The metaphors and figurative uses compiled in this subsection are performed by several words that have spread to different contexts, which belong to the same specialized area (i.e. sports) on some occasions or –mostly– to other domains. Alphabetically, the first instance collected by ‘Observatorio Lázaro’ is *the champions league*. As DAD (2021: 61) records, this term denotes the European competition of football clubs organized by the UEFA and in which the top teams in the ranking of each country participate. Rodríguez González (2016) drew attention to the fact that this Anglicism is commonly employed figuratively in the Spanish press, mainly in the domain of economics. This use is displayed in example 1, in which the journalist reproduces the words of former Spanish president José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who compared the high quality of the champions league with the high level of the Spanish economy:

1. “José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero se enorgullecía de haber dejado al país en “la *champions league* de las economías del mundo” (...)” (“España se aleja de la convergencia con los países más ricos al caer por debajo de Chipre, Lituania y Eslovenia”, *El País*, 15/10/2020).

In English, the word *cheerleader* has had a general sense (‘a person who leads cheers of acclamation or encouragement’, *Oxford English Dictionary*) as well as a specific meaning in the American sporting culture (‘a member of a team that performs organized cheering, chanting, and dancing in support of a sports team,’ *lexico.com*) since the 19th century. It spread afterwards to other contexts, such as journalism, to refer to ‘an enthusiastic and vocal supporter of someone or something’ (*lexico.com*). This usage is illustrated utilizing example 2, which alludes to the US TV channel Fox News:

2. “Los comentaristas son *cheerleaders* de Trump” (“Joe Peyronnin, expresidente de Fox News: ‘El canal atraviesa una crisis de identidad sin Trump’”, *El País*, 09/02/2021).

According to Rodríguez González (2016), the origin of the word *crack* lies in horse racing betting in the 1920s; afterwards, it reached football as well as other ball sports. In English, this sense of *crack* is only employed as an adjective (however, Spanish has adopted it as a noun). This author declares that, by extension, the term is currently used to refer to any dimension of life. Specifically, ‘Observatorio Lázaro’ offers the following instance belonging to the field of cooking:

3. “No hace falta ser un *crack* de la cocina para prepararlo, pero como suele pasar con los platos aparentemente simples, la técnica puede marcar la diferencia entre uno

bueno y algo similar a un emplasto” (“¿Cuál es la mejor manera de hacer arroz blanco?”, *El País*, 09/12/2020).

The term *doping*, which has been employed for a long time to refer to the use of drugs to enhance sporting performance, is also found in the collocation *doping tecnológico* to allude to technological aids employed in some sports, as example 4 illustrates.

4. “(...) ha explicado sobre el debate de si la ayuda traspasa la frontera del '*doping tecnológico*'” (“Coe defiende las protestas en los Juegos: ‘El deporte debe ser un catalizador’”, *El Mundo*, 11/12/2020).

Dream Team, a tag with which the top ten NBA players in 1992 were labelled, has extended its meaning to designate any team constituted by the best players (DAD, 2021: 93) but also to make reference to the best possible group of people in other areas, such as politics. This use is exemplified by the following instance, which mentions several politicians belonging to Spanish conservative party Partido Popular (PP):

5. “(...) el "*dream team*" del PP: Rajoy, Cospedal, Francisco Álvarez Cascos, Rodrigo Rato, Federico Trillo...” (“El Congreso fracasa en arrancar novedades a Bárcenas: ‘Esto no tiene nada que ver con Kitchen’”, *El Diario*, 17/03/2021).

Concerning *hat trick* and its variant *hat-trick*, DAD (2021: 146-147) explains that it was coined in cricket and afterwards spread to football, where it is commonly employed nowadays. Indeed, the latter is mentioned in the definition of the term provided by *Collins Dictionary*: ‘A hat-trick is a series of three achievements, especially in a sports event, for example, three goals scored by the same person in a football game.’ Example 6 illustrates a metaphorical usage of this term:

6. El FC Barcelona no solo no escapa de ese escenario, sino que le añade su cuota de conflicto habitual, brutal este verano después de experimentar un *hat-trick* de calamidades difícilmente soportable: un 2-8 que queda incrustado en la historia, una directiva atrincherada con múltiples frentes abiertos y su estrella más rutilante, Leo Messi, quedándose queriéndose ir (“Barça: panorama después de la tormenta”, *La Vanguardia*, 09/09/2020).

Considering the word *hooligan* –which frequently appears in the sphere of sports–, in example 7 it is used in a different domain: politics. DAD (2021: 150) clarifies that the general and figurative sense of this term in Spanish is similar to the one it has in English, but in the Spanish language this meaning appeared after the Anglicism being adopted and spread in the context of football. Example 7 adequately illustrates an axiological usage of *hooligan* in the area of politics. The use of this term is euphemistic, since it intends to avoid employing the recipient language equivalents *gamberra* or *vándala*, which have negative connotations in Spanish:

7. “Quiere poner tierra de por medio con Marjorie Taylor Greene, '*hooligan*' trumpista y sectaria del culto QAnon” (“Los republicanos callan ante el alegato de una congresista de matar demócratas”, *La Vanguardia*, 01/02/2021).

As for *killer*, Rodríguez González (2016) claimed that its metaphorical sense is stinging and dramatic due to its literal meaning. In the football jargon, it can be defined as ‘a very efficient and great goal-scorer offensive player’ (DAD, 2021: 166). In the realm of sports, it is also used when talking about basketball, as example 8 proves:

8. “La salida de los Suns, quizá donde más brilló Rubio, como el sol de Phoenix, junto al ‘killer’ Devin Booker, con un proyecto de futuro que ahora se intenta reinventar con el influjo de Paul, supuso un mazazo (...)” (“Ricky Rubio, su desengaño y su nueva etapa en los Timberwolves: ‘Bla, bla bla... Parece que nada era verdad’”, *El Mundo*, 24/11/2020).

Figuratively, it is employed with axiological values to avoid using other Spanish terms that may sound more offensive and negative. These uses are euphemistic in domains such as the following ones:

- politics, to refer to an aggressive politician, who utters sharp comments or is creepy (see example 9):

9. “Y, además, la relación con el presidente del Gobierno se había vuelto insoportable: su fría impavidez de ‘killer’ y sus silencios no auguraban nada bueno” (“¡Dos iguales para hoy!”, *La Vanguardia*, 20/03/2021).

- finance, a context in which a killer is a heartless businessman/woman who demonstrates a lack of ethics in his/her behavior (see example 10):

10. “El responsable último de NYL es un maduro atractivo, de sonrisa permanente y gesto amable. Pero un *killer* capaz de condenar a la miseria a un país entero con sus decisiones” (“Devils: los diablos que mueven el dinero y controlan el mundo”, *El Mundo*, 13/02/2021).

- justice. In example 11, the usage of killer is associated to a person nominated to lead the “Transparency Committee,” which caused serious trouble to the Spanish government at the time.

11. “«El Puma», un «killer» a 110.000 euros al año para controlar el Consejo de Transparencia” (“«El Puma», un «killer» a 110.000 euros al año para controlar el Consejo de Transparencia”, *ABC*, 20/01/2021).

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *match ball* has the following two senses: ‘(a) a ball of the size and standard specified by the rules or laws of a particular sport; (b) *Tennis*, *Squash*, etc., a ball or shot which, if won, will decide the match.’ The latter is employed in a wide variety of contexts, both in the form *match ball* as well as in its variant *match-ball*. Examples 12 to 15 illustrate this use:

- politics: In example 12, Casado –as the leader of the opposition– intends to encompass the center and right wings to prevent another ultra-right wing political party, Vox, from gaining a position in the Spanish political panorama of the time.

12. “Casado salva otro 'match ball' y acelera la refundación del centro-derecha” (“Casado salva otro 'match ball' y acelera la refundación del centro-derecha”, *ABC*, 21/03/2021).

- finance: Example 13 refers to a firm that wants to borrow money from hedge funds specialized in debts while waiting for relief from a public rescue fund.

13. “La hotelera de Kike Sarasola trata de salvar un *match ball* financiero” (“Room Mate busca liquidez urgente de ‘hedge funds’ ”, *El País*, 26/03/2021).

- illness: In example 14, the use of *match ball* is related to those few ill people who are able to survive a terrible illness and continue playing their game, in other words, living.

14. “(...) pertenezco a ese pequeño porcentaje de enfermos que salvan el *match-ball* y se aferran a seguir jugando el partido por encima de la supervivencia media” (“Muere el exfutbolista y periodista Carlos Matallanas, símbolo de la lucha contra la ELA”, *20 minutos*, 09/03/2021).

- justice: Example 15 makes a connection between Boris Becker’s profession (tennis player) and his judicial situation for concealing assets and bank accounts.

15. “‘*Match-ball*’ judicial a Becker” (“‘Match-ball’ judicial a Becker”, *La Vanguardia*, 29/09/2020).

In the first of the two senses included in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *match point* is very similar to 'match ball': '(a) *Tennis, Squash*, etc., a point which, if won, will win the match; (b) *Bridge* a unit of scoring used in matches and tournaments; frequently *attributive*'. This first sense is figuratively used in different contexts too by Spanish journalists, as presented in examples 16 and 17:

- politics: The text to which example 16 belongs starts by making a reference to Woody Allen’s film *Match Point*, and then uses this English term to allude to a key moment in the career of the Spanish politician Cristina Cifuentes.

16. “Cristina Cifuentes, de 56 años, abogada madrileña de ancestros gallegos, tuvo su *match point*” (“El «match point» de Cifuentes”, *ABC*, 19/01/2021).

- or even pandemics: In example 17, the *match point* was a decisive moment to take important decisions –that, if correct, would make the situation dramatically better– during the pandemic period.

17. “Pero las autoridades sanitarias consideraron que se trataba de un momento *match point*” (“Ya no nos quedaba más qué [sic] hacer para bajar la interacción social”, *El País*, 18/10/2020).

As for *punch*, it literally means ‘a forceful hit with a fist’ (*Cambridge Online Dictionary*) and it is a term frequently used in sports such as boxing. However, other metaphorical uses of this lexical unit have been identified outside the sportive realm. In the following example, *punch* is used with a figurative sense in the political field:

18. “acaso por falta de entrenamiento, el expresidente demostró menos ‘punch’ de lo habitual” (“Trump no descarta volver en 2024, pero no creará un nuevo partido político”, *El Mundo*, 01/03/2021).

Lastly, *ring* is also an Anglicism generally associated with boxing –the enclosed area where the boxing match takes place– but, as example 19 shows, it is also employed in other sports such as football.

19. El Camp Nou fue un *ring*, el más transparente de todos los escenarios deportivos (“Resignación cristiana”, *La Vanguardia*, 17/02/2021).

This sub-section has demonstrated the power of the Anglicism as a linguistic resource to avoid taboo, rude and negatively loaded words. Authors such as Crespo-Fernández have provided plenty of evidence on this matter in areas such as politics (2016) and sex (Crespo-Fernández & Luján-García, 2017 & 2018), among others.

4.2. New compound terms and hybrid formations

This subsection comprises several English compound terms related to the domain of sports which have entered the Spanish language either as non-adapted lexical Anglicisms or as hybrids. The latter are, specifically, loanblends, which may be considered, in Pulcini et al.’s words (2012: 9), as “partial loan translations”.ⁱⁱ An in-between case consists of the hispanicization of the compound elements order.

The term *abu-fitness* is a hybrid that results from partially calquing English “Fitness Gran”: *abu(ela/elo)-fitness < fitness gran(dmother/dfather)*.

20. “Su nombre es Erika Rischko, aunque todos la conocen como ‘*abu-fitness*’” (“Erika Rischko, la ‘abuela fitness’ que triunfa en TikTok a los 81 años”, *20 minutos*, 24/02/2021).

In English, *beer pong* was coined in the 20th century from “beer + (Ping-)Pong” (*Collins Dictionary*). It has been adopted by Spanish without any adaptation, as example 21 shows. Note that the journalist has included an explanation of the foreign term enclosed in round brackets, which means that the writer suspects this term is not familiar to the readers.

21. “Salud Pública ha rastreado la celebración de cuatro: ibicenca, tardeo, gincana y *beer pong* (juego de origen estadounidense consistente en encestar una pelota de ping pong o de papel en un vaso de cerveza y bebérsela)” (“La resaca viral de la fiesta ibicenca que acabó con 23 universitarios en una habitación en Valencia”, *El País*, 10/10/2020).

The same beverage is involved in *beer yoga*, which is defined in the BBC News website (26 April 2017) as a “fitness craze from Germany, combining traditional yoga poses while drinking bottles of beer”. Since it was coined in Germany, it can be considered a false Anglicismⁱⁱⁱ which has extended its use to Spanish.

22. “*Beer yoga*’ es el nombre de esta particular metodología en la que el equilibrio es muy importante, y con razón, puesto que después de una o dos copas parece más difícil conservarlo” (“Día mundial del yoga: la disciplina con la que lograrás un equilibrio mental y emocional”, *El Confidencial*, 21/06/2020).

The compound element “friendly”, which is frequently employed at present combined with a wide range of nouns, as in *pet-friendly* or *gay-friendly*, has also been connected to cycling in the term *bike friendly*. The two variants of this word that have been found in ‘Observatorio Lázaro’ –a hyphenated form and another one written as two separated parts– are illustrated by means of examples 23 and 24:

23. “Se ha hecho un esfuerzo notable por transformar las calles en entornos *bike-friendly*”

(“España está perdiendo la oportunidad de transformar su modelo de movilidad urbana”, *20 minutos*, 21/02/2021).

24. “(...) que se califica como *bike friendly* y ofrece a sus clientes aficionados al cicloturismo todas las facilidades” (“Delta del Ebro, horizontes rebosantes de vida”, *El País*, 24/07/2020).

Influencer fitness constitutes an instance of a specific adaptation consisting of hispanicizing the order of the elements: English “fitness influencer” becomes *influencer fitness* in the recipient tongue.

25. “(...) pierde 30 kilos y supera una depresión gracias al ejercicio y ahora es una *'influencer fitness'*” (“Una anciana de 73 años pierde 30 kilos y supera una depresión gracias al ejercicio y ahora es una *'influencer fitness'*”, *20 minutos*, 06/10/2020).

As in ‘abu-fitness,’ *mami fit* is a hybrid which results from partially calquing English “Fit Mom”, a term that refers to a pregnant woman or a new mother who works out.

26. “Si ‘mami fit’ fue la encargada de ayudarle a trabajar su suelo pélvico ahora es Iñaki García quien, de nuevo, trabaja junto a ella en busca de una imagen con la que Paula se sienta cómoda y feliz” (“3 ejercicios del entrenador de Paula Echevarría para unos glúteos perfectos”, *El Confidencial*, 24/01/2022).

These examples constitute good illustrations of the use of English as a recurrent language to introduce innovative hybrid or anglicized compound terms, which in some cases may seek to produce irony or a humorous effect on the Spanish reader, as in the cases of *abu-fitness* or *mami-fit*.

4.3. Clippings

In the English specialized field of sports, the form *basket* means ‘a net hanging from a ring through which players try to throw the ball to score points’ as well as ‘the point scored when

the ball is thrown through the ring' (*Collins Cobuild*). However, in Spanish and French it is employed as a synonym for *basketball*, as example 27 shows:

27. “Aniston, el cómico vuelve a cambiar de registro haciendo valer su afición por el basket convirtiéndose en un entrenador caído en desgracia que tiene ante sí una segunda oportunidad” (“La NBA cierra la temporada regular machacando en la ficción: las cinco series que aspiran a ser MVP”, *El Diario*, 09/04/2022).

In example 27, the use of *basket* for *basketball* advocates for the principle of economy of language, turning an English lexical item into a pseudo-Anglicism. This, once more, proves the huge creativity of language users.

The *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (DLE, 23rd ed.) indicates that the word *cross* is a “[v]oz fr., y esta del ingl. *cross-country*” [French word coming from English *cross-country*] to refer to a long-distance race in which the racers cross fields. Indeed, *cross* is employed in Spanish with the meaning that *cross-country* has in English (‘the sport of running, riding, or skiing across open countryside rather than along roads or around a running track,’ *Collins Cobuild*), as illustrated by example 28:

28. “Dominaba en el tartán y en el barro, imbatible como era en *cross*” (“Muere a los 53 años Alejandro Gómez, uno de los mejores fondistas del atletismo español”, *El País*, 31/01/2021).

Upper, as the abbreviated form of *uppercut*, is used to refer to a kind of punch used in boxing which consists of a hard upward blow to the chin (*Collins Dictionary*).

29. “Álvarez, quien salió 50-1 a favor, tomó la iniciativa con un buen '*upper*' y par de ganchos al hígado, pero Yildirim defendió bien con la guardia arriba” (“Canelo Álvarez machaca al turco Yildirim y retiene sus cinturones”, *El Mundo*, 28/02/2021).

Following Gottlieb et al. (2018), *basket*, *cross*, and *upper*, as used in Spanish, are instances of ‘clippings’ (i.e. shortened English words), which constitute one of the types of pseudo-Anglicisms recorded by these authors. In all the examined cases of clippings –*basket*, *cross*, and *upper*–, the users of these terms in Spanish understand their exact meanings, despite the fact that the original English word has been shortened. These are good examples of how the principle of economy of language, creativity and common understanding play essential roles in communication.

4.4. Nicknames

The presence of British nicknames that are being employed in Spanish denotes a clear exchange of linguistic and cultural items. As de Klerk and Bosch (1997: 291-292) remark, the usage of nicknames “reveals insights (...) into their role (...) in the subculture which devised and uses them (Raper, 1987; Landman, 1986)”. Thus, their use implies a sense of belonging to this subculture – in this case, that of football. According to Feng, Shuyue and Cheng (2020: 60), “[s]ome of the functions served by nicknames are to break down barriers of formality;

increase fan identification; and create a sense of closeness (Lieb 1943; Harre 1980; McBride, 1980; Skipper, 1985)”. In the study these authors carry out on the sobriquets of all the FIFA national football teams (NFTs), “these nicknames often indicate the team colors, animal symbols, regions, nationalities, and guiding virtues” (Feng, Shuyue & Cheng, 2020: 60). Furthermore, the scholars conclude that “nicknames are the manifestation of subtle and profound geographical, historical, and cultural difference” (p. 67). With this piece of research focusing on the area of football, these scholars contribute to onomastic theory by providing “valid empirical evidence gathered on solid methodological grounds” (p. 60).

The systematic examination of the Anglicisms collected by ‘Observatorio Lázaro’ has enabled the identification of a remarkable phenomenon: the usage, by the Spanish press, of the original English nicknames employed in the UK to refer to several British football clubs.

- *The blues*: Chelsea Football Club

30. “(...) Los *blues*, que eliminaron sin demasiados problemas al Atlético de Madrid en octavos (0-1 y 2-0), realizaron varias incorporaciones de prestigio al inicio del curso, pero el equipo no está cumpliendo con las expectativas” (“Así quedan los bombos del sorteo de cuartos de la Champions” *La Vanguardia*, 18/03/2021).

According to DAD (2021: 29), the Chelsea players are nicknamed after the color of their team T-shirt.

- *The cherries*: Athletic Football Club Bournemouth

31. “Desde el club *cherry* consideran que el error ha sido definitivo para el descenso del equipo y esperan que su reclamación sirva para lograr la permanencia un año más en la Premier League” (“El Bournemouth presentará una queja contra el ‘ojo del halcón’ para lograr la permanencia”, *La Vanguardia*, 28/07/2020).

- *Citizens*: Manchester City Football Club

32. “(...) en auxiliar a los centrales para evitar que Sterling y Foden, los extremos '*citizens*', hicieran superioridades por afuera” (“La irrupción de Laporte doblega la defensa del Everton y pone al City en semifinales de la Copa”, *El País*, 20/03/2021).

- *The gunners*: Arsenal Football Club

33. “Los '*gunners*' se imponen con justicia al Tottenham” (“El Arsenal se sobrepone a la fabulosa rabona de Lamela”, *El Mundo*, 14/03/2021).

- *The hammers*: West Ham United Football Club

34. “Sin embargo, en el caso del West Ham, la asistencia ha podido superar en más de una ocasión esta cifra después de una estrategia que ha diseñado el máximo accionista de los '*hammers*', que ha sido cuestionada y criticada en Inglaterra” (“Las trampas del dueño del West Ham para que familiares y amigos puedan acudir al estadio: nombrarles directivos”, *20 minutos*, 14/01/2021).

- *The foxes*: Leicester City Football Club

35. “Durante el primer tiempo, la defensa de los *foxes* sólo fue inquietada por un disparo de Bernardo Silva”, (“De Bruyne, con un golazo de falta, cubre la ausencia de Haaland”, *El Mundo*, 29/10/2022).

It is important to note that we cannot give for granted that many Spanish football fans are familiar with some of the colloquial names of the British teams, but still news reporters choose these sobriquets to refer to them on some occasions.

4.5. Terms with an inconsistent orthography

As in the area of Information Technologies (IT), where Sánchez Ibáñez (2014) analyzes formal variation by means of the case study “on line / on-line / online”, several Anglicisms are used with inconsistent orthography in the sample collected. According to the classification presented by Núñez Nogueroles (2017), the cases found in the present study belong to the following types of orthographic variation:

- Spelling variation: *dribbling/ dribling; goal average/ gol average*. The former instance maintains the English form whereas the latter is adapted to the orthographic rules of the recipient language.
- Compounds written as two separated words, with a hyphen or as one word: *dirt track/ dirt-track; fit ball/ fitball; free style/ freestyle; hat-trick/ hat trick; kick boxing/ kickboxing; match ball/ match-ball; offroad/ off road; onboard/ on board; play-off/ play off/ playoff; pit stop/ pit-stop; shakedown/ shake down; way point/ waypoint*. On one occasion, the three forms are present in the sample collected in this study; however, in most of the cases only two of them are found.

Furthermore, there is an example which combines the previous two types of variation: *alley-hoop/ alley oop/ alley-oop*. As can be observed, the term appears as two separated elements as well as with a hyphen, and its second part is written with and without ‘h’.

The lack of consistency that has been analyzed in the previous paragraphs reveals that these anglicized lexical units are not consolidated in the donee language yet. Reference dictionaries such as DLE (23rd ed.) and *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* (DPD) –both by the Real Academia Española (RAE)– provide alternative spellings of some terms with an adaptation to the Spanish orthographic and phonological systems. In addition, DPD recommends using italics to mark those foreign lexical units that have no Spanish equivalent, as in the case of *hooligan*, present in this analysis and compiled in both dictionaries. Considering the term *ring*, both lexicographic works immediately refer to the word *cuadrilátero*, which is its Spanish alternative. For the Anglicism *crack*, which is collected in both dictionaries with various senses –being one of them “a person who excels extraordinarily in something”–, the RAE recommends using the adapted form *crac*.

Therefore, it could be stated that it is a matter of time to determine whether these borrowings will remain in Spanish at all –or are trendy terms that will not be used in this recipient language in a few months or years– and, if they do, which of the different forms – adapted or pure– will survive in Spanish in each case.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The unlimited power of creativity and inventiveness of English is not only unquestionable, but it spreads to other tongues too, contributing to making up new figurative uses in the recipient languages, Spanish in this case. This creative power is extended as well to the emergence of new (hybrid and compound) terms that are employed by Spanish journalists and news reporters. Clippings and nicknames also seem to be evidence of the influence that English exerts on the Spanish language and, consequently, culture. The usage of these linguistic elements provides Spanish with a touch of modernity and professionalism.

The axiological uses of sports Anglicisms in Spanish are expressed by means of different phenomena, such as the metaphor or the euphemism. In most cases, the English lexical item is chosen against the Spanish equivalent one because of different reasons. On some occasions, these English terms do not have, in the recipient language, the negative connotations of the Spanish alternative words. In other cases, there may be an intention on the part of the journalists, such as producing irony or a humorous effect on the reader. As evidence of the power of creativity of languages, even though most of these borrowings originally come from the field of sports, their uses are not restricted to this domain. In other words, not only these English loanwords are employed metaphorically when referring to a sport game different from the one each of them originally belongs to. Throughout the present paper, several instances have shown examples of figurative uses of these anglicized lexical units in a variety of thematic spheres, such as politics, finance, or justice.

As shown in the previous lines, these English borrowings reveal a great inconsistency in terms of spelling, which may be expected since most of them are not totally consolidated in Spanish. On another note, it might be presumed that a Spanish journalist or news reporter uses an English compound, clipping or nickname because s/he assumes that the prospective reader is able to understand it – whether this being really the case or not is, of course, a different story. This denotes an unquestionable presence of English that exceeds the linguistic domain to penetrate the Spanish cultural sphere of sports. Moreover, it is also important to highlight the degree of specialization of some of these terms –such as *match ball*, *match point* or *upper*–, which, despite being employed in the generalist press, are part of the terminology of specific sports rather than belonging to the everyday language used by any Spanish speaker.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

In this paper, the authors have followed the alphabetical order of the surnames of the two researchers and have applied the “Equal contribution” norm (EC). The authors wish to state that they have worked on equal terms on this piece of research. Both of them have collected the sample, have carried out its analysis, and have worked on the introduction, theoretical framework, theoretical review of existing literature, and conclusions on equal terms.

NOTES

ⁱ Although the number of media covered by this tool has been recently enlarged, they were eight at the moment when this study was developed.

ⁱⁱ A loan translation is defined by these authors as “a word or multi-word unit which translates an English item into the RL” (Pulcini et al., 2012: 9); therefore, loanblends are those units in which half of them remains in its original English form whereas the other part has been translated into the recipient language.

ⁱⁱⁱ False Anglicisms are, in Pulcini et al.’s (2012: 9) words, “instances of creative lexical productivity in the RL”.

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