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The Presence and Influence of English in the Portuguese Financial Media

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Abstract

As the lingua franca of the 21st century, English has become the main language for intercultural communication for those wanting to embrace globalization. In Portugal, it is the second language of most public and private domains influencing its culture and discourses. Language contact situations transform languages by the incorporations they make from other languages and Portugal has witnessed an increase in the pervasion of English in written communication. The aim of this study is to disclose how this sociolinguistic behavior is perceived by examining the presence of English loanwords in the Portuguese financial media to uncover its role and functions. Three Portuguese newspapers, *Diário Económico*, *Expresso Economia* and *Vida Económica* were chosen as the corpus of analysis over a two-week period in January 2016 corresponding to the pre and post presidential election weeks. This may reveal if the electoral results affect the presence of English. The motivations of journalists for borrowing English items and the reactions of readers complement the analysis. Results have shown English borrowing as an acceptable/accepted behavior in the analyzed Portuguese financial newspapers.

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1. Introduction

The English language, which began by suffering several linguistic incursions, went on to affect many languages in close and distant lands (Amorim, 2014; Bragg, 2003; Ostler, 2006). This language contact resulted in language shifts and processes of adoption and adaptation. Today, as the global language, English exerts an influence on many cultural aspects of non-native countries. Evidence of this is the many studies dedicated to the increasing presence of English loans resulting in phenomena as borrowing and code switching (Chenggang & Yajun, 2004; Dako, 2002; Gonzalez, 2017; Griffin, 2001; Onysko, 2009; Robinson, 2006; Shoostari & Allahbakhsh, 2013). In Portugal, English permeates the written communication and the media networks as auxiliary or alternative language but this remains an under-researched area.

English is the world's main language for intercultural communication, the predominant foreign contact language. In Portugal, it is the second language in institutional and personal contexts. Use of English in Portugal is encouraged by such factors as the economy and market, the social networks, technology, the media, Americanization, and acculturation. As part of one's 'linguistic capital' (Bourdieu, 1993) allowing speakers of one community to act transversally in all social areas, English is said to grant prestige and status and open doors locally and globally. The demand and need for English proficiency led Portugal in 2014 to make English a compulsory subject as from the third grade of primary school (Ministério da Educação e Ciência, 2014). This increases the number of L2 speakers; however, the real impact of a language in a given society cannot be measured just by the number of people who speak it as a second or foreign language (regardless of proficiency), nor by the number of people who are learning it. It seems pertinent to assess how deeply English permeates cultural environments and discourses worldwide, "encroaching on one among many languages – and occurring in their texts" (Robinson, 2006, p. 9) and "how it infiltrates every day speech" (Griffin, 2001, p. 55).

Three measurements reveal the contemporary impact of English in the Portuguese culture. *Visibility*, the presence of English in road

signs, shop windows, outdoors, and the level of people's contact with English in the media, entertainment, and technology; *communality*, the amount of interactions in spoken or written English; and *functionality*, the roles and functions of English in different domains as business, science, politics, advertising, and the internet.

This study analyzes the presence and influence of English loans in the Portuguese financial media to uncover its role and functions. It also aims to reveal if and how electoral results affect the presence of English and uncover journalists' motivations and readers' reactions to this sociolinguistic behavior. The presence and influence of the global language in the Portuguese culture is scrutinized by looking at its written discourse in three financial periodicals. The main objective is to understand how English words have permeated journalistic text, and how they are shaping the financial and business news of *Diário Económico*, *Expresso*, and *Vida Económica*, the three newspapers chosen as the corpus of analysis. It further focuses on the two-week period comprising the week before and the week after the Presidential elections of 2016, to inquire whether the electoral results may have influenced the presence of English loans. The perspectives of journalists working in these newspapers and of a sample of anonymous readers on this sociolinguistic behavior complement this analysis, by revealing the motivations for and reactions to the use of English loans in financial media discourse.

2. Theoretical Framework

2. 1. The World in English

Three factors are responsible for the global status of English: British imperial dominance, the USA's hegemonic power, and "... economic globalisation [that] encouraged the spread of English (and) the spread of English [that] also encouraged globalisation" (Graddol, 2006, p. 9). In 1990, Bryson claimed, "English words are everywhere" (p. 176). In 1992, Ammon stated that English had the greatest number of speakers reaching as many as 1.5 billion people and that it was the official languages in 62 nations. It was the most dominant language in scientific communication with 70-80 percent of academic publications,

the official and working language in most international organizations, and the most taught foreign language across the world. Currently, non-native speakers outnumber native speakers (Dewey, 2007; House, 2003; Jenkins, 2006) and “English is spoken or written with varying levels of fluency, by a third of the world’s population” (Crystal, 2010, p. 8). The present world order feeds English and English feeds on it as modern lifestyles become more globalized and consequently more homogenized. The English language is a competitive tool for economic success and empowerment, a “basic skill, a taken-for-granted common denominator of this global existence” (Amorim, 2014, p. 135). As a high commodity value, demand for it generates its need and vice-versa. There is a sense of modernity and internationalization attached to English resulting in concrete economic and business incentives to its use. Numerous global transactional and translingual flows boost the language worldwide and make its use “inextricable from the social relationships and identities of its users” (Graddol, 2006, p. 49). With globalization, technological development, and new concepts and ways of life, languages as changing organisms receive outside influence and sometimes create internal mechanisms to accept or reject the new elements.

2.2. Language Contact

Language contact makes for the transformation of languages by the incorporations they make from other languages. This implies a connection between culture, social context, and language use. For Kramsch (1998), language crossing is the insertion of elements of one language into another to perform cultural acts of identity and to achieve solidarity. According to Hoffer (2002, p. 1), “perhaps the most frequently encountered product of cultural contact is the set of loanwords that follow from intercultural communication”. Neologisms are constructed thanks to the morphological processes of derivation or composition that are formed by the semantic extension of existing words (Casteleiro, 2001) reflecting the past and present of a language in the use of their speakers (Machado, 1997).

The terminology used to refer to the processes by which words or expressions enter other

languages differs and different terms are sometimes used interchangeably. These range from transfer, crossing, loans, loanwords, borrowings, foreignisms, code-mixing, and code-switching which is described by Peter Auer (1999, p. 73) as “the alternating use of two or more languages”. “‘Intra-sentential’ refers to switches within the sentence and ‘inter-sentential’ to switches between sentences” (Milroy & Muysken 1995, p. 8). ‘Loan’ is the most basic influence that one language may effect on another (Sapir, 1921). Machado (1994, p. 5) defines borrowings as “the elements that serve, prove and clarify the political, social, economic, scientific or technical expansion of each language”. The author also adds that these occur because of contacts with other people supplying new concepts and lexicon. Fasold (1991) states that borrowing is the process by which words are imported from one language to another. For Spolsky (1998, p. 121), borrowing is “the integration of a word from one language into another” and for Hoffer (2002, p. 1), it is “the process of importing linguistic terms from one system into another” whilst a loanword is an imprecise term including the majority of the other terms. Thomson and Kaufman (1991) claim that lexical borrowing constitutes the inclusion of distinct lexical items from one code in the lexicon of another, and code-switching, the presence of two codes in one clause or utterance. Muysken (1995, p. 189) defines code-switching as the use of two languages in one clause or utterance and claims that the difference is that borrowing “involves the incorporation of lexical elements from one language in the lexicon of another language”. For the purpose of this study, loan refers to all English words found in the corpus and borrowing to the process itself.

2.3. Influences on Portuguese

Portuguese, a Latin-based language, results from a multiplicity of influences that derive from the innumerable encounters with other cultures. As early as 1606, in his study *Origin of the Portuguese Language*, Duarte Nunes de Leão identified Portuguese words that had originated in other languages. According to the *Boletim da Sociedade da Língua Portuguesa*, in 1993 there were thirteen English loans in the Portuguese language in comparison to the present where more than 800 words float in the

linguistic speech according to *Portal da Língua Portuguesa* (the repository of statistics for the Portuguese language) (Machado, 1994). In *Morfologia do Português*, Villalva (2008) explores the history of the Portuguese lexicon. According to the author, the words that came into Portuguese after its foundation in 1214 are neologisms because they were invented or created from existing ones or are loans that entered from other languages or were formed from morphological resources available in the language. Villalva (2008) considers that there are different types of loans: loans that have an equivalent term in the 'receiving' language like *part time* or *update* (in Portuguese: *tempo parcial* and *atualização*); loans already present in the Portuguese vocabulary keeping its original form as *software* and *marketing*; loans that have an incorrect or insufficient spelling adaptation (iceberg to *icebergue*, stress to *estresse*) or do not respect the structure of the Portuguese lexicon. In relation to this last type, the recommendation is not to intervene in loans that identify particular realities of other cultures (*sushi*, *kamikaze*); are trademarks (*postit*); come from personal names (*Alzheimer*, *watt*); or are international cults (*Rock and roll*, *blues*). According to Correia (2005) there are two possibilities to normalize and accept a loan: semantic decal, one way to create a neologism avoiding the entrance of an unnecessary lexical item that is not congruent with the structure of the arrival language; literal translation of the loan, example *rato* to mouse; *disco rígido* to harddisk; *centro comercial* to shopping center.

Nowadays, English loans are pervasive in the Portuguese society: *jeans*, *t-shirt* and *top* are frequent in the Fashion industry, *glamour*, *fitness* and *lifting* in the Lifestyle industry, *workshop*, *benchmark*, *mainstream*, *ranking*, *rating*, *dumping*, *knowhow* and *feedback* in Business, *spread* and *swift* in Banking, *online*, *site* and *web* in IT. Portugal follows the growing global trend toward borrowing from English: "the last few decades have put the English language into the limelight of language contact since, as the voice of globalization, English contributes as a major source of language influence worldwide" (Onysko, 2009, p. 25).

3. Methodology

3.1. Corpus

This is a mixed methods study in sociolinguistics contiguous to media, business, and politics combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It aims to observe how English is permeating the Portuguese culture and language by analyzing the presence and influence of English lexicon on the Portuguese financial and business text. In Portugal there is no regulation in relation to the presence of loans from other languages. A discourse analysis was carried out on three business newspapers *Diário Económico* (DE), *Expresso Economia* (EE), and *Vida Económica* (VE) as they deal with "naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse [...] also concerned with language use in social contexts" (Slembrouck, 2003, p. 1). According to its website, DE was a daily newspaper with high sales. EE is the financial supplement of *Expresso*, a weekly newspaper distributed on Saturdays. VE is also a weekly newspaper distributed on Fridays with 40,000 subscriptions from small and medium-size businesses and economic groups. These three papers were specifically chosen because they are the main national financial periodicals.

3.2. Procedure

According to Stubbs (1983) discourse analysis is about "the interrelationships between language and society and with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication" (p. 1). This study identifies in the fourteen editions of the DE, EE, and VE: (a) the presence, frequency, and functions of loans; (b) the signaling of loans; (c) the semantic fields; (d) the newspaper sections. When relevant, information on the findings contrasts results for the Pre-election week (Pre) and the Post-election week (Post). Word counting included repetitions.

The period of time chosen for analysis was January 18 to 29, 2016, corresponding to the week immediately before and the week immediately after the Portuguese Presidential election which took place on Sunday, January 24 2016. For DE, this translates into ten weekday editions, five before and five after the election. For EE, it corresponds to two weekend-editions, January 16 (Saturday) and

January 30 (Saturday). For VE, it covers two weekend-editions, January 15 (Friday) and January 29 (Friday). A complementary aim of this study is to perceive whether electoral results influence the presence of loans in these newspapers.

The research also involved collecting journalists' and readers' perspectives on this sociolinguistic behavior. The objective is to shed light on and complement the findings of the discourse analysis. For this purpose, a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was specifically designed by the authors with the aim of understanding the underlying motivations for journalists working for these periodicals to be resorting to loanwords. The questionnaire encompassed seven closed questions addressing issues ranging from the reasons for the use of loans and for the signaling of loans, for how borrowing is perceived, and for the profile of the reader of the newspapers. The questionnaire was then sent by email to 24 journalists of DE, EE, and VE to collect their motivations for borrowing lexical items. Only ten journalists returned the questionnaires and, because of impossibility to obtain more responses, a choice was made to analyze the data. Journalists could choose all the answers that seemed appropriate for their own case. Scoring was done by adding all common answers and making a simple addition of occurrences to determine which ones were more frequent.

Apart from the questionnaire designed to obtain data from the journalists, authors also wanted to have an understanding of how readers perceive the inclusion of loanwords in the financial newspapers they read. Therefore, a more comprehensive view of both sides of the communication could be obtained. Another questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was designed by authors and sent to anonymous readers by means of an online Google questionnaire. The aim was to collect readers' reactions to the presence of loans in financial newspapers. This questionnaire included six closed questions enquiring such issues as the frequency of readership, whether loans are noticed, understood and appreciated, the reasons for the presence of loans, and how borrowing is perceived. One final semi-opened question enquired about the most encountered

loan and respondents could only include one answer.

4. Results

4.1. Loans in the Portuguese Media

4.1.1. Presence, Frequency and Function of Loans

In the fourteen editions of DE, EE, and VE, 794 loans were found indicating that English pervasion is noteworthy and that borrowing is apparently natural and acceptable. It also suggests journalists are writing for an audience with whom they feel they share some degree of English intelligibility. Quantitative analysis of the data revealed that the number of loans rose from 371 in the Pre to 423 in the Post. A 7 % overall increase in loans shows that the Portuguese presidential election only marginally influenced the financial press. The three newspapers were not influenced similarly. In VE loans rose from 90 to 136 and in EE from 41 to 70, but in DE, which portrays the highest number of loans, this trend is contradicted by a decrease from 240 to 217 loans.

Rating is the most frequent loan appearing 29 times, followed by *franchising* 23, *ranking* 17, and *startups* 18. The presence of loans as *rating* and *ranking* reflects Portugal's concern with its current position in international financial markets. The presence of loans as *franchising* and *startups* also mirrors the reality of Portugal, which faces a financial crisis that has led many young unemployed to create their own startup and franchising businesses. According to data from EE dated June 4 2016, 102 startup companies are born every day in Portugal. These four most frequent loans, *rating* and *ranking*, *franchising* and *startup* function as lexical and semantic gap-fillers as there are no one-word equivalents in Portuguese.

CEO and *cloud* appear 13 times, *Coworking* 9, *service design* 7, *retail park* 6, *penny-stocks*, *upgrade*, *recall*, and *design* 5, *share*, *draft*, *anti-dumping*, and *coco bonds* 4, and finally *outdoor*, *partner*, *brand*, *stock*, *networking*, *subholding*, *box*, *marketing*, and *yield* 3. Overall, eleven loans function as gap-fillers, six are used for the sake of accuracy or simplicity as the Portuguese equivalents are longer and more elaborate and nine are used

for prestige as the Portuguese one-word synonym exists but is less commonly used. All loans are nouns as they are “the most easily borrowed” (Lass, 1969, p. 71) and could be considered instances of ‘intra-sentential’ code-switching (Auer, 1999). All loans are adapted to Portuguese syntactical categories acquiring a masculine or feminine gender. For example, *rating*, *ranking*, and *franchising* are masculine nouns while *startup* is feminine.

4.1.2. Signaling of Loans

Although borrowing seems natural and acceptable, there is nevertheless the wish or

need to signal the majority of the loans. Figure 1 (below) shows that 25% of loans were unsigned and 72% were signaled: by commas (59%), by italics (13%), and 2% of loans were followed by a Portuguese translation indicating that only a minority of technical loans are unknown to readers. A particularly interesting and unusual finding is that 2 % of Portuguese words were followed by the English loan. It would seem there is an intention to provide readers with the most common or prestigious international terminology.

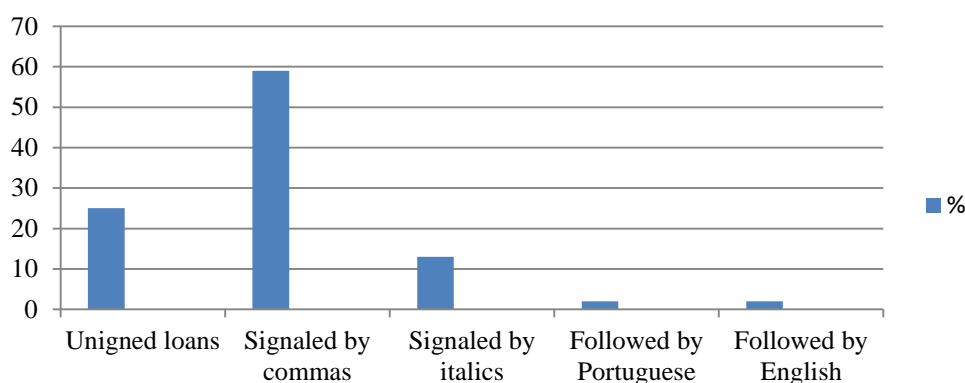


Figure 1
Signaling of Loans

4.1.3. Semantic Fields

Loans were considered according to four semantic fields: Politics, Finance and Economy, IT and Media, and General Information. Figure 2 (below) reveals that oscillations in the number of loans in the core

and specialized semantic fields were minimal from Pre to Post electoral process. However, a significant increase occurs in the *General Information*. This indicates that the financial and business lexical categories were not the most influenced by the Presidential elections.

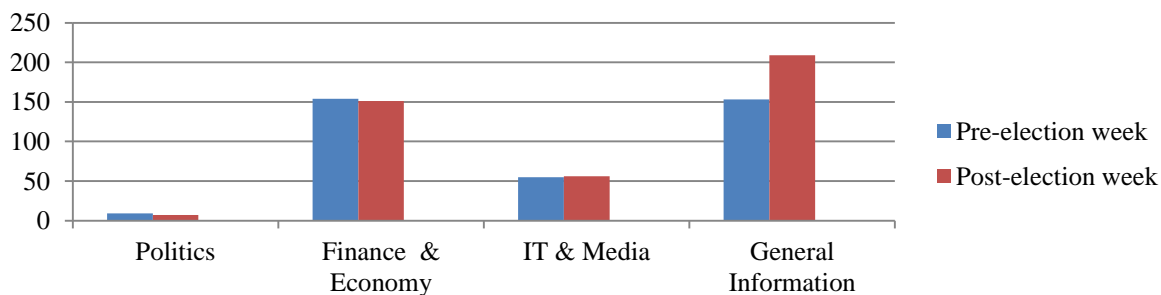


Figure 2
Semantic Fields

4.1.4. Newspaper Sections



Figure 3
Newspaper Sections in DE

Figure 3 reveals that in DE, the core sections *Firms and Finances* and *Economy and Politics* displayed a 27% and a 30% decrease respectively from Pre to Post, a trend followed by other sections (*Publicity & Media,*

Highlights, Last Page, Employment, Cover Issue and *Editorial*). What is relevant is that in both weeks combined *Firms and Finances* stands out and reaches a peak with the highest number of loans.

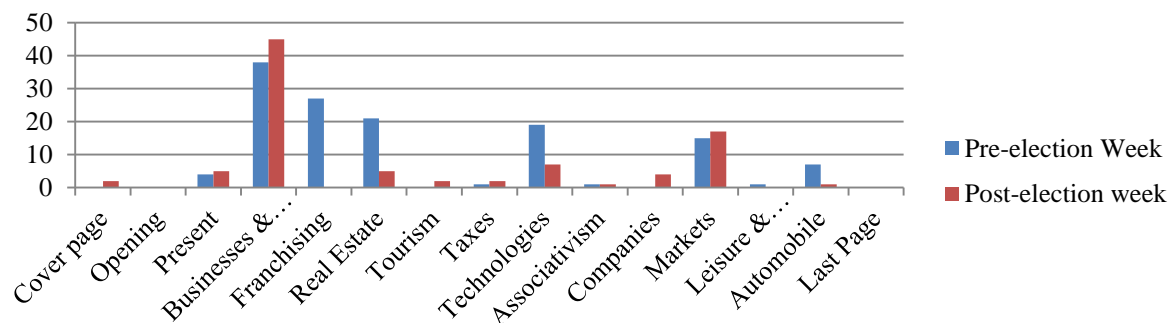


Figure 4
Newspaper Sections in VE

In VE, the number of loans from Pre to Post increased in the core *Businesses and Firms* and *Markets* as shown in Figure 4. Other sections as *Franchising, Real Estate, Technologies,* and *Automobile* registered a decrease of loans. Once again, what is relevant is that in both weeks combined *Businesses and Firms* stands out and reaches a peak with the highest number of loans.

In EE, newspaper sections vary according to the theme of each edition and could not be considered for a comparative analysis.

4.2. Perspectives of Journalists

In order for qualitative data to be gathered as well, two questionnaires were designed. One questionnaire was sent to journalists working

for these periodicals and another was sent to anonymous readers. Thus, after research of the names of journalists writing for these newspapers, twenty-four questionnaires were sent to the same number of journalists of DE, EE, and VE. Ten were returned. Despite having only obtained questionnaires from ten respondents, authors decided to analyze the data as these were all journalists working for the periodicals under scrutiny and this could provide some insight on the choices made for the use of loans whose occurrences were analyzed quantitatively. However, it is worth mentioning that generalizations cannot be extracted. Journalists' responses revealed that six used a loan because there is no translation in Portuguese, five for reasons of accuracy, and three for simplicity. This correlates with

the study's findings that in the financial and business media most of the loans function as a gap-filler as no one-word equivalent exists. Additionally, English terminology was also chosen because it is more precise or more commonly used. No journalist affirmed that English gives him/her a certain status and one journalist sustained English adds status to the newspaper. Nevertheless, four journalists claimed they prefer an English loan even when a translation exists and five preferred to use English because it is fashionable. This confirms that sometimes English is chosen for prestige or status, a fact demonstrated by other international studies as the one carried out by Shoostari and Allahbakhsh (2013) regarding the inclusion of English loans in Persian advertising. In their analysis, these authors concluded that "bilingual advertisements can be regarded as exclusive register of 'prestige' in advertising discourse" (p. 89).

Furthermore, two journalists in our study considered their readers to belong to a specific professional group and seven defined their readers as people who know English technical loans. This may suggest that readers and writers of financial newspapers are members of a linguistic community even if this is not acknowledged.

As previously seen, 72% of loans are signaled. However, only five journalists admitted placing loans in commas and six in italics because they wish to highlight them. Seven journalists said they may not signal loans because readers know them and seven stated they may place loans followed by Portuguese translation because of fearing they would not be understood. Overall, it seems that journalists believe readers are familiarized with English terminology in the fields of Business, Economics, and Finance and borrowing is intentional. The signaling of loans could mean that this behavior is not as natural as it seems or that some journalists want to highlight their English proficiency.

4.3. Perspectives of Readers

Seventy-two people answered the online Google-form questionnaire (see Appendix 2). Sixteen respondents read financial newspapers daily, twenty-five weekly, and thirty-one monthly. Borrowing seems to be a natural linguistic behavior for readers as 78% notice

loans, 98% understand loans, and 82% appreciate them. The majority of the readers (75%) believe journalists choose a loan even when an equivalent word exists. As to the reasons why journalists borrow, 60% state it is for accuracy and 36% consider it is fashionable, 25% believe it gives the journalist a certain status, and 38% believe it gives the newspaper a certain status. Only eleven readers selected one of the most encountered loan. *Rating* was chosen by 5 and *startup* by 3. These are two of the four most frequent loans found in the discourse analysis.

5. Discussion

The global linguistic phenomenon of the encroachment, invasion, or infiltration of English on other languages seems to be contemporaneous to Portugal. The presence of 794 loans in the fourteen editions of DE, EE, and VE demonstrates the extent to which Global English has permeated the Portuguese Financial and Business Press. In both weeks combined, the core fields of the newspapers, *Business and Firms* and *Firms and Finances* display a peak in number of loans but in terms of the semantic fields most loans belong to *General information*.

From the data available for this study, English borrowing seems to be a natural and acceptable cultural and linguistic behavior. The readers surveyed perceive this overtly and so do the ten journalists who replied to the questionnaire. This study, as it was carried out, has revealed that English plays the role of an alternative or additional language as loans are functionally used as gap-fillers or for reasons of simplicity, accuracy, or prestige. Both journalists and readers participating in this study believe that borrowing is intentional as "speakers who have more than one language available to them code switch/mix as a matter of choice and for a range of pragmatic and expressive reasons" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 95) or as suggested by Haugen "the use of language forms from two languages is not a random mixing" (1950, p. 210). In the financial and business newspapers studied, choice of language is a relevant issue defining this speech community, notably in terms of its identity as suggested by Kramsch (1998, p. 70). Journalists' borrowing does not seem to be an obstacle to readers' intelligibility. Readers who responded to the questionnaire

confirmed this fact and even expressed their appreciation for the inclusion. This could suggest that both readers and journalists are part of a linguistic community sharing English financial and business terminology.

As to the influence of the electoral process on the borrowing of English in the selected periodicals, the overall 7% increase in loans from Pre to Post leads us to believe that its influence was marginal and not equal in all the newspapers. The globalized importance of English is here to stay and its impacts on other languages are a relevant topic of further discussion and analysis.

Without a broader study including the general press, it is not possible to safely assume the true dimension of English in Portuguese journalistic discourse. Similarly, a study encompassing the general press in Pre- and Post-election weeks would be needed to determine whether the results obtained by this research could be transferred to a larger universe of journalistic discourse. The limitations of this study, that is, the fact that it only contemplated a particular niche of journalism within the fields of the economy and finance, are also opportunities for further research. It would also be interesting to observe how English loans are making their way to journalistic discourse in other languages and questions arise as to whether English is more conspicuous in languages of world status like French or Arabic or in those spoken by more restricted communities such as Finnish or Greek. Studies show that “English is the most dominant language, especially in the content of economic and cultural globalization” (Gonzalez, 2017, p. 29). Our study, limited as it was, points to this direction. The globalizing and globalized importance of English is here to stay and its impact on other languages is a relevant topic of discussion and analysis.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Journalists (Translated from Portuguese)

This questionnaire was designed by three professors/researchers of Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas of Universidade de Lisboa for a study on the use of English words in the Portuguese financial press.

Please answer the following questions that will not take more than 5 minutes. Thank you for your collaboration.

For each question place crosses (X) on the reasons for your choice of using an English word.

1. I use an English word/expression/term because:	
There is no translation in Portuguese	
There is a translation but I prefer the English word	
It is more commonly used	
It is more precise	
It is more economical	
2. The use of English words:	
Is fashionable	
Gives journalists a certain status	
Gives the newspaper a certain status	
3. The readers of these newspapers:	

Know these technical terms	
Appreciate these technical terms	
Belong to a specific and restrict populational/professional group	
4. I place English words in brackets because:	
I want to highlight them	
I fear they may not be understood	
5. I place English words in italics because:	
I want to highlight them	
I fear they may not be understood	
6. I do not signal words in brackets/italics because:	
I see no need to highlight them	
The reader knows them	
7. I place English words followed by in bracket translation because:	
I want to highlight them	
I fear they may not be understood	

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Readers of Financial/Business Newspapers (Translated from Portuguese)

This questionnaire was designed by three professors/researchers of Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas of Universidade de Lisboa for a study on the use of English words in the Portuguese financial press.

Please answer the following questions that will not take more than 5 minutes. Thank you for your collaboration.

For each question place a cross (X) on your answer.

1. I read financial/business newspapers:	
Daily	
Weekly	
Monthly	
2. I always notice the presence of English words.	
Yes	
No	
3. I usually understand those words in English.	
Yes	
No	
4. I appreciate the use of those English words.	
Yes	
No	
5. I believe those words are in English because:	
There is no Portuguese translation	
There is a translation but English words are preferred	
5. I believe those words are in English because:	
They are more commonly used	
They are more precise	
They are more economical	
6. I believe the use of English words:	
Is fashionable	
Gives journalists a certain status	
Gives the newspaper a certain status	
7. Which English word do you most read in Portuguese financial newspapers?	
Word:	