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English in the European Context: The EHEA Challenge

Offprint
Foreign words in the English of textiles

1. Introduction

The development and progress of science and technology and, as a result, of the industry and productive sectors bring about new realities, objects, materials and actions, which have to be necessarily associated to a word or term. Languages use different internal or external means to create those lexical units (with different degrees of specialization) in order to adapt themselves to those specific non-linguistic circumstances, as well as to satisfy the users’ needs to account for them in linguistic and meaningful terms. Accordingly, languages may either build new forms from old ones by resorting to internal means, that is, to the so-called word-formation or morphological processes, or also they may borrow words or terms from other (foreign) languages.

English has a wide range of productive internal processes available, namely prefixation, suffixation, compounding, blending, conversion, clipping, reduplication, etc., to create or expand its own lexical units from existing ones (for further details see Adams 1973, Bauer 1983, or even Glowka/Barnhart/Barrett/Melançon/Salter 2009, among others). Furthermore, considering that English is nowadays the dominant language, it seems that the obvious and more natural behaviour would be for other languages to borrow from English rather than just the opposite. Hence, it may be said that resorting to external procedures such as borrowing or using loanwords seems quite unnecessary in English as there is no apparent reason for it. But for different factors and/or reasons that will be explained below, borrowing is also an important way of introducing new words in the English language, though apparently less productive or more limited than the internal
processes. Thus, almost thirty years ago, Cannon (1987: 279) claimed that derivations and compounds accounted for 54.9% of the recent additions at that time, conversions 19.6%, and shortenings 18%, new meanings were only 14.4%, while borrowings were even less prominent, with only 7.5%. In spite of this, English has often been regarded as a language with an extremely rich and varied vocabulary, “like a large mosaic” (Katamba, 2005: 135), a circumstance that some scholars like Bliss (1966: 26) or Katamba (2005: 143) attribute to the fact that it has “enthusiastically” and increasingly imported foreign words in “very large numbers”, as we shall see below.

One may always wonder why English, as many other languages, has adopted foreign elements rather than creating their own lexical units with its internal resources. Many have been the reasons put forward by linguists in the last two centuries. Obviously one of the most important is that there may be no existing elements that may be adapted to create new suitable words. As Katamba (2005: 139) puts it, a reason for borrowing may be that adopting a suitable word from another language rather than making up an original one “from nothing” is the easiest thing to do. But other causes have also been mentioned. For example, the dominion or control of some languages or a given one in an also given period and/or the close contact between languages. In the case of English, its expansion due to the rise of the British Empire not only facilitated the expansion and domination of English over other languages but also the contact between multilingual communities (see Görlach 1991). Thus, not only has English left its mark on other languages but other languages have also influenced English vocabulary. Related to this is the factor of prestige, which usually implies attractiveness and use of words from a more or less exotic language. But probably the most important cause, motivation for, or, simply, the natural source of borrowing is the arrival or invention of a new object, material, situation or circumstance which has already been named in another language, usually the original language in which such a “concept” has been created or produced. In such cases, the borrowing language does not have a native word or equivalent to express the meaning conveyed by the foreign item. The best way to solve this situation and answer the urgent linguistic or terminological need is then adopting the foreign element. Sometimes
a term from a foreign culture is the only suitable and possible one world-wide, e.g. *burka*, *chic*, as there is either no possibility of finding or creating an equivalent or simply the foreign word is more attractive and connotationally richer.¹

2. Borrowings, loan(word)s, adoptions, and/or foreign words?

So far we have indistinctively used the terms “borrowings”, “loans/loanwords” and “foreign words/elements” and we will continue to do so in this study, for several reasons, mainly, to follow the tradition in this type of research and also to avoid repetition. However, as can be inferred from the title, we prefer the term “foreign words” rather than “borrowings”, “loanwords” or even “adoptions”. In the following lines we not only attempt to define this well-known phenomenon but also to explain the adequacy of using one term or the other.

“To borrow” usually and generally means “to receive temporarily from another, implying or expressing the intention either of returning the thing received or of giving its equivalent to the lender” *(Webster’s)* or “to take (a thing) on pledge or security given for its safe return; b. To take (a thing) on credit, on the understanding of returning it, or giving an equivalent.” *(OED).* Thus, the term does not seem appropriate to describe or define the linguistic phenomenon as the lexical elements taken from a foreign language are neither temporarily received nor is there any purpose of giving the words back, among other reasons, because the lending language does not suffer a loss in its “patrimony”, as the lexical item does not disappear from such (the borrowing) language. Similarly, “loan” may also be defined as “something lent for the borrower’s temporary use on condition that it or its equivalent be returned” or “a thing lent; something

¹ Note that Katamba (2005: 139–142) mentions other reasons for borrowing such as “identity” or “avoiding causing annoyance or embarrassment”, which we do not consider because they are not relevant for our study.
the use of which is allowed for a time, on the understanding that it shall be returned or an equivalent given; esp. a sum of money lent on these conditions, and usually at interest.” (Webster’s). “Loan” and “borrowing” may then be regarded as metaphors to explain the process. However, the linguistic use of these labels is so ingrained in the general language and in common usage that we may even find definitions such as “a word taken from another language and at least partly naturalized: a borrowed or adopted word – called also loan” for “loan-word” (Webster’s) and “a word or phrase adopted from one language into another” for “borrowing” (Webster’s), or even, by extension or analogy, for the verb “to borrow”. “To borrow” is defined as “to appropriate (something not capable of being returned) for one’s own esp. immediate or temporary use” in Webster’s (sense 2a) or even “to introduce (as a word) into one language from another” (sense 5). Although sense 2a may convey and describe quite appropriately what happens in the phenomenon we focus upon, it is not satisfactory enough as it does not generalise as to clarify the length of use or the linguistic changes that the item may undergo, which, of course, are not always predictable. Therefore, for the already mentioned reasons, we believe that these terms do not describe the process in an adequate way.

Furthermore, although in the definition of “loan”2, two synonyms are suggested, that is, “borrowing” and “adoption”, Pfeffer/Cannon (1994) clearly distinguish between the process and the borrowed item, that is, between “borrowing” and “loanword”. They argue that “when speakers imitate a word from a foreign language and at least partly adapt it in sound or grammar to their native speechways, the process is known as borrowing, and the word thus borrowed is a loanword” (Pfeffer/Cannon, 1994: xxii). As to the term “adoption”, it seems quite relevant that it is not only that preferred by Haughen (1950: 211) though not without some criticism3 but also and mainly

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2 “2b. fig. Said, in recent use, of something (as a word, a custom) ‘borrowed’ or adopted by one people from another“ (Webster’s).

3 “The process might be called an adoption, for the speaker does adopt elements from a second language into his own. But what would one call a word that had been adopted—an adoptee?“ (Haughen, 1950: 211).
that used by the OED. In spite of its use by such an authority as the OED, it is here believed that the term is not the appropriate one. Thus, if the OED definition is considered [“The taking of a word belonging to a foreign language into regular use in our own, without (intentional) change of form; a special instance of this process.” (sense 2b; OED)], two remarks must be made. First of all, “the taking […] into regular use in our own, without (intentional) change of form” does not seem completely accurate since sometimes, as we shall see below, loans undergo changes and adaptations to the new language. Secondly, if we consider the metaphor/compare it with human adoption, neither is it a very good choice because, as was also the case with the “borrowing” metaphor above, the biological parents do no longer “enjoy the presence of” their own children but the foster parents, who have introduced them in their lives, do instead. In language, words continue to be used by their producer/creator language or its users as well as by their “foster” users who have also introduced them in their own language but without any loss for the “biological language”. Instead, we believe that the best term is “foreign words”. If “foreign” means “born in, belonging to, derived from, intended for, or characteristic of some place or country (as nation) other than the one under consideration: not native or domestic” (sense 2; Webster’s), “foreign words/elements/terms” would denote words, elements or terms used in a language which is not its native or proper one. Thus, this term simply describes the situation in which a language makes use of an element which belongs to another language without any implications concerning the primary or original language or even without indication related to formal changes, etc.

In spite of the preceding discussion and the inadequacies of the different terms, probably the most popular one is still “loanword”. In fact, other terms have arisen from this in order to describe different ways and forms of adapting the new and foreign element to a given language. Thus, terms such as “loanshifts”, “loan translations” or “calques” and “hybrids” are found in the literature to describe the translation of the meaning of the vocabulary item, e.g. loanword from the German Lehnwort (see Katamba, 2005: 137), in the former three cases, and “loanwords in which only a part of the phonemic shape of the word has been imported, while a native portion has been substi-
stituted for the rest” (Haugen, 1950: 214), in the latter. While in such cases, and after the word has been in the language for some time and has gained some frequency, users do not tend to perceive the word as foreign, other words remain unchanged and are both synchronically and diachronically felt as foreign or sometimes even as exotic.

Diachronically or etymologically speaking, foreign words may be quite complex, especially when a word has gone through several languages until it is finally “adopted” by a given language, in our case, English. Moreover, in some instances there are even inconsistencies or uncertainties as to the precedence and development of a word in a foreign language. However, the existence of a good number of clear examples has led to a distinction between “direct/immediate borrowings” and “indirect borrowings” or, similarly, we may speak of “direct/immediate source” or “ultimate source”. As Serjeantson (1979: 5) explains, some words have entered English “through an intervening language”, e.g. *kahveh* (Turkish) > *kahva* (Arabic) > *koffie* > (Dutch) > *coffee* (English). Such instances are called “indirect borrowings”; in this case, the “ultimate source” of English *coffee* is Turkish *kahveh*. Unlike this, a unit may also be taken directly from its source language, as is the case with English *babushka* or *barret*, taken from Russian *babushka* and French *barrette*, respectively.

So far we have only provided a few examples of foreign words which have entered the English language but, in the light of the examples, we may already observe that they are all nouns. The reason for this is not that we have chosen our examples intentionally, but that the most frequently borrowed words belong to the category of nouns. The explanation for this is quite obvious: new concepts, things, materials, objects, etc. are created and developed and these necessarily need to be given a name. However, it seems also true that, as some scholars have already suggested, sometimes figures “simply reflect the distribution of particular grammatical categories in native-language materials rather than their specific propensity to be borrowed” (see Poplack/Sankoff/Miller, 1988: 62–63).
3. Foreign words in English

Though, as said earlier, English is nowadays the lingua franca of communication, trade, science and industry world-wide and, therefore, its impact in other languages, especially as regards vocabulary, is very important, this does not mean that it has not also been -and still is- lexically and otherwise influenced by all those languages with which it has had any contact throughout its history. English has extensively borrowed elements from other languages around the world due mainly to cultural or colonial contact with those languages. Furthermore, it seems that the number of borrowings has been increasing over the centuries. As we shall see in the following lines, English has borrowed largely from French, Latin, Old Norse, Greek and Scandinavian, and also, to a less extent, from Spanish, German, Dutch and Italian, as well as from eastern European and/or colonial languages or any other language with which it has had any contact [for further details on this see Serjeantson (1979) or Gramley (2001: 18–28)]. It seems that this has been facilitated by the fact that there has never been in Britain an Academy preserving the “purity” of the language, like in other European countries, such as Spain or France. In spite of this, some scholars have argued against “the tendency towards borrowing developed after the Norman Conquest” which, in their opinion, “has had the effect of diminishing the capacity to make use of native material to hand” (Sheard, 1970: 328). While we would not agree with such categorical remarks, we shall leave such considerations aside in this paper, and refer the reader to further analysis on the advantages and disadvantages of borrowing in Baugh/Cable (1990), Sheard (1970) or Pyles (1971).

We said above that English has borrowed from either a particular language or several languages at different periods of its history. As we shall see in the following lines, usually those periods coincide with industrial, scientific or technological developments as well as with specific cultural or colonial situations. In general, it may be said that borrowing is a never-ending continuous process which began in Anglo-Saxon times and is still active and alive in Present Day English.
According to Claiborne (1990:105), the largest proportion of the OE lexicon was native in origin, that is, it resorted to English word-formation processes, mainly compounding and affixation, to create new words. Only 3% of the vocabulary items were foreign words, most of them from Latin, introduced by Christianization (see, for example, Ayto, 1991: v). However, with the Norman Conquest in 1066, and, particularly after it, English began to borrow words largely from French, the language of political, social and, to some extent also, cultural power. But, apart from French and Latin, English was also influenced by Scandinavian, especially between the ninth and the twelfth centuries, and indirectly (through French which had acquired Arabisms from Spanish) by Arabic (the language of scientific knowledge at that time) in the Middle Ages. Afterwards, it seems that English began to borrow words from many other languages (see Crystal’s *Foreword* to Ayto, 1991: iv). During the Renaissance, besides the influence of Greek and other languages, most of the foreign English vocabulary was either directly or indirectly taken from Latin as well as Spanish. Latin was the language of religion but also, and most importantly, of education and learning. Instead, Spanish had the military, naval, political and economic power. Note that after the sixteenth century, British English has been intermittently receiving Spanish words directly or via French or American English (for further details see Gooch, 1996: 231–233). However, from the seventeenth century up to the present day, the spread of English due to the rise of the British Empire, on the one hand, and, after its decline, the rise of the world-wide American power, on the other, has facilitated contact with nearly all world languages (see Bauer 2002: 13–29; Görllach 1991: 229–30). Thus, nowadays English has words for the most varied areas of life and culture (dress, food, the arts, etc.), science, technology or industry from almost every language in the world, as we shall see in the following section, especially as regards a very specific and limited field, that of the textile sector or industry.
4. Foreign words in the English of textiles

The language of textiles, and in our particular case the English of the Textile Industry, is no doubt a good recipient of borrowings or foreign words, especially because all peoples, nations or countries have their own clothing and/or fabrics which make them different from all the others. Thus, when two language communities come into contact and consequently a new item of clothing either becomes fashionable in a foreign culture or simply there is a need to refer to it in the foreign language, such language usually borrows the term used to denote such a garment or material. Furthermore, other factors such as power, prestige, wealth, exoticism, trade, immigration, colonization, and developments in science or technology (especially for new types of materials or fabrics), for example, bring about new objects and ideas which did not exist in the borrowing language or culture, the easiest (and, probably, the most logical thing) being then to use the foreign words.

As we shall see in the following lines, nowadays English has adopted large numbers of words or terms related to textiles from the most varied and distant countries due to the above mentioned reasons.

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4 This study may be said to be located in between terminology and historical linguistics but it also touches upon issues on language contact, and focuses on terminological loans of the nominal word-class in the specific field of textiles in English, accounting for their foreign origin. Though it does not attempt to be exhaustive and complete, it contains a large amount of significant data on foreign elements used in the textile industry in English. Furthermore, though there are works such as Cannon (1981), Rao (1954), Stubbs (1998), and Haja Mohideen (2007), it seems that there is still no overall and up-to-date work on the subject of textiles, which increases the relevance of the present study. The data have been drawn from Ayto (1991), Speake (2005) and the *OED* (2004), using simple procedures such as skimming the dictionaries in the former two cases and searching for either specific languages in the etymology search tool or specific words to be found in the definitions such as “cloth”, “garment”, “fabric”, “textile(s)”, “head”, “dye”, “technique”, etc. The list of terms obtained from them was checked against the *OED*, our primary and most reliable source. In case of discrepancies the information in the *OED* was that considered as valid.
4.1. Romance words in the English of textiles

Many of the words in this field come directly from Romance languages, especially from French (which for English-speaking cultures has traditionally been the language of sophistication and high fashion from which English has massively borrowed words; see, for instance, Rosenthal 1999), but also from Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. From French English has acquired terms related to sophistication such as chic, haute couture (‘higher tailoring’), prêt-à-porter, boutique, and élégante; style such as lavaliere (‘any of various items of women’s clothing in styles associated with the reign of Louis XIV of France or a pendent necklace’); design, such as mannequin and modiste; types of fabric or cloth, such as batiste (‘a fine light cotton or linen fabric like cambric’), broche (‘material, especially silk woven with a pattern on the surface’), chiffon, crochet, denim, marocain (‘a crêpe fabric of silk or wool or both’), satin, voile and zibeline; elements related to footwear, such as chaussure or sabot; garments such as décolleté/décolletage (‘a woman’s dress, blouse, etc., signifying that it has a low-cut neckline, revealing the cleavage and often the shoulders as well’), negligee, chemise, chemisette, gilet (‘a light often padded waistcoat, usually worn for warmth by women’), lingerie, mask (‘a covering for the face, worn either as a disguise or for protection’), robe de style (‘a woman’s formal dress with a tight bodice and a long bouffant skirt’) and salopette (‘trousers with a high waist and shoulder-straps, worn especially as a skiing garment and as a Frenchman’s overalls’); state or condition such as dishabille5 (‘partially or casually dressed’); accessories and adornments such as aumônière (‘a purse carried at the waist’) and rivière (‘a necklace of diamonds or other gems, especially one consisting of more than one string’); specific sewing elements, such as chenille (‘velvety cord with pile all round, used in trimming and bordering dresses and furniture’) and entredeux (‘an insertion of lace, linen, etc., in sewing’); household elements such as duvet (‘a thick soft quilt used instead of other bedclothes’), and other more or less general terms, as midinette (‘a young Parisian girl who works in

5 Note that many of the French words have been adapted to English spelling.
a humble clothes shop or hat shop, and who for being poor and beautiful is the sexual prey of men though she may hope to be swept up and married by a handsome duke one day’).

English has also borrowed textile terms directly from Italian related to knitting processes, such as intarsia, garments such as mantelletta (probably from medieval Latin but came to English through Italian, denoting ‘a sleeveless vestment reaching to the knees, worn by cardinals, bishops, and other high-ranking ecclesiastics’) as well as other elements related to the church (most of them originally from Latin) such as ombrellino (‘a small umbrella-like canopy held over the sacraments when they are moved from one place to another’) and palio; types of fabric such as regatta (‘a cotton fabric, usually made in twill’) and reticella (‘a lacelike fabric with a characteristic geometric pattern produced especially in Venice from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century’); and footwear such as scarpetti (‘rope-soled shoes worn for rock-climbing, especially in the North Italian Alps’). Considering that, according to Pfeffer/Cannon (1994: 103), Italy was the principal centre of the textile industry in Europe as early as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is not surprising that Italian words have come into English through this language or rather, directly from it.

From Spanish there is also a nice variety of terms which usually reflect, as is the case with borrowings from other languages, the type of contact English had with Spanish as well as the relations between British and Spanish people, on the one hand, and South-Americans and Americans, on the other. Thus, terms for different types of fabric such as alpaca (‘a domesticated Peruvian animal resembling the llama, with long fine woolly hair and usually brown and white colouring’; but also ‘the wool from such animal or a fabric or garment made there from it’), cordovan, esparto, hilo and merino; for footwear such as alpargata and hurache (this taken from Mexican Spanish to name ‘a leather-thonged sandal, originally worn by Mexican Indians’); garments (most of them from South American Spanish), such as bolero (‘a woman’s short open jacket, with or without sleeves’), bombachas (‘baggy trousers worn in some South American countries’), chaparejos (‘leather over-trousers worn by cowboys for protection against spiny vegetation from Mexican Spanish’), faja (‘a sash’), mantilla (‘light scarf, frequently of black lace, worn over
the head and shoulders, especially by Spanish women’) and *zamarra* (*‘a kind of sheepskin jacket’*).

Among the Romance languages, Portuguese has been one of the less prolific immediate sources of borrowings, but still words such as *banyan* (adopted from Portuguese which probably adopted it from Arabic; ‘a loose flannel shirt or jacket, worn in India’) or *tanga* may be found in the English vocabulary for textiles.

4.2. *Germanic words in the English of textiles*

Apart from those, in this specific area of study English has also borrowed words from Germanic, Italic and Hellenic languages, as said in the previous section. Accordingly, some Germanic terms may be found either from German, Dutch, Afrikaans or Yiddish. Germanic types of fabric or cloth such as *krimmer* (*‘a cloth resembling the grey or black furry fleece of young lambs from the Crimean area’*), *loden* (*‘a heavy waterproof woollen cloth’*) or *schappe* (*‘a fabric or yarn made from waste silk’*) have been recorded, as well as different types of garments such as *dirndl* (*‘a dress in the style of Alpine peasant costume with a bodice and full skirt or, simply, a full skirt with a tight waistband’*), *loden* (*‘a coat or cloak made of loden cloth’*), *rauschpfeife* (*‘a reed-cap shawl of the Renaissance period’*), *vorlage* (*‘skiing trousers’*), and footwear elements such as *ketterschuh* (*‘a cloth- or felt-soled light boot worn especially for rock-climbing’*).

From Dutch, however, we have only found two lexical units to convey the same meaning, *riem* and *riempie*, which denote a long strip or thong of dressed softened leather. Other words have entered the English language through Afrikaans, such as *doek* (*‘a cloth, especially a headscarf, in South Africa’*), *kappie* (*‘a sun-bonnet with a large brim to protect the face in South Africa’*), *kaross* (*‘a cloak or sleeveless jacket like a blanket made of hairy animal skins, worn by the indigenous peoples of southern Africa’, and also ‘a rug of sewn skins used on a bed or on the floor’*), and *katel/kartel*. The latter, *katel/kartel* (*‘a lightweight portable bed or hammock’*), though entering English through Afrikaans or South African Dutch, apparently was adapted in such a language from Portuguese *catel, catle,*
which had formerly adopted it from Malay *katil* and this from Tamil *kattil*.

As said, Yiddish has also been a source of borrowings for English, although its influence on the English of textiles does not seem to be as relevant as the preceding languages. Thus, *kittel* (‘a white cotton or linen robe worn by orthodox Jews on certain holy days; such a robe used as a shroud’), though adopted from Yiddish, was actually adapted by Yiddish from Middle High German *ki(e)tel*; and, similarly, *shmatte/schmatte* (‘a rag; a garment, especially a ragged one’) came to English through Yiddish, though it is actually a Polish term.

### 4.3. Italic and Hellenic words in the English of textiles

As to the Italic and Hellenic sources of new items for the English textiles, Latin and Greek have been the main languages from which English has borrowed directly.

Latin has provided English with a good amount of words, as already explained. Among them, the following may be mentioned: within the semantic field of garments, *cento* (‘a patchwork garment’), *peplum*\(^6\) (‘a usually short flounce on a jacket, blouse, or tunic, hanging from the waist over and covering the skirt; a jacket’), and *toga* (‘a loose flowing outer garment worn by a Roman citizen, made of a single piece of cloth and covering the whole body apart from the right arm’), which may also have a more specialized meaning, related to education and learning (‘a robe of office; a professional gown’). It must, of course, be remembered that Latin was at some stage the language and model of learning. But Latin was also the language of the church. Thus, words such as the following are also found: *sudarium* (‘a cloth for wiping the face, a cloth with a likeness of Christ’s face on it, a veronica’), *tiara* (originally from Greek; ‘a richly ornamental three-crowned diadem formerly worn by popes’) and *vexillum* (‘a small piece of linen or silk attached to the upper part of a crozier’; also, as a fingerprint of the Roman History and the

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\(^6\) Note that the Latin *peplum* derives from Greek *peplos*, which has also entered English directly from Greek.
military power of this people, it may also denote a military standard or banner or a body of soldiers grouped under this). The richness of the Roman civilisation has also left its mark in the English textiles in words for adornment or embroidery, such as *opus anglicanum* (‘fine pictorial embroidery produced in England in the Middle Ages and used especially on ecclesiastical vestments’) and *opus araneum* (‘darned netting; delicate embroidery done on a net and resembling a spider’s web’).

English has also borrowed words from the Greek civilisation. Garments such as *chiton* (‘a long woollen tunic worn in ancient Greece’) and *peplos* (‘a usually rich outer robe or shawl worn by women in ancient Greece’), containers for food made with textiles such as *olpe* (‘a leather flask for oil, wine, etc.’) and even terms related to culture-specific elements made with any kind of textile such as *kore* (‘a statue of a clothed young woman’).

4.4. *Indo-Iranian words in the English of textiles*

More distant languages than the former are those belonging to the Indo-Iranian family, such as Hindi, Hindustani, Urdu and Persian, which have also been an important source of new words for English, especially in the field of textiles. From Hindi, quite a few deserve to be mentioned: garments worn either by men or women such as *achkan* (‘a knee-length coat, buttoned in front, worn by men in the Indian subcontinent’), *chadar* (‘a large piece of material or sheet worn as a shawl, mantle or cloak by Muslim women in northern India’), *dhoti* (‘a cloth worn by male Hindus, whose ends are passed through the legs and tucked in at the waist’) and *sari* (‘a traditional garment of Indian women, consisting of a length of cotton, silk, or other cloth wrapped around the waist and draped over one shoulder’) as well as head-dressing garments such as *terai* (‘a wide-brimmed felt hat with a double-layered crown and a vent, worn by travellers, etc. in subtropical regions’); footwear terms such as *chappal* (‘a sandal, especially of leather’); types of fabric such as *khaddar/khadi* (‘Indian home-spun cotton cloth’), and other accessories such as *punkah* (‘a large swinging cloth fan on a frame worked manually by a cord oper-
ated by a punkah-wallah or by electricity’). From Hindustani, loan-words for garments such as choli (‘an Indian woman’s short-sleeved bodice of a type worn under a sari’), kurta (‘a loose shirt or tunic worn by especially Hindu men and women’) or even for head-dressing, such as puggaree (‘a turban, as worn in the Indian subcontinent, or also a thin scarf wound round the crown of a sun-helmet or hat so that the ends of the scarf form a shade for the neck’); and types of fabric such as zenana (‘a light quilted thin fabric used for women’s dresses’) have been recorded. Finally, Urdu has also “lent” a good number of words to English. Among others, garments such as shalwar (‘loose trousers worn by women together with a kameez in some South Asian countries and by some Muslims elsewhere’), khaki (though first used to refer to a dull yellowish-brown fabric, originally of stout twilled cotton, later also of wool, etc., used especially for army uniforms, it is now also used to mean ‘khaki trousers and/or khaki clothes’); adornments such as chikan (‘a type of hand-embroidery of the Indian subcontinent’); household elements, such as satranji (adapted form Urdu, the immediate or direct source of the English use, but the latest source is Persian shatranj; ‘a carpet or floor-rug made of coloured cotton, now usually with a striped pattern’), charpoy (‘a light bedstead’), numdah (though this word has entered English through Urdu, this is a Persian term; ‘a rug or carpet made from a kind of felt or coarse woollen cloth, frequently embroidered’), as well as other nouns denoting objects made with some kind of fabric or textile such as howdah (Urdu hauddah is the immediate source for the English borrowing but Urdu had already taken it from Arabic hawdaj, ‘a seat for two or more, usually with a canopy, carried on an elephant’s back’). Unlike this, Persian has not been as prolific a source of items as the preceding Indo-Iranian languages. Thus, and despite the information provided by Speake (2005), and once checked it against the OED, only one item deserves our attention: kulah, a kind of cap, usually a conical cap made of lambskin worn by Muslims in the Middle East.
4.5. Austronesian words in the English of textiles

Also due to colonization English has had contact and, consequently, has been influenced by the Austronesian family of languages. Malay and Hawaiian are two of those languages that have also left their mark in the field of textiles in English. As above, the terms found may be classified in different semantic fields such as those of garments, types of fabric, textile techniques or processes and dyes. Among the former, *kain* (‘a piece of cloth, especially for use as clothing; a sarong’) and *sarong* (‘a traditional skirt-like garment, consisting of a long strip of cloth usually worn tucked round the waist; in Western countries it is worn especially on the beach’) may be mentioned. Note that the term *ikat*, also taken from Malay into English, denotes not only a technique used in the textile industry (an Indonesian technique of textile decoration in which warp or weft threads, or both, are tied at intervals and dyed before weaving), but also a type of fabric made using such a process or technique. Apart from that, dyeing techniques are also important in this sector, many of those coming indirectly into the English industry from other Austronesian languages such as Javanese and directly via Malay in the late 19th century (see Ayto, 1991: 36). One of them is *batik*, that is, a method of dyeing cloth which involves drawing patterns on the fabric with wax.

Unlike Malay, Polynesian languages do not seem to have left as important a mark in English for textiles. Thus, we have only found the loanword *muu-muu*, a quite culturally-bound word denoting a woman’s usually brightly-coloured and patterned loose-fitting dress, (as) worn in Hawaii, or the *kapa/tapa*, a type of cloth made from the bark of a tree.

4.6. Afro-Asiatic and Slavic words in the English of textiles

Other eastern cultures have also influenced English, not only Mediterranean ones such as Afro-Asiatic Semitic languages such as Arabic or Hebrew, Altaic ones such as Turkish, or even of the Chadic sub-family such as Hausa, but also, those that we may regard as more northern language families such as Slavic ones as Russian, and even Ukrainian.
Arabic terms related to textiles which have entered English are mainly nouns of garments as, for example, *aba/abba/abaya* (‘a sleeveless outer garment of various forms resembling a sack with openings for the head and arms, worn by Arabs’), *agal* (‘a fillet worn around the head by Bedouin Arabs to keep the keffiyeh in position’), *burka* (‘a long, loose garment covering the whole body, worn in public by women in many Muslim countries’), *chador* (‘a large piece of dark-coloured cloth, typically worn by Muslim women, wrapped around the head and upper body to leave only the face exposed’), *galabiya* (‘a long loose garment worn in Arabic-speaking Mediterranean countries, especially in Egypt’), *hijab* (‘the headscarf worn by Muslim women’), *ihram* (the costume worn by a Muslim, consisting of two lengths of seamless usually white fabric), *izar* (‘an enveloping outer garment worn by Muslim women and, in some countries, Muslim men’), *jellaba/djellaba/jellabah/jelab* (‘a loose hooded long-sleeved usually woollen cloak of a kind worn originally by Arab men in North Africa’), *jubba/jibba(h)/jubbah* (‘a type of long open cloth coat with wide sleeves, worn especially by Muslims’), *kameez* (‘a loose long-sleeved shirt or tunic worn, especially by Muslims, in the Indian subcontinent, and by some Muslims elsewhere’), *kebaya* (either ‘a light loose tunic of a type worn in South-East Asia by women or (formerly) by men’, or ‘a short tight-fitting long-sleeved jacket, together with a sarong, the traditional dress of Malay and Indonesian women’), *keffiyeh/kaffiyeh/kuffiyeh* (‘a kerchief worn as a head-dress by Bedouin Arabs’), *tarboosh/tarbush* (though Arabic, Egyptian, tarbus is English immediate source, the Arabic word comes from Ottoman Turkish *terpos*, Turkish *tarbus* from Persian *sarpus*, from *sar* head + *pus* cover; it denotes a cap similar to a fez, usually of red felt with a tassel at the top, worn by Muslim men either alone or as part of a turban), *yashmak* (‘the double veil concealing the part of the face below the eyes, worn by some Muslim women in public’). Apart from garments, some other semantic fields have also been provided with Arabic words. We will only highlight here one of the borrowings related to types of fabric. Thus, the widespread term *mohair*, that is, a fabric in imitation of the true mohair (‘a kind of fine camlet made from the hair of the Angora goat’) which is made of a mixture of wool and cotton, is also said to be ultimately adopted from Arabic.
However, its history is obscure as it seems that the word has come into English by more than one channel.

The influence of Hebrew upon English lexis, especially as regards the textile sector, has left words related to various semantic fields such as those of religious garments, with terms like *kippa/kipa(h)/kippah* (‘a skullcap, usually of crocheted thread, worn by Orthodox male Jews’) or *tallith* (‘the shawl with fringed corners traditionally worn by male Jews at prayer’), and household elements such as *parochet* (‘a richly decorated curtain which hangs in front of the Ark in a synagogue’), among others.

Turkish elements which entered the textile register in English do also reflect the kind of life of such a community with which the English came into contact. Thus, words such as the following were borrowed: *bezesteen* (‘a covered market for fine cloth and valuables’; the word is originally from Persian but it is unclear how it reached English, that is, whether it was an adoption from Turkish or whether it arrived directly or indirectly through French or Italian); garments such as *caftan/kaftan* (‘an Eastern man’s long tunic with a waist girdle, a long loose dress, or a loose-fitting shirt’), *fez* (‘a flat-topped conical brimless red hat with a tassel, worn by men in some Muslim countries’; it was so called from the town in Morocco, where it was formerly manufactured. As to the term it is also unclear whether it entered the language directly from Turkish or through French); household elements from this culture or community and their names were also introduced into English, among those, *kilim* (‘a pileless woven carpet, rug, etc., made in Turkey, Kurdistan, and neighbouring areas’, and now ‘a fashionable furnishing item in the West’; though English borrowed it directly from Turkish, this is a Persian term), *macramé* (a fringe, trimming, or lace of knotted thread or cord; knotted-work; the art of making this).

Similarly, English has also borrowed words from other languages within the Afro-Asiatic language family. As is the case of *lappa*, term that has been directly borrowed from Hausa but that comes from Arabic *laffa*, meaning or denoting a woman’s shawl, wrap or skirt, especially in West Africa.

As said above, other Eastern language families such as Slavic Russian and Ukrainian have also enriched English vocabulary with items such as *babushka* (‘a headscarf folded diagonally and tied un-
der the chin’), *karakul/caracul* (‘a cloth or fur resembling the glossy curled fleece of a young lamb of this breed’), and *balaclava* (‘woolen head covering’, named after the town where first used), respectively.

4.7. *Sino-Tibetan words in the English of textiles*

As Cannon (1988: 3) indicates, despite the information found in some Histories of the English Language and Serjeantson’s book on borrowings in English which indicate that languages such as Japanese and Chinese have contributed few items, some of them enjoy high frequency. But, more important than that, at least for our purposes, is the fact that despite the low number of loans from these two languages, some may even be found in the field of textiles.

Our study has allowed us to identify more Japanese than Chinese terms. Among the latter, *cheongsam* (‘a Chinese woman’s garment with a high neck and slit skirt’) and *samfu* (‘a suit consisting of jacket and trousers worn by Chinese women and occasionally men’) may be mentioned. Japanese borrowings, however, seem to be more prolific in English, as just suggested. Thus, we provide here some of the instances found, classified by semantic fields: garments such as *hakama* (‘Japanese loose trousers with many pleats in the front’), *kimono* (‘a long Japanese robe with wide sleeves, tied with a sash, or also, especially in Western countries, a garment or dressing-gown which is modelled on the Japanese garment’), *mompei* (‘baggy working trousers worn in Japan’), *obi* (‘a sash worn round the waist with Japanese clothing’), and *tabi* (‘a thick-soled Japanese ankle sock with a separate stall for the big toe’), which may also be considered within the following semantic field; footwear elements such as *zori* (‘a Japanese sandal, having a simple thong between the toes and a flat sole originally of straw but now often of rubber, felt, or any other material’); types of fabric such as *habutai* (‘fine soft silk of a type originally made in Japan’); household elements such as *futon* (‘a cotton-stuffed mattress rolled out over a mat on the floor for use as a bed; more generally, a low-slung Japanese-style bed or mattress’); and other elements using any type of fabric, such as *kakemono* (‘a Japanese unframed wall-picture, usually painted or inscribed on silk or paper’).

Quite surprisingly, English has also borrowed words from other less well-known languages as far as the Western world is concerned but with whom it has had some kind of contact. Thus, from the Niger-Congo family of languages, English has loanwords from Swahili or Kiswahili and Twi. From the former some garments and types of fabric may be mentioned. Thus, for example, *kanzu* (‘a long white cotton or linen robe as worn by East African men’), *kikoi* (‘a distinctive striped cloth with an end fringe, worn round the waist, especially in East Africa’), and *khanga/kanga* (‘a fabric printed in various colours and designs with borders, used especially for women’s clothing in East Africa’). From Twi, we have only found *kente*, which denotes either a brightly-coloured banded material or a long garment made from it, loosely draped on or worn around the shoulders and waist.

Apart from those, the Eskimo-Aleut family of languages has also provided English with a few terms in this field. As expected, those items are related to warm clothing, such as *parka* (borrowed from Aleut, though the word comes from ultimately from Russian; it denotes either ‘a long hooded skin jacket worn by Eskimos’ or, probably by semantic extension, ‘a similar garment, usually of windproof fabric, worn especially by mountaineers’), and *anorak* (borrowed from Eskimo, from Greenlandic *annoraarq*; it denotes either ‘a hooded jacket made of skin or cloth and worn by Eskimos and so by others in polar regions’ or ‘a similar weatherproof garment worn elsewhere’, and even, by semantic extension or metonymy, ‘a person who wears an anorak’).

5. Conclusions

Our primary goal in this contribution has been to partially fill in a gap in the study of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), more specifically, on the language of textiles concerning foreign words or loans in English. For such purposes we began by considering the internal and external processes that the language has available in order to
create new lexical items or, in other words, to answer to lexical needs for new words. Once we had explained that borrowing is a natural process despite its detractors and critics (on this see Baugh/Cable 1990 and Pyles 1971), we dealt with the appropriateness of using one term or the other, concluding that “foreign elements/units/words/terms” is the best choice as it describes the units without further implications that are not applicable to this linguistic phenomenon.

As we have also seen along the preceding lines, the English language has extensively “borrowed” and been influenced by all those languages with which it has come into contact throughout its history. In the field of textiles borrowing is particularly visible. Thus, we have accounted for foreign words of more than ten language families and over twenty-five languages. It seems that the English textile vocabulary is formed by elements from almost any kind of language on earth, independently of how far and exotic it may be. This massive borrowing creates a situation in which sometimes there are quite a few terms to denote a similar entity, garment or piece of cloth. Thus, different types of shawl (term adopted from Persian) have entered the English language from quite a variety of languages: chadar (‘a large piece of material worn as a long shawl or cloak especially by Muslim women in the Indian subcontinent and Iran’) from Hindi, lappa (‘a woman’s shawl, wrap or skirt in West Africa’) from Hausa, merino (‘a garment, especially a dress or shawl, made of a soft fine material resembling cashmere, made of (originally merino) wool or wool and cotton’) from Spanish (though its ultimate origin is unknown), peplos (‘a usually rich outer robe or shawl worn by women in ancient Greece’) from Greek, rauschpfeife (‘a reed-cap shawl of the Renaissance period’) from German, serape/sarape/zarape (‘a shawl or blanket worn as a cloak by Spanish-Americans’) from Mexican Spanish, and tallith (‘the shawl with fringed corners traditionally worn by male Jews at prayer’) from Hebrew. Apart from that, it seems that the foreign words or borrowings fit into a group of semantic fields such as garments, hair-dressing, footwear, etc. which is repeated through all world languages English has taken its words from.

The present study deals with terminological and historical or etymological issues as well as with language contact within the study...
of English for Specific Purposes and, more specifically, the language textiles. Our intention has been to contribute an amount of significant data to the study of this particularly rich field. However, there is still a lot of work to be done in future research.

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