

English borrowings in Modern Greek: a corpus-based study*

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Περίληψη

Τα δάνεια της αγγλικής στη νέα ελληνική (NE) είναι πολυάριθμα λόγω της αγγλικής επιρροής σε τομείς όπως η τεχνολογία, το διαδίκτυο, ο αθλητισμός και η μόδα. Στην παρούσα εργασία εξετάζουμε άμεσα δάνεια από την αγγλική, π.χ. κόνσεπτ 'concept' < αγγλ. concept, καθώς και φρασεολογικές δομές που μεταφράζουν λέξη προς λέξη αντίστοιχες δομές της αγγλικής, π.χ. τροφή για σκέψη 'food for thought' < αγγλ. food for thought, με γνώμονα την εμφάνισή τους στα NE λεξικά και σώματα κειμένων (ΣΚ). Επιχειρούμε μία ποιοτική και ποσοτική ανάλυση των δεδομένων μας, συγκρίνουμε τη συχνότητα εμφάνισης των μεταγεγραμμένων και μη μεταγεγραμμένων τύπων των άμεσων δανείων, π.χ. κόνσεπτ 'concept' vs. concept, καθώς και της εξαγγλισμένης φρασεολογικής δομής με τις αντίστοιχες δομές της NE, π.χ. τροφή για σκέψη 'food for thought' vs. αφορμή για προβληματισμό.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά: δάνεια, φραστικές δομές, σώματα κειμένων, αγγλισμοί, εξαγγλισμός

1 Introduction

Nowadays, the influence of English on Modern Greek (hereinafter MG) is strong in domains like industry, entertainment, the web, sports, fashion and lifestyle and triggers the insertion of a large number of English borrowings into MG.

Our research on English borrowings concerned newly imported English loanwords and calqued phraseological and morphosyntactic patterns (Papadopoulou and Xydopoulos to appear, Papadopoulou and Xydopoulos 2016, Papadopoulou 2016). Most of our data appear in recent dictionaries (e.g. the Dictionary by the Academy of Athens (Charalampakis 2014)) but not in older ones (as the MG Dictionary (1998)). Expectedly, they have limited or zero appearance in the existing MG corpora (i.e. the Hellenic National Corpus (HNC) and the Corpus of Greek Texts (CGT)), as they include limited number of texts (47 million words and 30 million words respectively), that come from the formal written language, while oral and web data are limited or totally absent (Goutsos 2010, Goutsos and Fragkaki 2015: 52-54, Pantazara and Mantzari 2015: 10).

All our data are available on the web, through Google search. As Google is not a reliable tool and a resource for linguistic data processing, such results were useful to localise these patterns and obtain some preliminary quantitative results, as well as natural examples of use. We also observed that English loanwords appear in transliterated forms in the MG spelling system, or non-transliterated, maintaining their English spelling form.

The results of our research so far indicate that the English borrowings under consideration constitute new elements for MG. They emerge in informal circumstances of communication and are mainly used by young speakers (Papadopoulou and Xydopoulos to appear). Furthermore, they mostly appear in

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English-influenced vocabularies, in both their transliterated and non-transliterated form (Xydopoulos and Papadopoulou 2018, Papadopoulou in preparation). Based on all these findings, MG appears to be following the general tendency towards Anglicisation that is observed among many European languages (Gottlieb 2005: 162, Pulcini *et al.* 2012).

In this work, we introduce new customized and exclusively web-based corpora available through Sketch Engine¹ (see e.g. Kilgarriff *et al.* 2014, Kilgarriff *et al.* 2004): the Greek Web as Corpus (GkWaC) (124 million words) and the Greek Web 2014 (elTenTen14) (1.6 billion words). These corpora cover the needs of our research since they also include texts from informal communication circumstances. Through them, we aim at localizing and evaluating our data and getting statistically significant results. Moreover, we focus on English loanwords and phraseological units that have been inserted into MG during the past twenty years, intending to investigate their adaptation in the MG system.

More specifically, in section 2, we present our methodology. In section 3, we analyse a set of English loanwords, comparing the frequency of appearance of transliterated and non-transliterated forms, whereas in section 3.1, we draw some preliminary conclusions concerning the reasons for the appearance of the non-transliterated forms. Furthermore, in section 4, we present a set of calqued phraseological patterns and we compare the frequency of appearance of the calqued phrase to the indigenous MG phrase available. Finally, in section 5, we discuss our findings and make some concluding remarks.

2 Methodology

During our research, we gathered our data manually from the television, the Press, everyday communication and the web, including social media, blogs and online gaming. We also consulted the Dictionary of European Anglicisms (Görlach 2001) and MG dictionaries. Our corpus of Anglicisms in MG consists of 1,400 items (loanwords, loan translations, calqued phraseological units etc.) and is being constantly renewed, since new English elements are attested in MG.

In this paper, we discuss eight examples of English loanwords that are linked to the web (e.g. *μπλόγκερ* ‘*blogger*’), the television (e.g. *ριάλιτι σόου* ‘*reality show*’) and everyday life (e.g. *χάπενινγκ* ‘*happening*’). Some of them are brand-new elements in MG since they do not appear in MG dictionaries (e.g. *σέλφι* ‘*selfie*’), while others are older loanwords, based on the chronological information from the Dictionary of the Academy of Athens (Charalampakis 2014) (e.g. *χάπενινγκ* ‘*happening*’). We examine three loanwords that appear to have high frequency (more than 10,000 appearances) (see examples in (1)) and five loanwords with low frequency (less than 5,000 appearances)² (see examples in (2)) in the elTenTen14 corpus:

- (1) (a) *μπλόγκερ* ‘*blogger*’
(b) *κόνσεπτ* ‘*concept*’
(c) *μπάτζετ* ‘*budget*’
- (2) (a) *μπακγκράουντ* ‘*background*’

¹ Available on <https://www.sketchengine.eu>.

² We did not choose to analyse loanwords that appear in their non-transliterated form within fixed headlines, titles or phrases in the elTenTen14 corpus, such as *event*, e.g. *TEDxAthens event*, in order to have results as representative as possible.

- (b) *χάπενινγκ* ‘happening’
- (c) *χίπστερ/χίψτερ* ‘hipster’
- (d) *ριάλιτι σόου* ‘reality show’
- (e) *σέλφι* ‘selfie’

We checked their appearance in the Dictionary of European Anglicisms (DEA) (Görlach 2001) as well as in MG dictionaries, the Modern Greek Dictionary (MGD) (Institute of Modern Greek Studies 1998), the dictionary of the Academy of Athens (DAA) (Charalampakis 2014), the On-line Dictionary of Modern Greek (ODMG) (Patakis 2019) and the Dictionary of Modern Greek language (DMGL) (5th edition) (Babiniotis 2019), in order to check their meaning and morphology and extract chronological information.

Regarding calqued phraseological units, we present eight examples, that appear to be more frequently used in the television, the web and the everyday communication (e.g. *παίρνω το χρόνο μου* ‘take my time’) or some unusual and noticeable cases (e.g. *τελευταίο αλλά όχι έσχατο* ‘last but not least’)³ (see examples in (3)):

- (3)
- (a) *παίρνω το χρόνο μου* ‘take my time’
 - (b) *κλαίω πάνω από το χυμένο γάλα* ‘cry over spilt milk’
 - (c) *σκελετοί στη ντουλάπα* ‘skeletons in the closet’
 - (d) *τροφή για σκέψη* ‘food for thought’
 - (e) *καυτή πατάτα* ‘hot potato’
 - (f) *τελευταίο αλλά όχι έσχατο* ‘last but not least’
 - (g) *κρύβω κάτι κάτω από το χαλί* ‘sweep something under the carpet/the rug’
 - (h) *πουλάει σαν ζεστό ψωμί* ‘it sells like hot buns/cakes’

The calqued phraseological units under consideration barely appear in the MG dictionaries. In order to determine the possible equivalent MG phrases, we consulted English-Greek dictionaries and the translation engine “Linguee.gr”⁴.

For all data under consideration we checked their appearance in the MG corpora, the HNC, the CGT, the GkWaC and the eTenTen14. Especially, for loanwords we give frequency results for both the transliterated and non-transliterated forms. Moreover, for the calqued phraseological units we give frequency results comparing the calqued expression to its MG equivalent.

3 Loanwords

All English loanwords under consideration are nouns, they appear uninflected in the MG system and they maintain the English -s suffix in plural, as for example *μπλόγκερ-ς* ‘bloggers’, *κόνσεπτ-ς* ‘concepts’).

³ We did not choose to analyse calqued phraseological units that in different contexts appear to have various interpretations, e.g. *στο τέλος της μέρας* ‘at the end of the day’, that has either a conclusive or a chronological connotation, depending on the context.

⁴ Available on <https://www.linguee.gr>.

English loanword	Appearance in Dictionaries				
	MGD (1998)	DMGL (2019)	DAA (2014)	ODMG (2019)	DEA (2001)
μπλόγκερ 'blogger'	-	✓	✓ (1999)	✓	-
κόνσεπτ 'concept'	-	✓	✓	-	-
μπάτζετ 'budget'	-	✓	✓	-	✓ (1990s)
μπαγκράουντ 'background'	-	✓	✓	✓	✓ (late 1990s)
χάπενινγκ 'happening'	✓	✓	✓ (1959)	✓	✓ (1990s)
χίπστερ 'hipster'	-	-	-	-	-
ριάλιτι σόου 'reality show'	✓	✓	✓ (1968)	✓	✓ (late 1990s)
σέλφι 'selfie'	-	✓	-	-	-

Table 1 | Appearance of English loanwords in the Dictionaries (from Papadopoulou in preparation)

The fact that the English loanwords do not appear in their majority in the MGD, but some of them do appear in the ODMG and the DEA and the majority of them appears in the DAA and the recent edition of DMGL, actually confirm that they are newly imported elements in MG. The majority of them have entered the language during the 1990s. However, only the loanwords *χάπενινγκ* 'happening' and *ριάλιτι σόου* 'reality show' are rather old. According to the DAA lemmas they were imported in 1959 and 1968 respectively. However, the DEA indicates that they occurred in MG later, during the 1990s. Such loanwords may have been in fact imported during an earlier period of time; however, they have spread and are massively used during the last two or three decades, due to the massive evolution of technology, internet and the influence from English and American lifestyle.

Anglicisms Transliterated/non-transliterated form		HNC		CGT		GkWac		eTenTen14	
		Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.
a.	μπλόγκερ 'blogger'	2	0	-	-	1,503	10.08	4,781	2.44
	blogger	-	-	-	-	3,058	20.52	13,064	6.67
b.	κόνσεπτ 'concept'	9	0.2	-	-	72	0.48	1,192	0.62
	concept	46	1	18	0.6	719	4.82	14,776	7.54
c.	μπάτζετ 'budget'	38	0.8	6	0.2	308	2.06	7,636	3.92
	budget	17	0.4	6	0.2	288	1.93	6,375	3.25
d.	μπαγκράουντ 'background'	3	0.01	1	0	45	0.2	234	0.12
	background	24	0.05	15	0.05	430	2.88	4,076	2.08
e.	χάπενινγκ 'happening'	104	2.2	20	0.67	73	0.49	949	0.49
	happening	26	0.5	12	0.39	193	1.29	2,129	1.08

f.	χίπστερ ‘hipster’	-	-	-	-	1	0	583	0.32
	hipster	-	-	-	-	2	0.01	786	0.4
g.	ριάλιτι σόου ‘reality show’	44	0.03	10	0.03	37	0.24	418	0.22
	reality show	9	0.01	24	0.07	70	0.2	743	0.38
h.	σέλφι ‘selfie’	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	0.04
	selfie	-	-	-	-	-	-	997	0.5

Table 2 | Appearance of the transliterated and non-transliterated forms English loanwords in the MG corpora (from Papadopoulou in preparation)

As shown in Table 2, all English loanwords under consideration have limited or zero appearance in the HNC and the CGT corpora. On the other hand, most of them have higher results in the GkWaC and all of them note extremely high scores in the eITenTen14 corpus.

The limited appearance of the loanwords in the HNC and the CGT and at the same time their strong presence in the GkWaC, and especially the eITenTen14 corpus, confirms that they are newly imported elements that occur in informal communication settings, as the ones available online. In particular, written texts found on the web include colloquial elements and a vocabulary that is attested in the oral and informal language (Johannessen and Guevara 2011: 127).

Such loanwords emerge in specialized vocabularies, as for example the vocabulary of technology and the internet and of course the vocabulary of young people. In some cases, they are institutionalized, and they appear in the general vocabulary of MG. Most of the English loanwords under investigation appear in the MG corpora (they display high scores in the eITenTen corpus) and the recent MG dictionaries, indicating that they have been institutionalized in MG. However, the loanword σέλφι ‘selfie’ appears only in the DMGL and it has presumably recently been institutionalized, while χίπστερ ‘hipster’ does not appear in any of the dictionaries, indicating that it is yet not part of the general MG vocabulary.

In the majority of the cases, the non-transliterated form occurs more frequently than the transliterated one in all corpora. For instance, μπλόγκερ ‘blogger’, κόνσεπτ ‘concept’, μπακράουντ ‘background’, χίπστερ ‘hipster’ and σέλφι ‘selfie’ appear more frequently in their non-transliterated form in almost all MG corpora. This may be related to the fact that these elements are rather new to MG as well as to the fact that they are related to specialized vocabularies such as of technology, of the web and of young people. Regarding the case of χάπενινγκ ‘happening’, the transliterated form is more frequent in the HNC and the CGT. Likely, for ριάλιτι σόου ‘reality show’ the transliterated form predominates in the HNC. However, the non-transliterated forms of these loanwords are more frequent in the web-based corpora. This indicates that in formal written texts they appear orthographically adapted in MG, while, when used on the internet, they maintain their original English form. Finally, μπάτζετ ‘budget’ appears in its transliterated form in all MG corpora. A possible reason for this phenomenon is that μπάτζετ ‘budget’ has become a common term of the general vocabulary, used by speakers of all ages, resulting to its orthographical adaptation in MG.

3.1 Factors that contribute to the appearance of non-transliterated forms

In this section we discuss the possible reasons for the appearance of the non-transliterated forms of the English loanwords within the MG text as in the example in (4):

- (4) Το *trend* που έχει γίνει *viral* σε Ευρώπη και Αμερική⁵
the trend that it-has_{3,SG} become viral in Europe and U.S.A.
'The trend that has become viral in Europe and the U.S.A.'

As previously said, English loanwords are new elements that are massively imported into MG from English and so they are not fully adapted into the MG system. Despite the fact that they are phonologically adapted, their morphological form is invariable. Coming to the orthographic form, given that MG uses a different alphabet to the English one, it would be expected that the loanword would be transliterated according to the MG spelling system. However, this is not the case since users in their majority have the tendency to keep and use the English orthographic form.

In addition, the transliteration of a loanword into MG might reduce the recognisability of the word. If, for example, we try to transliterate the loanword *blogger* into the MG spelling system, the given result will be *μπλόγκερ* 'blogger' in the MG alphabet. Its visual form, however, is not familiar to the average user and would not allow them to recognise it straight away⁶.

In their majority, Greek speakers are familiar with the Latin alphabet, a fact that may be related to the late or even the non-adaptation of the English loanwords into the MG spelling system. The Latin alphabet is present in many aspects of everyday life, as for example in advertising and on road signs, where Greek and Latin transliterations coexist. Especially young speakers are familiar with "Greeklish" the "Latinised" form of MG spelling that is mostly used in electronic media communication (see among others Androutsopoulos 2009, Tzortzatou *et al.* 2018, Xydopoulos *et al.* 2019).

Furthermore, non-transliterated forms of the loanwords seem to emerge in informal communication settings, as the ones available online. Especially young speakers are usually more familiar with the web, they use the non-transliterated forms of the loanwords in order to be more "cool" or trendy.

Non-transliterated forms also predominate in "specialised" and English-influenced vocabularies, such as those of technology, sports and fashion. Evidence from the vocabulary of technology support our claim that the appearance of non-transliterated forms is related to the period of insertion of the English loanword in MG. Newly imported loanwords regarding new technology (e.g. *φόλοουερ* 'follower') appear non-transliterated in MG, while older loanwords (e.g. *μόνιτορ* 'monitor') appear transliterated (Papadopoulou in preparation). This is also supported by the appearance of English loanwords in the vocabulary of sports. In particular, football and basketball terms appear transliterated in MG, whereas ski and snowboarding terms appear non-transliterated. This is due to the fact that football and basketball are rather old and well-established sports in Greece while ski and snowboarding became popular the last two or three decades.

Furthermore, another factor regarding the non-transliteration of loanwords is linked to social prestige. For instance, sports like ski and snowboarding are preferred mostly by speakers of the upper social class since they are rather financially

⁵ <https://www.faysbook.gr/moda/tips-trends/co-ords-to-trend-poy-echei-idi-ginei-viral-se-cyropi-kai-ameriki-tips-gia-na-to-akolythiseis-ki-esy/>.

⁶ Transliteration issues regarding proper nouns in MG are discussed by Papanastasiou (2008: 403-427).

demanding (special equipment, travel and lodging expenses), unlike football or basketball that are more popular and easier to play or watch. Therefore, these users do not need to and opt to not transliterate English loanwords so as to enhance their idea of prestige and higher status (Papadopoulou in preparation).

Finally, non-transliterated forms of the English loanwords are widely used in the vocabulary of fashion. Speakers use non-transliterated forms in order to be “in fashion”, “up to date”, cool and trendy. In particular, the appearance of the original form of English fashion loanwords in Greek blogs, magazines or social media accounts, aims to demonstrate that the proposed ideas, styles or products are influenced of the American and English fashion industry, they are stylish and in fashion, and therefore are more modern than local ideas or items (Papadopoulou in preparation, Xydopoulos and Papadopoulou 2018: 179-180).

4 Calqued phraseological units

In this section we present and analyse phraseological units attested in MG that are word-by-word translations of the equivalent English ones (Haris 2003, Mackridge 1985; 2016), e.g. *παίρνω το χρόνο μου* ‘take my time’.

Calqued phraseological units	HNC		CGT		GkWac		elTenTen14	
	Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.	Occ.	Fr.
παίρνω το χρόνο μου ‘take my time’	-	-	-	-	6	0.03	230	0.09
κλαίω πάνω από το χυμένο γάλα ‘cry over spilt milk’	-	-	-	-	2	-	162	0.08
σκελετοί στη ντουλάπα ‘skeletons in the closet’	-	-	-	-	4	0.03	148	0.07
τροφή για σκέψη ‘food for thought’	-	-	7	0.02	90	0.6	1,654	0.84
καυτή πατάτα ‘hot potato’	-	-	2	0.06	33	0.22	1,257	0.65
τελευταίο αλλά όχι έσχατο ‘last but not least’	4	0.01	-	-	4	0.03	57	0.03
κρύβω κάτι κάτω από το χαλί ‘sweep something under the carpet/the rug’	33	0.09	7	0.02	70	0.05	657	0.3
πουλάει σαν ζεστό ψωμί ‘sells like hot cakes/buns’	2	-	-	-	4	0.03	37	0.03

Table 3 | Appearance of the calqued phraseological units in the MG corpora (from Papadopoulou in preparation)

As shown in Table 3, the calqued phraseological units under consideration have extremely low or zero appearances in the HNC and the CGT corpora, while they give low scores in the GkWac corpus. However, they all give high considerable scores in the elTenTen14 corpus. Their appearance in the elTenTen14 confirms the fact that they constitute new elements for MG. This is also supported by their absence in the MG dictionaries. They are therefore neologisms that appear in “specialized”

vocabularies. Moreover, their appearance in the web-based corpora indicates that they occur in informal communication settings, as the ones found online.

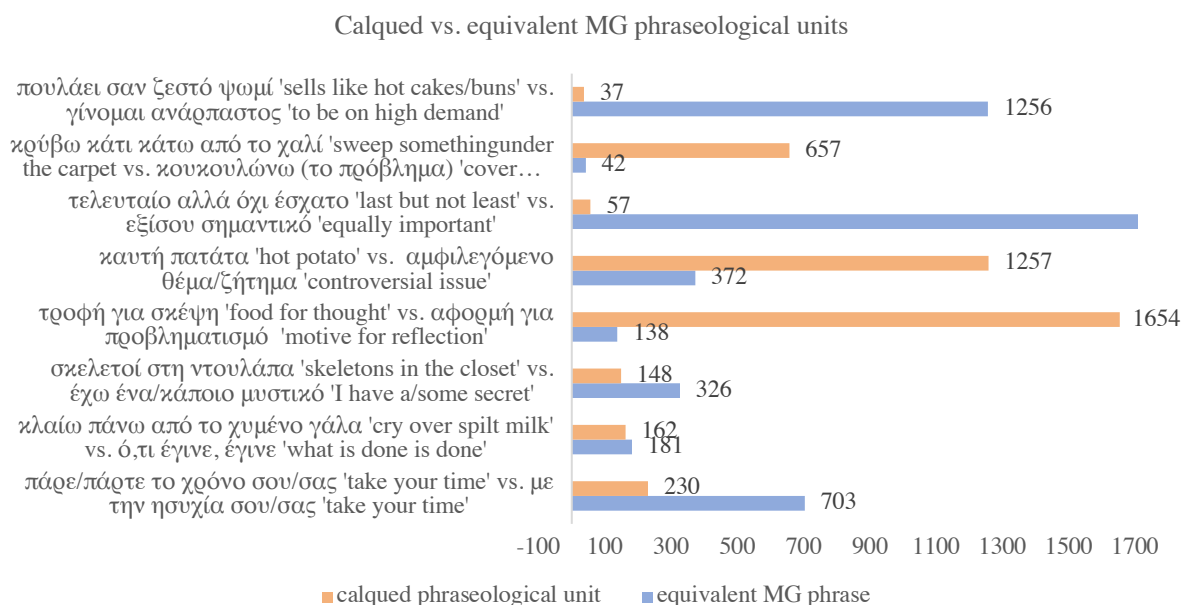


Figure 1 | Calqued vs. equivalent MG phraseological units (from Papadopoulou in preparation)

As shown in Figure 1, the calqued phraseological units *πάρε το χρόνο σου/πάρτε το χρόνο σας* 'take your time', *τελευταίο αλλά όχι έσχατο* 'last but not least' and *πουλάει σαν ζεστό ψωμί* 'sells like hot cakes/buns' have lower scores than their equivalent MG phrases. In the cases of *κλαίω πάνω από το χυμένο γάλα* 'cry over spilt milk' and *σκελετοί στη ντουλάπα* 'skeletons in the closet' the calqued phraseological unit and the indigenous MG phrase compete one another. However, in the cases of *κρύβω κάτι κάτω από το χαλί* 'sweep something under the carpet/the rug', *τροφή για σκέψη* 'food for thought' and *καυτή πατάτα* 'hot potato' the calqued phrase prevails. In particular, only the case of *καυτή πατάτα* 'hot potato' appears in the MG dictionaries, and is therefore institutionalised in MG. On the other hand, *κρύβω κάτι κάτω από το χαλί* 'sweep something under the carpet/the rug' and *τροφή για σκέψη* 'food for thought' are presumably going through the process of institutionalization in MG.

5 Discussion and concluding remarks

In this work, we examined new instances of non-adapted English loanwords and calqued phraseological units that have been inserted into MG due to the vast influence from English and emerge in informal circumstances of communication. We also confirmed our findings from previous works about the existence of such English borrowings that were based on Google, by testing them through the Sketch Engine platform as well, and the included web-based corpora for MG.

In this research we found that the non-transliterated forms of newly imported loanwords are usually more frequent than the transliterated ones (see section 3), thus indicating that these elements are not adapted into the MG system, also in terms of spelling. Therefore, they appear to form instances of hybrid spelling with the English loanword appearing in its original spelling form within the MG spelled text environment (see section 3.1).

As far as the calqued phraseological units are concerned, we assume that they are inserted into MG through a mechanism of a “rushed” loan translation. In other words, they constitute cases of a rushed, hasty and sloppy word-by-word translation, resulting in most of the cases in a translation not easily, if not at all, comprehensible by MG speakers. These translations are rapidly and uncontrollably diffused through the web. The majority of these phraseological units have idiomatic meanings in English, so it is impossible for them to be naturally adapted into the target language by just translating them word-by-word.

According to the relevant literature, phenomena of Anglicisation in European languages as well as MG, are any signs of phonological, morphological, syntactic or phraseological interference that may be ascribed to the influence of English (Petrounias 2007, Pulcini *et al.* 2012). Taking that into consideration and based on our findings we assume that there is arguably a strong indication for Anglicization in MG as is also observed in other European languages.

Our findings cannot be supported by evidence from diachrony as there are not available corpora for such purposes. However, we can make some assumptions regarding the age of these imported terms. Given that our data do not appear in the existing MG corpora, their appearance in the web-based corpora is an indication that they are new items for MG, they emerge in informal communication settings and in all cases, they have been imported and widely used during the last two decades. This is independently supported by chronological information by the DAA and the DEA for some of these items.

The lack of diachronic data is a drawback for our work that needs to be remedied. So, we are working on creating custom-made corpora through Sketch Engine and include mostly oral data, perhaps data from scripts of old Greek movies, aiming at studying the diachrony of the loanwords in general. Finally, we hope to be able to map the English influence at each linguistic level and examine whether a linguistic level is more vulnerable to English influence than another.

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