

Anglicisms in Music Fandom Terminology: The Idiosyncratic Use of Self-Referential Nouns in the Language of Youth

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Within the global phenomenon of music fandom or “fan universe,” this study examines a lexical sub-component of the language of youth which is still unknown to a majority of the general public: the anglicisation of fan base nicknames. Nowadays there exists a prolific coinage of specialised self-referential terms denoting young fans of pop music singers or bands. In peninsular Spanish, such words have been either borrowed from English as direct anglicisms, such as *belieber* “a Justin Bieber fan” or *selenator* “a Selena Gómez follower,” or have been idiosyncratically created following English patterns, as in *abrahamer* (< Abraham Mateo) or *casanover* (< Casanova). In this article, I will describe the word-formation processes at work in this extremely productive technolect, while pinpointing major morphological trends such as the internalisation of the English suffix *-er* by Spanish speakers. Likewise, I will address the functions of this anglicised lexis, which will help to understand its impact not just on the conceptualisation of young people’s identity but also on Spanish in general.

Keywords: anglicisms; hybrid loans; language of youth; music fandom; self-referential nouns

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Anglicismos en la terminología del *fandom* musical: el uso idiosincrático de sustantivos autoreferenciales en el lenguaje juvenil

Dentro del fenómeno internacional del *fandom* o “universo de fans musical,” el presente estudio examina un sub-componente léxico que es todavía desconocido por la mayoría del público general: la anglización de nombres de grupos de *fans*. En la actualidad, se está dando una acuñación prolija de términos especializados auto-referenciales que denotan jóvenes seguidores y admiradores de grupos o de cantantes de la música pop. En español peninsular, dichas voces han sido unas veces apropiadas del inglés como anglicismos directos tales como *belieber* “fan de Justin Bieber” o *selenator* “fan de Selena Gómez,” y otras han sido creadas de

forma idiosincrática partiendo de modelos foráneos ingleses como *abrahamer* (< Abraham Mateo) or *casanover* (< Casanova). En este artículo, describiré los procesos de formación de palabras que se dan en este tecnolecto tan extremadamente productivo, a la vez que señalaré las principales tendencias morfológicas, como la internalización del sufijo inglés *-er* llevada a cabo por hablantes españoles. Asimismo, trataré las funciones de este léxico anglizado, lo que ayudará a entender su impacto no sólo en la conceptualización de la identidad de los jóvenes, sino también en la lengua española en general.

Palabras clave: anglicismos; préstamos híbridos; lenguaje juvenil; *fandom* musical; sustantivos autorreferenciales

I. INTRODUCTION

The expansion of English all around the world and its influence on modern languages seems an unquestionable reality. The reasons for its hegemonic status can be analysed from synchronic and diachronic perspectives. From a historical viewpoint, economic, cultural, political and military reasons have all certainly played their roles in the prevailing position that English still enjoys. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the main focus of influence exerted worldwide came from England in fields such as sports, navigation and new technologies. However, the emergence of the US as a superpower after the Second World War completely shifted the focus from England to the other side of the Atlantic.

At the present time, the widespread use of English as a *lingua franca* for global communication and its pervasiveness, through American cultural productions and other social realms such as politics, economics, technology and science, have both led some authors to state that we are witnessing an “Anglicization of European lexis” (Furiassi, Pulcini and Rodríguez González 2012). This is not surprising since languages build their word-stock either by making use of their own lexicogenetic mechanisms or by borrowing lexis or phraseology from other languages, particularly from English.

However, not all words that seem to be English in form are truly so. At this stage it is important to distinguish “true anglicisms,” *de facto* English words borrowed without or with only minor formal changes and/or semantic integration (Furiassi, Pulcini and Rodríguez González 2012, 6), from “false anglicisms,” also known as “pseudoanglicisms” (Onysko 2007, 52; Furiassi 2010, 19-20). As Furiassi states, “false anglicisms may be defined either as autonomous coinages which resemble English words but do not exist in English, or as unadapted borrowings from English which originated from English words but that are not encountered in English dictionaries, whether as entries or as sub-entries” (2003, 123).

Besides these lexical borrowings, the powerful impact of English has also prompted a noteworthy hybrid phenomenon whereby speakers coin neologisms by drawing on their knowledge of English but using native lexical material. Words undergoing partial substitutions are known as “hybrid loans” or “loanblends” (Haugen 1950), which are characterised by the merger and re-combination of morphological material retrieved from both the source and the recipient language.

Such a cross-linguistic formation is used humorously in Spanish *-ing* forms (e.g., *puenting*, *edredoning*, *balconing*, etc.) or in colloquial words such as *porfaplease* or its variant *porfapflís*, a tautological compound in which the reduplication of English and Spanish lexemes is used for emphatic purposes.¹ Even more significant for the present article is the appropriation of loanblends—to use Haugen’s (1950) terminology—by young fans as a means of encapsulating their identity. I will discuss all of these idiosyncratic coinages in the following pages.

¹ See Rodríguez (2013) for an overview of the different types of loanblends in Spanish.

2. ANGLICISMS IN MUSIC FANDOM TERMINOLOGY

2.1. Objectives and methodology

The aim of this article is twofold: on the one hand, I will attempt to account for the “universe” of music fans as depicted in the anglicised lexis of teen magazines, with particular reference to the monthly Spanish magazine *Top Music & Cine*. In order to do so, I will place the phenomenon of music fans in a broader context by briefly characterising the use of anglicisms in the present-day Spanish music panorama (§2.3). I will subsequently analyse linguistic aspects of self-referential anglicisms and hybrid loans used as the group nicknames of followers of a particular artist or group (§3). Taking into account the extensive variety of morphological patterns employed in the coinage of these fan base nicknames, I will formally describe each of the word-formation processes at work—namely, suffixation, compounding and other minor processes—while pointing out major trends in anglicisms and hybrid forms in Spanish. On the other hand, I will refer to the functions of anglicisms by drawing on Rodríguez González’s terminology (1996) in section 3.2. This will help me to examine the anglicisms selected from both a linguistic and an extralinguistic perspective, which will hopefully create a more comprehensive view of the use of anglicisms in the vocabulary of pop music fans.

2.2. Database

The primary database analysed consisted of issues 168–175 of the monthly teen magazine *Top Music & Cine* (2014–2015). This relatively low number of issues is due to the extreme novelty of the terms themselves; their use in the Spanish printed medium cannot be traced further back. Their novelty is such that this lexis has not yet made its way into any established corpora of modern Spanish or general dictionaries—e.g., the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (2014; henceforth *DRAE*) or María Moliner’s *Diccionario de uso del español* (2013)—unlike other anglicisms described in the previous literature. That is why I have also complemented this textual material with online sources whenever possible.

I decided to concentrate on *Top Music & Cine* because of its distinctiveness: even though the specific anglicisms to be analysed also occurred in other magazines, a greater significant frequency of use was detected in the section from *Top Music & Cine* entitled “Twitterías.” In this section young, adolescents, eager to make new friends, introduce themselves, announce their interests and give their social media accounts for the magazine’s readers to contact them. This is an interesting consideration to keep in mind when addressing the motivations behind the use and functions of these anglicisms. Consequently, after having noticed that most of the self-descriptive fan base terming was used on the Internet, particularly on the social media website Twitter, I turned to the web as corpus and traced their use on the Internet by making use of the online concordancer *Webcorp* (1999–2016). The search options of this online resource enabled me to confirm my hypotheses about whether some terms were really anglicisms or false anglicisms.

2.3. Anglicisms and music: sociocultural and linguistic characterisation

In the case of Spain, a multilingual country where, according to the European Commission's Eurobarometer survey of 2012, 54% of the respondents consider themselves unable to speak any foreign language, the role of English may not appear to be as paramount as in other geographical areas. Nevertheless, this figure is misleading as regards the presence of English in Spain, which is widely attested by the following aspects: (1) its preeminent position as the most demanded foreign language studied in educational settings, having replaced French (Lorenzo 1996, 17; Luján-García 2012, 3); (2) its role in the country's linguistic landscape, the manifest linguistic actualisation (for instance, via shop names) of the underlying sociocultural realities in multilingual contexts (Luján-García 2013); and (3) its long-standing presence through the ample number of anglicisms existing in the Spanish language—see Pratt (1980), Gómez Torrego (1995), Rodríguez González and Lillo Buades (1997), Gómez Capuz (2000; 2004; 2005) and Rodríguez Medina (2000).²

Most anglicisms enter the language through the written medium and are mostly coined in technical and specialised fields. However, as suggested by Rodríguez González (2012), another important societal dimension in which anglicisms abound is in leisure activities—for instance, sports. Along these lines, popular culture in general has also welcomed a large amount of terms—mostly coming from American English—as a result of the pre-eminence of US cultural productions in the cinema, television and music industries.

In the globalised field of music, where lyrics and song titles are preserved in their original language, unlike films, the longstanding influence of English is crystallised in the sheer number of anglicisms in Spanish. These can be broadly categorised according to the new extra-linguistic realities introduced, such as music styles—e.g., *hip-hop*, *pop*, *rock*, *rap* or *punk*—and commercial or promotional products—e.g., *CDs*, *albums*, *videoclips*, *covers* or *singles*—to name but a few.³

All of these borrowings have been integrated to varying degrees into the language: some of them, like *álbum* or *roquero*, were adapted and fully integrated into the Spanish linguistic system, as attested by the *DRAE*, whereas others have been only recently borrowed, thus presenting a more foreign flavour. Within the latter class, there are new sub-types of music style—e.g., *Asian pop* or *dancehall*—nuanced musical terms, such as *tracklist* or *playlist* [“a list of songs to be played on a portable media player”] and *set list* [“a list of the songs that a band or singer intends to perform at a concert”] or the very recurrent compounds in my corpus *boyband* or *girlband*: “a pop group entirely composed of either male or female young singers, whose music and clothes style attempts to appeal to a young audience.”⁴ These two recently adopted compound anglicisms, *boyband* and *girlband*, show graphic variation, being written either as solid compounds or as two

² Rodríguez González's *Gran diccionario de anglicismos* (forthcoming) documents over 3200 entries.

³ For a study of anglicisms in music see, for instance, Olivares Baños (2009).

⁴ All the working definitions provided are of my own devising unless otherwise stated.

separate words. Occasionally, because of the “newness” of this lexis in Spanish, they are not even inflected to form their plural forms but use zero morphemes. These uninflected lexemes, in conjunction with plural determiners, sometimes occur in formal written media as the following example shows:

Kevin Richardson y Backstreet Boys. Las “boy band” son un negocio muy complejo. Muchas presión [*sic*], muchas fans y muchos conciertos para que un grupo de adolescentes los puedan asumir y actuar en consecuencia. A los Backstreet Boys les acabó pasando factura (*El Mundo.es* 2015).

Given the large amount of anglicisms in the field, for the purposes of this article, I will mainly concentrate on anglicisms employed in teen magazines. This choice is motivated for the following reasons: on the one hand, young people are at the forefront of linguistic innovation because of the inherently playful and ever-changing nature of their speech. Specifically, Eckert insightfully described adolescents as “the linguistic movers and shakers” in Western societies (1997, 52).

As pointed out by Rodríguez González and Stenström, if in the past young people attempted to imitate the manners and ways of adults, from 1960s onwards, “the age of youth revolution,” “adults of all ages, both men and women, have been trying to adopt a young appearance and lifestyle, which includes the use of language” (2011, 236). This is definitely confirmed in the corpus of teen magazines analysed, since, even though they address a teenager readership, many sections are written by adults who attempt to emulate the language of young people.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the language of youth epitomises relevant characteristics common also to slang, namely playfulness and group identification. Eble (1996), among many others points out that slang serves to identify speakers as members of a particular group—e.g., punks, sports players, etc.⁵ This same function of slang language as an in-group marker can be tentatively applied to adolescents’ use of anglicisms, an issue already discussed by other authors, like Caballero Fernández-Rufete (1994), Drange (2009), González-Cruz, Rodríguez Medina and Déniz Santana (2009) or Luján García (2013). Anglicisms keep the “too old” outside the youngster’s circles and conversations, as neatly demonstrated by the following sentence extracted from my corpus: “Las fans quizás me veis muy cool, decís que tengo mucho flow y mucho suag [*sic*] en el escenario, bailando . . . pero yo no me veo.” (*TopMusic & Cine* 172, 21). All in all, the idiosyncrasies of the language of youth make their speech somewhat slangy from a sociological perspective, even when no slang terms *per se* are being used. This is particularly noticeable in the coinage of fan base names, such as *belieber* used for “an avid fan of Justin Bieber” or *katycat* for “an avid fan of Katy Perry,” as I will discuss later on.

⁵ See also Stenström, Andersen and Hasund (2002), Androutsopoulos and Georgakopoulos (2003), Stenström and Jørgensen (2009) and Wiese (2009).

Finally, the widespread use of the Internet and social media has globalised the music market to such a degree that many Spanish boy/girl bands and young singers have adopted English or English-looking words as their names, e.g., Sweet California, Aurnyn, Clover or Gemeliers. Their designations are an important part of their image projected on a potentially international scale, which is why, as López Rúa also suggests in relation to alternative musicians, “in many cases the names are purposely devised to catch the audience’s attention by appealing to the senses; in other words, they try to strike the eye and the ear by resorting to all types of linguistic deviation: typographical, phonological and morphological” (2012, 24).

Groups of enthusiastic fans have even come up with self-referential terms or nicknames either morphologically related to the group name itself, like One Direction > *directioner*—thereby facilitating their identification to a certain extent—or completely dissimilar: Lady Gaga > *little monster*). Creating nicknames for groups of fans is not a recent practice whatsoever. For instance, for many years football fans in the UK have identified themselves by names like *Gooners* [“Arsenal fans”] or the *Toon Army* [“Newcastle United fans”]. In the field of music, this tradition can possibly be traced back to 1971 (see Budnick and Baron 2012). It began with a simple note inside the back cover of the album *Grateful Dead*, in which fans were addressed as “Dead Heads.” Nonetheless, it seems that there has recently been a proliferation of fan nicknames—particularly denoting female fans of pop music—which have been borrowed from English as direct anglicisms, but they have also served as patterns for the creations of hybrid linguistic varieties, as this article will attempt to show.

Nicknames of fan groups are part of a larger societal phenomenon known as fandom, “a fan universe.” According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*), the word *fandom* originated in the US meaning “the world of enthusiasts for some amusement or for some artist; also in extended use” (s.v.). Interestingly enough, the first written record in which this word occurred—an entry from *Publishers’ Weekly* June 30, 1928—shows its usage in the field of sports: “Ty Cobb, the idol of baseball fandom” (*OED* s.v. “fandom”). This evidences the close association between sports and music *aficionados*, as in both spheres strong bonds arise out of common interests. The fandom or fan kingdom phenomenon, which is nowadays usually associated with young people, is not new in Spanish either, as Puig demonstrates (2002, 98) in his study in the field of pop music comprising the years 1976–2000. Even so, it is important to note that with the advent of the Internet and other means of communicating worldwide, fan kingdoms and their names are acquiring international dimensions rather than being geographically limited to a specific country.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

3.1. Morphophonological description of the anglicisms

All lexical borrowings related to the fan universe are direct anglicisms: at the graphemic level, they have remained unaltered, even though they may present consonant clusters

which are incompatible with the Spanish phonological and graphic system, notably <cs> in final position, as in *lovatics*, or the geminate consonant <tt> in the French-sounding word *vampettes*. Nonetheless, one of the most characteristic and recurrent morphemes that facilitates their identification as English words is the suffix *-er*, as in *directioner* or *beaster*, which is indeed compatible with the Spanish distribution of consonants in final position. This makes these words formally permissible, as there are no phonotactic constraints. Because they have recently permeated the Spanish language of youth through the written medium, these words are still in their earliest stages in which anglicisms usually preserve their spelling totally or partially.

From a phonological viewpoint, even though most of them are almost entirely restricted to the written language, fan base names such as *beliebers* have roughly preserved their initial pronunciation to a greater or lesser extent: in Spanish there are no long vowels, such as /i:/ in *beaster* or *belieber*, and graphemes characteristically match with phonemes, but the adolescents who use these anglicisms are familiar with the names of their favourite singers and their original pronunciation. This is why it is very unlikely that these words undergo any significant graphemic alteration reflecting their phonological make-up either in the short or in the long term.

In addition, the preponderance of American English powerfully influences pronunciation too. For instance, the unstressed syllable *er* could be pronounced /ə/, following British English, and so being adapted in Spanish as an <a>, as in *corner* > *cona*, attested in Canary Islands Spanish: “si había sido o no *cona*,” “tiró un *cona*” (González Cruz 1995, 554; quoted in Rodríguez González, forthcoming). Still, among Spanish learners of English, the sequence vowel + /r/ in the suffix *-er* is, most of the times, realised as an r-coloured vowel as in American English. This significantly reduces any chance of *-er* being spelt otherwise.

I will now proceed to provide an overview of the main lexicogenetic mechanisms used, which I have attempted to systematise in the following sections. As suggested above, the most interesting linguistic aspect to consider in fan base nicknames is morphology, as many of these nouns denoting fans have been subject to word-forming processes.

3.1.1. Suffixation

3.1.1.1. The agent suffix *-er* and its variant *-or*

According to Plag, “*-er* should be described as rather underspecified, simply meaning something like ‘person or thing having to do with X’” (2003, 89) because there is a plethora of semantic possibilities concerning this suffix: it is used to indicate place of origin or residence—e.g., *Londoner*, *New Yorker* or *New Englander*—performers of actions—e.g., *singer*—or instrument nouns—e.g., *mixer* or *toaster*—to list just a few of its uses.

As pointed out by Rodríguez González (2002, 141), “*-er* anglicisms” in Spanish are usually deverbal and refer to either a human performer—e.g., *mánager*, *latin lover* and

líder—or an inanimate object, *thriller* and *escáner*. Spanish is particularly receptive to this English suffix when denoting agency since the recipient language has a cognate suffix, *-ero*. The use of *-ero*, as opposed to the English (and original) variant *-er* in Spanish/English doublets such as *rocker/rockero*, *raper/rapero*, *surfer/surfero* or *windsurfer/windsurfero* evidences morphological integration of *-er* in Spanish (see Rodríguez González forthcoming).

In the case of fan names, the suffix *-er* performs a unique function and differs considerably from the aforementioned *-er* doublets in several aspects. (1) Prototypically, *-er* functions productively attached to common nouns; despite this use in more traditional word formations containing *-er*, fan nickname anglicisms may have proper names as lexical roots. (2) From a semantic viewpoint, this suffix conveys the meaning of “avid fan” in anglicisms such as *belieber*, *directioner*, *mixer* or *beaster*, which at the same time proves the wide semantic flexibility of the morpheme; in other words, it has adopted a new meaning within the microcosm of music bands and singers. (3) *-er* names for musician fan bases are not so well established as the *rocker/roquero* paradigm. The latter model mainly originated in sports and music terminology, and its continuous use facilitated its progressive integration into Spanish both in formal and informal registers. In contrast, novel *-er* nicknames are “underway” and continue to enlarge the lexical repertoire of the fandom universe.

Other *-er* examples—besides those recorded in the corpus of teen magazines used for this study—which confirm the widespread use of this suffix by young people, are *gouldiggers* [“Ellie Goulding fans”], *jepseners* [“Carly Rae Jepsen fans”], *rushers* [“Big Time Rush fans”] or *smilers* [“Miley Cyrus fans”], among others. This wide spectrum of *-er* fan base nicknames makes a provisional systematic categorisation possible. The simplest process consists of attaching the suffix in question to one of the words making up the singer/group’s name without any root modification as in *jepseners* < (Carly Rae) Jepsen, *rushers* < Big Time or *mixers* < Little Mix.

However, the coinage of fan base nicknames may go beyond morphological boundaries, and so fans may have nicknames playing with existing phonologically similar words as in *gouldiggers* (< Ellie Goulding) / *gold diggers*, *beliebers* (< Justin Bieber) / *believers* or others which, apparently, are not related to the singer/group’s name but rather have a more elusive connection. These clever fan nicknames require greater knowledge on the fan’s side in order to understand their etymological origin, as in *smilers* [“Miley Cyrus fans”].

Not only is the denominal suffix *-er* very common in fan base anglicisms, but it has also become extremely productive in present-day Spanish spoken by young people. In fact, its pervasive use in English-derived words has led Spaniards to create analogous forms with native Spanish material: *abrahamer* (< Abraham Mateo) or *casanover*—derived from Casanova although the root has undergone a process of final vowel apocope—are just some instances of this phenomenon. Thus, occasionally, Spanish coiners need to draw on lexical material in their own language since proper names simply lack an

English correspondence, as shown by *abrahamer* < Abraham Mateo. However, nonce-formations such as *gemelier* evidence a notably different word-formation process, resulting from the fusion of an existing Spanish common name, which already has a human referent—*gemelo* [“twin”]—and the English suffix *-er*. This latter type is akin to hybrid formations or loanblends present in general Spanish. However, the case of *-er* fan base hybrid nouns is strikingly distinctive because of its purely native origin, that is, it is not based on an existing anglicism of the *rocker-rocker* type.

Interestingly enough, the variant *-(t)or* is also present in the corpus of derived anglicisms as in *arianators* [“Ariana Grande fans”], but its preference over other suffixes does not seem to be grounded in derivational morphology. The root ends neither in <s> or <t>—unlike the Latinate bases *conductor* or *oscillator*—but rather the consonant <t> is inserted intervocalically. This may be due to euphony or even playfulness because of their phonological resemblance to other words, like *terminator*. But this is a hypothesis that should be confirmed in future works with larger data samples.

The recurrent use of this suffix is further exemplified by *selenator* (< Selena Gómez) and *sheeranator* (< Ed Sheeran), both appearing as anglicisms in Spanish too. *Selenator* has even been found at the “Listas” section of the widely-read Spanish newspaper *20 Minutos*, one of whose headings reads “13 señales de que eres una SELENATOR” (*20 Minutos.es* 2013). Concerning the second example, its integrated use in Spanish has also been attested: “Contar con millones de seguidoras, cada una en un punto del planeta, hace incrementar la posibilidad de recibir regalos y obsequios por parte de las **Directioners** y las **Sheeranators**” (*MeltyFan* 2015; bold type and capital letters in the original).

As can be inferred, the sources for these derivative words partially share the same ending: the vowel <a>, although an intervocalic <n> is maintained in *sheeranator*. This implies certain regularity and establishes another lexicogenetic pattern which can be exploited to create neologisms.⁶ Nonetheless, because of the intrinsically peculiar morphological ending of this type of nicknames, *-tor* will not probably become as productive as the derivational morpheme *-er*, which is more easily attached to base forms.

Having considered all these examples, it could be argued that there is also a visible trend concerning the relative position of the source words employed in these nicknames: when multi-word names (frequently, name + surname combinations) are examined, the second element prevails over the first one in the creation of nicknames. Taylor Swift > *swiftie/swifter*, Demi Lovato > *lovatic* or One Direction > *directioner* are just some examples of what it is now a noticeable tendency.

⁶ Rodríguez González (forthcoming) compiles several humorous nonce-formations containing *-ator*. Among them, *acojonator* (< acojonante + or) and the variant *-eitor*, as in *termineitor* (a result of the phonological spelling of *terminator*).

3.1.1.2. The French suffix *-ette*

The French-origin of this suffix seems to imply that it is used to form feminine nouns in such a case as *vampettes* [“The Vamps fans”]. However, the lack of a masculine form, unlike gender-marked fan names such as *juggalos/juggalettes* [“male/female fans of Insane Clown Posse”]—the terms coming from the band’s song *The Juggla*—enables me to conclude that it is indistinctively used for both women and men as a neutral term: “La banda británica ha querido tener con todos sus vampettes un detalle súper bonito con esta edición navideña que incluye el álbum original y 8 canciones de Navidad.” (*TopMusic & Cine* 172, 6).

This follows the modern tendency of using gender-neutral words even though the suffix originally denoted female gender, as in *suffragette*. The suffix *-ette* is not very productive in English, which is why more recent words making use of it, like *punkette*, tend to connote a humorous tone, which is a characteristic feature of the language of youth as well.

3.1.1.3. The suffix *-ie*

As regards *-ie* (and its variant *-y*), prototypically, it creates diminutive nouns or adjectives and hypocoristic names: *Bessy* (< Elizabeth) or *Annie* (< Anne). In addition, according to the *OED*, it is appended to surnames to form familiar names, like *Kitey* (< Mr. /Mrs. Kite) or *Coxy* (< Mr. / Mrs. Cox). This second sense of the suffix can be aptly applied to nicknames for fans such as *Swiftie* (< Taylor Swift), which convey a feeling of family affection among fans and singers.

Apart from the aforementioned anglicism, there is another occurrence of this type in the corpus, namely *sweeties* from the Spanish girl band called Sweet California. Fans of this band have appropriated an anglicism and have semantically endowed it with a more restricted meaning, “followers of Sweet California,” as in “Los fans de Sweet California, los *sweeties*, son en su mayoría chicas, pero cada vez tienen más seguidores masculinos” (*Semana.es* 2014).

3.1.2. Compounds

In comparison to derivation, compounding represents a less frequent word-formation mechanism employed in the corpus of anglicisms. Some compounds include the following: *katycat*—denoting “a fan of Katy Perry,” after her tour *Hello Katy* (2009)—, the English-looking term *XusoLover* (*TopMusic & Cine* 172, 31)—which was in fact coined by the Spanish singer Xuso Jones for it to be used mainly on Twitter—and the anglicism *redbead* (*TopMusic & Cine* 172: 10): a word created after the American boyband Midnight Red.

Regarding the latter, because of the semantics of *-bead*—which may refer to X enthusiasts, as in *webbead*—it has been productively used in the coinage of other fan nicknames such as *blockbeads* [“New Kids on the Block fans”] or *jonasbeads* [“Jonas

Brothers fans”]. As already mentioned, the fan name precursor of this trend can be traced back to 1971, when Grateful Dead fans started to be called *Dead Heads*.

Head, as a base of compounds, was widely used in American drug slang signifying “drug-user” (e.g., in *basehead* or *cubehead*) and, in general slang, it still functions as a negatively loaded suffix meaning “a foolish person,” in *airhead*, *chucklehead*, *dickhead* or *meathead*.⁷ This meaning is closer to the original sense of *Dead Head* in 1971, a word which subsequently underwent a process of amelioration. However, the overall specificity of this base, mostly restricted to the field of drugs, makes this type of compounds infrequent in Spanish.⁸

3.1.3. Other word-formation mechanisms

Other word-formation processes at work include, for instance, the extension of the singer Becky G’s short name (i.e., *B*), in *beasters* [“Becky G fans”] as in “También le encanta estar conectada con sus fans, los “beasters,” a través de las redes sociales, en las que tiene ¡casi nueve millones de seguidores!” (*TopMusic & Cine* 173: 77; see also *ABC News* 2012). This nickname plays with the word *beast* in allusion to her “rebellious” nature, as the singer herself explains. Another interesting case is the combination of an initialism and a clipped form in *5sosFam*, which stands for “5 Seconds of Summer [i.e., the band name] family.” The inclusion of the word *family* in this anglicism is indeed very revealing in understanding the true sense of belonging to a fan community. With similar collectivist purposes, other singers have employed such terms as *navy* as in “Y como él no pierde la oportunidad de contarle todo en twitter, ha subido esta foto con la diva. ¡Tenemos un nuevo miembro en la Rihanna Navy!” (*El Mundo.es* 2013).

As a final comment in this section, it is worth mentioning that there are a few fan groups which use simple or mono-morphemic words to refer to themselves, generally coined after the name of an emblematic album or song. This is the case of the American band Green Day, whose followers are called *idiots* after the album *American Idiot*. Because of the negative semantic load of the term, followers tend to use it indicating its meaning in a paraphrase. It rarely occurs on its own. These two tendencies are illustrated in the following examples retrieved from online forums: “Soy idiot ejeje pero no hace mucho, desde el año pasado; pero los conocia desde hace unos 2 años por Boulevard of Broken Dreams” (*Slim Shady Bitch* 2014) and “Soy Idiot [Fan de Green Day] [...] sin Green Day el Punk ahora estaría olvidado para las nuevas generaciones” (*Mind Attacks* 2011).

3.2. Functions of these anglicisms

The significant number of English-looking hybrid formations in Spanish replicating English morphological patterns, like the addition of the suffix *-er*, rather than using

⁷ See Thorne (2007) for a complete compilation of *head* compounds in English slang.

⁸ *Acid head* and *head shop* are the only anglicisms of this type recorded in Rodríguez González (forthcoming).

the native equivalent (*-ero*) suggests that young people coin their nicknames out of cultural snobbery in order to be trendy or fashionable. Still, the motivations behind these coinages go far beyond this extralinguistic reason.

The functions of the aforementioned anglicisms and hybrid formations can be better explained by referring to the “interpersonal” or “expressive function” and to the “textual function,” in Halliday’s terms (1970; 1994).⁹ Concerning the former, the use of these nicknames helps to create bonds and reinforce solidarity, as already mentioned in connection with sports fans. However, fan phenomena are acquiring unprecedented dimensions thanks to the role of social media—Twitter, Facebook—and video-sharing websites which facilitate the dissemination of music as well as communicative exchanges among fans from all over the world.

Within this global context, the already discussed fandom is not trivial in the least. Fan base monikers are created to identify an in-group community of young people who feel strong devotion to certain singers and organise fan events in which followers worldwide come together to spend a few days with their idols, in, for instance, *MyCamps* (used as a single word), or in meetings with their favourite singers after concerts, known as *Meet&Greets* (also written as a single lexical unit).

Not only do these terms form strong communities, but they also create layers of commitment. While all fans are characterised in the same way from an outsider perspective, contemporary fandom has devised an intricate hierarchical system whereby true fans need to rank first as far as their knowledge of the artist/s is concerned. In other words, while ordinary fans will simply be familiar with some songs, nicknames for fan groups represent the superlative manifestation of commitment (see also Bermingham 2014). In this respect, the following comments retrieved from a blog which discusses the differences between *swiftie*, *swifter* (after the singer Taylor Swift) and *fan* are illuminating:

SWIFTIE: Ser swiftie implica que realmente te guste ella, que te guste su música, que escuches una canción suya como si fuera la primera vez (aunque la tengas ya súper machacada), que la sientas y que la vivas, que conozcas sus historias y sus inspiraciones, que la defiendas y que la apoyes por encima de pocas cosas en el mundo [...]

FAN: Ha escuchado “IKYWT” [I Knew You Were Trouble], “WANEGBT” [We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together], “22” y a lo mejor hasta “Everything Has Changed” y sabe que Taylor tiene cuatro álbumes en el mercado, aunque solo ha oído el último.

SWIFTER: ADOOOOOOOORA A TAYLOR. Siempre lo ha hecho, solo que ahora que “se ha vuelto más pop” la escucha más. (*El rincón de Taylor* 2014)

⁹ For a detailed analysis and application of these tenets to the study of anglicisms, see Rodríguez González (1996).

The author's post details her own views on the differences between *fans* and the apparently similar nicknames *swiftie* and *swifter*. While *swiftie* is an anglicism, *swifter* is here employed as a false anglicism. *Swifter*, meaning "fan of Taylor Swift," is *prima facie* exclusively used on Spanish websites because that specific meaning is only activated within an exclusively Spanish-speaking community. If *swifter* were used in isolation, there would be a semantic clash with the homophonous comparative form of the adjective *swift*, which would be, in turn, a source of misunderstandings.

Furthermore, the fact that the word *fan* is an abbreviated form of *fanatic*, which itself implies an obsessional degree of interest in a singer, seems to be completely neglected. This is probably due to the fact that *fan* is a well-established anglicism which has undergone a diachronic process of amelioration, thereby adopting more neutral connotations than *fanático*, "preocupado o entusiasmado ciegamente por algo" (*DRAE*, s.v.).

This corroborates Rodríguez González's statement that "connotations and stylistic markings of borrowings at times lead to specialised meanings, giving rise to a distribution of usages between the native and the foreign term" (1996, 112). In this particular case, the high degree of integration of *fan* into Spanish may suggest that it functions as a native word despite having originally been borrowed from English.

Regarding their function in a text as a whole, there is a clear tendency towards "simplification" (Rodríguez González 1996, 116), as anglicisms and hybrid formations are short terms that would require longer paraphrases in Spanish in order to encapsulate their specific nuances. This tendency towards economy of the language is exploited to its fullest on such social media as Twitter, which limits Tweet length to 140 characters and, thus, users have to describe themselves and their feelings in an economical way.

On the other hand, however, the adult writers of teen magazines—who are indeed outsiders—lack the terminological precision that these fervent fans share as background knowledge; and so, non-specialist writers or speakers use particular fan nicknames indistinctly. Even more importantly for stylistic purposes, writers of teen magazines attempt to achieve variation of expression, whereby fan names and phrases of the type *fan of X* are set at the same semantic level. To put it differently, they are used indistinctly in cases such as the following:

Con este grito de guerra Abraham dejaba su tour por las teles españolas para aterrizar en este país donde, viendo los 2000 retuits y 3000 favoritos de su comentario, tiene ya miles de abrahamers [...] En otros lugares en los que aún no ha podido estar, como Panamá, ya tiene clubes de fans reclamando un concierto. (*TopMusic & Cine* 174, 16)

Este año, los sueños de todas las directioners van en una única dirección, ¡y nunca mejor dicho! España no parece entrar, al menos de momento, en la ruta del "OTRA Tour," así que a los fans de la boy band no nos queda otra que soñar. (*TopMusic & Cine* 174, 18)

Having considered all of this, I can confidently uphold that fan nicknames do not experience graphemic variations or changes in terms of register when imported from English to Spanish—as they tend to be used in informal specialised contexts—although there is in fact a great variation as regards their usage. This is an inevitable outcome of the subtle nuances that fans attempt to capture in these short, yet powerful, lexical units.

4. FINAL REMARKS

Within the framework of the global phenomenon of fandom, this study has delved into a part of the language of youth which is generally unknown to the public at large, namely the use of anglicisms and coinage of hybrid formations denoting fan nicknames. As I have attempted to show, a great number of word-forming processes are at work in the creation of what could be considered self-presenters. Derivation is arguably the most frequently employed mechanism nowadays, although the constant coinage of this type of lexis may alter the state of affairs in the future.

Concerning derivation, I have drawn particular attention to the suffix *-er*, which represents an epitome of the lexical creativity developed by foreign—in this case, Spanish—speakers once they have internalised the grammatical system of such an influential language as English. This suffix, despite being typically English, has spread across languages to such an extent that it is used independently of its originally native lexical material. With increasing significance it has become semantically specialised to function as a productive morpheme in nonce-words coined out of admired groups'/singers' names, thereby creating a whole new onomastic “microsystem” within music fandom.

After having formally examined these terms, I have addressed their textual and expressive functions, which may provide insights into the sociolinguistic dimensions of the universe of young music fans. Adolescents aim to create strong communities which share common interests while distinguishing themselves from other peers who are not at the same level of commitment on the fan scale.

Strictly considering their low frequency of use and restricted means of dissemination—mostly teen magazines and social media—it could be argued that they are foreignisms rather than adopted anglicisms. However, this very limited approach to borrowings does not account for the important expressive force with which these nicknames are endowed, which explains their growing popularity.

Besides, even though some authors would argue that these types of nicknames—particularly hybrid forms—are mere nonce-formations, “sometimes [nonce-words] are seen as fully representative of the system of word-formation defining ‘possible words’.” (Štekauer and Lieber 2006, 363). This especially applies to the morpheme *-er*, now attached to proper names rather than simply to common nouns.

Young people are at the “vanguard” of lexical innovation, which partially explains why the most common derivational suffix, *-er*, has pervaded other realms of the Spanish linguistic scenario, such as television series. For instance, the word *Cayetaner* (after the

actress Cayetana Guillén Cuervo, who plays a role in the television series *El ministerio del tiempo*) has been recently traced on social media (see *El Diario.es* 2015). All in all, because of the aforementioned linguistic and extralinguistic reasons, analogous hybrid forms are forever likely to continue to make their way either into general language or into other specialised fields which have fan bases.

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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF SOURCES USED IN THE STUDY (DATABASE)

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APPENDIX 2: LIST OF FAN NICKNAMES ATTESTED IN THE DATABASE

- ABRAHAMER.- *n.* A fanatic of the Spanish pop singer Abraham Mateo.
- ARIANATOR.- *n.* An avid fan of the American singer and songwriter Ariana Grande.
- AURYNER.- *n.* An enthusiast of the Spanish boy band Aury.
- BEASTER.- *n.* An enthusiastic fan of the American singer Becky G.
- BELIEBER.- *n.* A devotee of the Canadian singer and songwriter Justin Bieber.
- CASANOVER.- *n.* A keen follower of the Spanish boy band Casanova.
- CAYETANER.- *n.* A follower of the actress Cayetana Guillén Cuervo, who plays a role in the Spanish television series *El ministerio del tiempo*.
- DIRECTIONER.- *n.* A devoted fan of the English-Irish pop boy band One Direction.
- KATYCAT.- *n.* An admirer of the American singer Katy Perry.
- LITTLE MONSTER.- *n.* A fan of the American singer and songwriter Lady Gaga.
- LOVATIC.- *n.* A fanatic of the American singer and actress Demi Lovato.
- MIXER.- *n.* A committed follower of the British girl group Little mix.
- REDHEAD.- *n.* An enthusiastic follower of the American boy band Midnight Red.
- SELENATOR.- *n.* An avid fan of the American singer and actress Selena Gómez.
- SHEERANATOR.- *n.* An enthusiastic fan of the English singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran.
- SWEETIE.- *n.* An enthusiast of the Spanish girl band Sweet California.
- SWIFTIE (also SWIFTER and SWIFTIER).- *n.* A fervent fan of the American singer-songwriter Taylor Swift.
- VAMPETTE.- *n.* Nickname for the fan base of the British pop band The Vamps.
- XUSOLOVER.- *n.* An admirer of the Spanish singer Xuso Jones.
- 5SOS FAMILY (also 5SOSFAMILY or 5SOSFAM).- *n.* Name for the fan base of 5 Seconds of Summer, an Australian pop punk/rock boy band.

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