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Use of English loanwords containing V-ING type forms in French and Italian

Abstract: Words starting with a verb root and ending with the *-ing* morpheme feature prominently among words borrowed from English in many Indo-European languages. Using the multilingual alignments of the Europarl corpus[1], we studied the use of terms and expressions containing a word beginning with a verb base and ending with the *-ing* morpheme (e.g. *benchmarking*, *gender mainstreaming*) in French and Italian, which seemed to exhibit a lesser degree of resistance than French for many such forms (*roaming*, *doping*, *overbooking*, *trading*), while others are used as translation equivalents for other English words (e.g. *mobbing* for *harassment*).We also compared usage with that observed in the Leipzig Web corpora, which confirmed a higher frequency of use for some *-ing* loanwords in Italian than in French, while no such difference was observed for other *-ing* nouns that are widely used in both languages (*marketing*, *dumping*, *e-learning*).

Keywords: *borrowing*; *corpus*; *Europarl*; *-ING morpheme*; *neology*; *Romance languages*

1. Introduction

Many new terms created by borrowing English words in Romance languages contain a word beginning with a verb base and ending with the *-ing* morpheme. Even though very few research articles have so far focused exclusively on *-ing* loanwords, the morpheme is always listed among the most productive sources of borrowing from English in French and Italian. In their recent report on the *Néoveille* project, Cartier et al.[2] identified 22,475 new word forms (types) in a 92-million-word corpus of contemporary journalistic French (2015-2017). Among borrowings (which represented 18,19% of all tokens) there were no fewer than 303 lexical items ending in *-ing*, accounting for 21,3% of all borrowings in the corpus. The authors note that the *-ing* morpheme has gradually made its way into the French language for over a century, originally through metonymic transformations in which places (parking, camping, dancing) were named after an English word referring to a process. They also remark that the competing suffix *-age* confines use of the *-ing* morpheme to specific sports (*running, beatboxing, snorkeling, cardiotraining*), trade-related vocabulary (*networking, packaging, branding, fact-checking, coworking, crowdfunding*) or 'socio-cultural' activities (*bashing, ghosting, pet-sitting*) which have no synthetic equivalents in French. Sports and Women's magazines are the two domains in which the authors record the highest number of new lexical items, a fact which is reflected by two examples mentioned in Gazzardi and Vásquez'[3] their taxonomic approach to the use of English in the Italian media, *linea per il grooming* ('grooming line') and *running* (in the question *Fai running?* used in the headline of an article describing trendy sports gear).

In her study on the influence of English on Italian in the field of economics, Musacchio[4] notes that use of such hybrid compounds as *agenzie di rating*, *società di outsourcing* or *trading di derivati* shows that in spite of the incorporation of such *-ing* borrowings into Italian, word formation mechanisms that are typical of Romance languages (such as use of a prepositional phrase) still prevail over the English head modification model based on word juxtaposition. Renner and Fernández-Domínguez[5] focus on false anglicisms in French, Spanish and Italian and record a high number of *-ing* word forms (*dribbling*, *footing*, *forcing*, *franchising*, *outing*), noting that they might alternately be classified as instances of affixation or direct borrowings of English forms which have acquired a new meaning in the receiving language.

Such loanwords very often stimulate the neological process, as new words using the lexical stock of the receiving language are coined. However, national institutions in countries such as France have tried to stem the tide of such borrowings by suggesting alternative words through commissions whose work is funded by the French Ministry of Culture (*Commission Générale de Terminologie et de Néologie,* henceforth CGTN). Widespread use of the coinages that result from the commissions' work may follow, in which case dictionaries will eventually reflect their adoption by the general public sometime after their implantation has started. For instance, Humbley[6] reports that only *brainstorming* was included in the 1986 version of the *Petit Robert* dictionary, while both *brainstorming* and *remue-méninges* (the term recommended by the CGTN) were included in the 2007 version of the same dictionary with cross-references to each other. Entries for the new words coined by the commission typically provide a definition as well as the foreign word they are supposed to replace. Here is the entry for the word *remue-méninges* taken from the *Vocabulaire de l'économie et des finances*[7] that was published in 2006 by the CGTN:[8]

> **remue-méninges,** n.m.
> ♦ *Définition :* Technique de groupe destinée à stimuler l'imagination des participants en vue de leur faire produire le maximum d'idées dans le minimum de temps. ♦ *Équivalent étranger:* brainstorming. Source: *Journal officiel* du 22 septembre 2000.

Many real (*listing*, *shopping*) and spurious English borrowings (*footing, surbooking*) coexist with the officially recommended terms, whose implantation has met with varying degrees of success. For instance, the French equivalents suggested for *opinion shopping* (chalandage de firmes d'audit) and *treaty shopping* (chalandage fiscal) in the Journal Officiel of 22/09/2000 respectively returned a little over 100 and 3,000 hits when queried on the Google search engine almost twenty years after they were first suggested by the CGTN.

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[4] Maria Teresa Musacchio, "The Influence of English on Italian. The Case of Translations of Economics Articles", *In and Out of English. For Better, for Worse* (2005), 71-96.

[5] Vincent Renner and Jesus Fernandez-Dominguez, "False Anglicization in the Romance Languages. A Contrastive Analysis of French, Spanish and Italian", in Cristiano Furiassi and Henrik Gottlieb, eds., *Pseudo-English : Studies on False Anglicisms in Europe* (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2015), 147.

[6] John Humbley, "Emprunts, vrais et faux, dans le *Petit Robert 2007*", In J. Pruvost, ed., *Les Journées des dictionnaires de Cergy : Dictionnaires et mots voyageurs. Les 40 ans du Petit Robert, de Paul Robert à Alain Rey*, (Herblay: Éditions des Silves), 221-238.

[7] *Vocabulaire de l'économie et des finances* (2006), http://fr.scribd.com/doc/120507304/Vocabulaire-de-l%E2%80%99economie-et-des-finances.

[8] *Cent termes français du vocabulaire technique recommandés par la CGTN* (2004, MCC, DGLFLF), www.dglflf.culture.gouv.fr/publications/vocabulaires/100termes.pdf.

The frequent use of the *-ing* morpheme in Romance language neology has been attributed to its nominalizing function[9]. It should however be noted that many uses of such borrowings in French are singular or truncated forms that are not considered as acceptable in standard English (*un jogging* for *a jogging suit*, *un parking* for *a parking lot, un passing* for *a passing shot*). Some English words have also taken on new meanings in French (dated Fr. *footing* for *jogging*), while some French words use verb bases that exist in English, as is the case for *forcing* and *pressing*, two terms from the field of sport which have now passed into general language and are very often used in conjunction with the verb *faire* (*faire le forcing/pressing*). Here is the etymology and history section devoted to the word *forcing* in the online edition of the *Trésor de la Langue Française*[10] (henceforth TLF):

> **forcing:** [**Étymol. et Hist.** 1916 boxe; 1953 au fig. « effort intensif ». Empr. à l'angl. *forcing,* subst. verbal du verbe *to force* se rattachant, par l'a. fr., au fr. *forcer**, employé dans le domaine des [sports] pour désigner une attitude d'attaque intensive.

The use of **forcing** in that sense does not exist in English, and the expressions *exert pressure* or *put pressure on* may be used to convey the same meaning, as in the following excerpts from the Europarl corpus (the corpus is available on the OPUS web site[11] and its makeup is described by Tiedemann).[12]

Must we constantly be forced to **exert such pressure** to guarantee the entry into force of a treaty and its institutional reforms?		Sommes-nous condamnés à constamment devoir **faire le forcing** pour garantir la mise en œuvre d'un traité et de ses réformes institutionnelles ?
Liability must include GMOs, particularly at a time when the United States is **putting pressure on** to try to get the moratorium on imports lifted in the context of the WTO negotiations.		La responsabilité doit inclure les OGM surtout au moment où les États-Unis **font le forcing** pour lever le moratoire sur les importations dans le cadre des négociations de l'OMC.

Table 1: Two examples of English translations for 'faire le forcing' in the Europarl corpus

The case of *pressing* is a bit different, since the word is used with a meaning that is somehow related to French usage in the English basketball term *full court pressing defense*, a defensive strategy in which one player harasses the ball handler in the backcourt while the rest of the team maintains a zone defense. The expression *pressing defense* can be traced back to the 1940s on the Google Books search engine, and was soon abbreviated to *full court press*, which can be traced back to the 1950s. The following excerpt from the TLF definition of *pressing* mentions two possible origins for the word, which could have been formed from the verb *press* or directly borrowed from English.

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[9] Michael D. Picone, *Anglicisms, Neologisms and Dynamic French* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1996).

[10] *Trésor de la langue française,* online edition, http://atilf.atilf.fr/

[11] *OPUS, the Open Parallel Corpus*, http://opus.lingfil.uu.se/

[12] Jörg Tiedemann, "News from OPUS – A Collection of Multilingual Parallel Corpora with Tools and Interfaces", In Nicolas Nicolov *et al.*, eds., *Recent Advances in Natural Language Processing V. Selected Papers from RANLP 2007* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2009), 237-248.

pressing: B. *Fam., SPORTS.* Pression persistante exercée par l'adversaire. […] *faire attaquer le porteur du ballon et* [...] *utiliser le « pressing » et l'agressivité au service de cette récupération du ballon* (J. MERCIER, *Footb.*, 1966, p.64). [...] 2 prob. formé sur l'angl. *to press* « exercer une pression sur, appuyer sur, presser » d'où « attaquer, assaillir, ne pas laisser de répit à » ou directement emp. à *pressing* dont l'empl. dans le domaine du sport n'est cependant att. qu'en 1976.

What the TLF editors mean here is that the English word *pressing* was not used as a noun (as it is in French) until 1976, since its use as an adjective in the expression *pressing defense* predates its use as a noun by about thirty years, so that the use of the noun *pressing* in French might be the result of a simple truncation of the type mentioned earlier for such words as *jogging*, *parking* or *passing*.

2. Objectives and Method

We tried to determine to what extent simultaneous interpreters in such institutions as the European Parliament contribute to the implantation of English *V-ing* terms or expressions in target languages through their literal or near-literal translation in Romance languages. Our aim was also to ascertain whether some Romance languages show a higher degree of resistance to the borrowing of English *V-ing* terms or expressions and to what extent the length of the expression has an impact on the degree of implantation. For that purpose, we used alignments available in the multilingual corpus Europarl (Tiedemann[13]), which includes all the reports of the debates of the European Parliament between 1996 and 2003 in 11 European languages. We queried the corpus for French and Italian words and phrases containing a word beginning with a verb/noun base and ending with the *-ing* morpheme (e.g. *benchmarking*, *gender mainstreaming*). We found that in both languages there is a tendency to borrow single word units (*benchmarking*), although implantation of such borrowings may not last more than a few years.

3. Study of a Few -ING Borrowings in French and Italian

3.1 *Benchmarking*

Since the borrowing *benchmarking* was one of the most frequently used in all three Romance languages under study, we analyzed its use over three parliamentary terms (1999-2004, 2004-2009 and 2009-2014) in the French and Italian versions of the minutes of the debates of the European parliament. The second column of Table 2 gives the actual number of tokens of the word as recorded in the Europarl corpus, which covers another period (1996-2003) that overlaps with the fist parliamentary term we studied. The exact size of each individual corpus is provided on the OPUS platform (66.8 million tokens for English, 66.3 million tokens for French and 59.2 million tokens for Italian) and the tables below consequently provide the number of results in the Europarl corpus (absolute frequency) followed by the per-million-word ratio (normalized frequency) between parentheses.

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[13] Ibid.

Language	1996-2003 (nb of hits)	1999-2004 (nb of debates)	2004-2009 (nb of debates)	2009-2014 (nb of debates)
English	279 (4,18)	92	63	23
French	170 (2,56)	48	11	2
Italian	228 (3,85)	82	18	1

Table 2: Compared use of benchmarking over three parliamentary terms in English, French and Italian

Benchmarking happens to be the foreign equivalent for a recommended French term (*référenciation*) that was included in a list of 100 terms published by the CGTN in 2004 (*Cent termes français du vocabulaire technique recommandés par la CGTN*); two other synonyms were also provided for that term (*étalonnage* and *parangonnage*). Table 3 shows frequencies for the use of *benchmarking* and its recommended French translation equivalents in the last two terms. The results for the parliamentary term that started in 2009 cannot be deemed statistically significant, but those that were obtained for the 2004-2009 period clearly show that one of the suggested synonyms (*étalonnage*) was widely used after the publication of the CGTN's list, while the term which heads the entry (*référenciation*) was used only once. As for the word *parangonnage*, its implantation was perhaps doomed from the start, since it is formed after a word which is itself quite rare, the French noun *parangon*, which migrated into English circa 1548 as *paragon*. A query for *parangonnage* on the Google search engine gave just over 16,000 hits in March 2020, and most of its occurrences seemed to be instances of use in its original sense in the field of printing.

	benchmarking (EN)	référenciation	étalonnage	parangonnage
2004-2009	63	1	22	0
2009-2014	23	0	2	0

Table 3: Compared use of benchmarking and its recommended French translation equivalents in the Debates of the European Parliament between 2004 and 2014

The following excerpts from the Europarl corpus show that Italian occasionally uses a one-word translation equivalent which is a cognate of the English word *parameters*:
- Perhaps that is what this was actually all about, hence the rejection of the **benchmarking** method.
- Peut-être que tel était le but réel, d'où le rejet de la méthode de **l'étalonnage**.
- Forse è proprio questo il punto, e si spiega così il rifiuto del metodo dei **parametri**.

Another excerpt from the same corpus shows use of a translation equivalent which is longer than the source language term, a phenomenon that is frequently observed when the base of the *-ing* form is a compound:
- The problem can be partially solved by **benchmarking**.
- Le problème peut être résolu en partie grâce à **l'étalonnage**.
- Il problema può essere parzialmente risolto adottando **parametri di riferimento**.

In many cases, the translation equivalents used for *benchmarking* in Italian (*parametri comparativi, metodi comparativi, parametri di riferimento, applicazione di parametri, definizione di criteri*) come in the form of a complex noun phrase in which one or more prepositional phrases are embedded.

3.2. *Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting*

The case of the expression *gender mainstreaming* is slightly different from that of *benchmarking* since the official recommendation for its French equivalent (*paritarisme*) was made public after most of the debates of our corpus had taken place, as part of the *Vocabulaire des sciences humaines* that was published in the *Journal officiel* of March 4, 2006:

> **paritarisme,** n.m.
> *Domaine:* Sciences humaines/Sciences sociales.
> *Définition :* Action en faveur de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes.
> *Équivalent étranger:* gender mainstreaming.

Evidence from more recent parliamentary debates shows that the term *paritarisme* seems to have been adopted, and the fall in the number of occurrences of *gender mainstreaming* in the French version of the debates (Table 4) might be correlated with the increase in the use of the recommended French equivalent.

Language	1996-2003 (nb of hits)	1999-2004 (nb of debates)	2004-2009 (nb of debates)	2009-2014 (nb of debates)
English	526 (7,87)	68	66	27
French	52 (0,78)	28	15	2
Italian	69 (1,17)	36	23	4

Table 4: Compared use of gender mainstreaming over three parliamentary terms in English, French, and Italian

The drop in the number of uses of the English expression seems to have occurred a bit faster in French than in Italian, a fact which is consistent with the higher rate of borrowing from English that is usually witnessed in Italian. In the Europarl corpus, the translation equivalents chosen for *gender mainstreaming* are usually quite long, a fact that bears witness to the difficulty that was originally posed by the source language term:

- Yet, closer inspection reveals that the practical implementation of **gender mainstreaming** in the EU's external policies is still weak.
- En y regardant de plus près, on remarque toutefois que l'application concrète du **principe de prise en considération systématique des questions d'égalité entre hommes et femmes** dans les politiques externes de l'UE reste faible.
- Eppure un attento esame mostra che l'attuazione pratica dell'**integrazione della dimensione di genere** nelle politiche esterne dell'Unione è ancora scarsa.

Another expression using the word *gender* as a modifier has created difficulties for translators: the term *gender budgeting*.

Language	1996-2003 (nb of hits)	1999-2004 (nb of debates)	2004-2009 (nb of debates)	2009-2014 (nb of debates)
English	35 (0,52)	9	18	6

French	20 (0,30)	6	4	0
Italian	26 (0,44)	6	11	2

Table 5: Compared use of gender budgeting over three parliamentary terms in English, French and Italian

The official recommendation for a French translation equivalent was published in the *Journal officiel* of March 29, 2003 and suggested the use of *établissement des budgets publics selon la perspective de genre*. This particularly elaborate expression seems not to have stuck in usage, since there were fewer than 200 hits for the expression in a Google search conducted in March 2020. Table 5 shows differing trends for the 2004-2009 term, as the use of the English borrowing slightly decreased in French in spite of a higher figure for English and almost doubled in Italian, thus confirming the tendency of the latter language for such borrowings as shown in Table 4.

The following excerpts from the Europarl corpus show that French generally uses translation equivalents for *gender budgeting* that roughly translate as "integration of a gender perspective in budgeting", whereas Italian either uses the original English expression or a shorter translation equivalent, *bilancio di genere*:

- A useful way of doing this is through **gender budgeting** […]
- Il peut s'avérer utile de se mettre à l'œuvre via **l'intégration de la dimension du genre dans les budgets nationaux** […]
- Un'utile metodologia è quella del **gender budgeting** […]
- Austria, incidentally, leads the way in this and will have a law in place as from 2009 – **gender budgeting** – […]
- L'Autriche, soit dit en passant, ouvre la voie en la matière et disposera d'une loi dès 2009 sur **l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans le processus budgétaire**, […]
- L'Austria, a tale proposito, dà l'esempio in questo contesto e dal 2009 entrerà in vigore una legge, sul **bilancio di genere […]**

Even though the relatively low number of occurrences of *gender budgeting* in French in the latest parliamentary terms may be due to an effort to avoid borrowing the English term, web usage does seem to suggest that its use is indeed less widespread in French than in Italian (over 2,000 Google hits for "le gender budgeting" as opposed to twice as many hits for "il gender budgeting"). While such lengthy French translations as *intégration de la dimension de genre dans le processus budgétaire* predictably return very few results on Google (30), shorter equivalents fare much better and actually show some degree of implantation in academic texts *(*23,000 results for *budgétisation sensible au genre*), although the translation equivalent *budgétisation sexospécifique* does not seem to be much used outside of Canada. As for the expression *bilancio di genere*, it definitely seems to have worked its way into the Italian language with 1,840,000 results.

3.3. *Naming and Shaming*

Coordinated compounds are quite frequent in English, and many of them (*drink and drive*, *shake and bake*) involve some kind of alliteration (Renner 2006). The rate of borrowing for the most frequently used expression of that type that contains the *-ing* morpheme in the Europarl corpus is low, a fact which may be due to the presence of a non-lexical word in the expression, but also to the relatively rare use of *shame* as a verb and the consequent opacity of its meaning in the target languages involved. The expression was nonetheless considered to be used frequently enough in French to justify the

suggestion of a French equivalent by the CGTN, which was published in the *Journal officiel* of January 19, 2010:

> **mise au pilori**
> *Domaine:* Tous domaines.
> *Synonyme:* stigmatisation, n.f.
> *Définition:* Pratique consistant à publier le nom de personnes physiques ou morales impliquées dans des activités tenues pour répréhensibles.
> *Équivalent étranger:* gender mainstreaming.

The results in Table 6 show that in spite of a steady increase in use of the expression over the past 13 years in the English part of the corpus, the number of borrowings has remained quite low in all three Romance languages under study.

Language	1996-2003 (nb of hits)	1999-2004 (nb of debates)	2004-2009 (nb of debates)	2009-2014 (nb of debates)
English	26 (0,39)	11	27	18
French	2 (0,03)	2	1	1
Italian	1 (0,02)	2	1	0

Table 6: Compared use of naming and shaming over three parliamentary terms in French and Italian

In the absence of a clear translation equivalent (at least until 2010 in the case of French), such scarcity of borrowing gives rise to a high level of variation in both languages involved, as witnessed by the following excerpts from the Europarl corpus:

- If you the Court will not do your job of **naming and shaming**, then we will have to do it for you.
- Si vous, la Cour, **ne dévoilez pas ces noms et ne dressez pas une liste de "coupables"**, nous devrons alors le faire à votre place.
- Se la Corte non intende fare il proprio lavoro **nominando e svergognando i trasgressori**, allora dovremo occuparcene noi.
- There must be a system of **naming and shaming** for those businesses that are careless.
- Il faut mettre en place un système consistant à **désigner nommément et à stigmatiser** les entreprises indélicates.
- Occorre un sistema per **indicare e stigmatizzare** le imprese che danno prova di negligenza.
- What is important here is public health, rather than some kind of **naming and shaming**.
- Ce qui importe dans ce dossier c'est la santé publique et non de **jeter l'opprobre** d'une manière ou d'une autre.
- Ciò che è importante qui è la salute pubblica , non **mettersi a distribuire nomi e discredito**.
- Mr President, today I would like to start a process of **naming and shaming** those Member States that fail to implement European directives.
- Monsieur le Président, je souhaite commencer aujourd'hui par **citer, afin de leur faire honte**, les États membres qui ne transposent pas les directives européennes.

- Signor Presidente, mi sembra giunto il momento di **additare al pubblico biasimo** quegli Stati membri che trascurano di applicare le direttive europee.

3.4. *Level Playing Field*

Multi-word expressions that do not involve coordination seem to be borrowed more frequently than coordinated compounds. Such is the case of the expression *level playing field*, a sports metaphor which is very often used in politics. The fact that it may be most commonly associated with football might explain why the expression shows a relatively high frequency of use in the Italian part of the corpus since football is quite a popular sport in Italy (the expression is found 33 times in Italian and 16 times in French, for a total of 330 occurrences in the English part of the corpus). Whether the expression is borrowed literally in another language (as is the case in Italian in the example below) or translated by another expression (as is the case for French), it is often followed by a paraphrase:

- The purpose of the directive is supposed to be to create a **level playing field** in Europe.
- Le but de cette directive est de créer un **terrain d'égalité**, c'est-à-dire, une égalité des armes dans toute l'Europe.
- La direttiva dovrebbe mirare alla creazione di un **level playing field** in Europa, ossia garantire che le parti siano ad armi pari.

3.5. *Phasing Out*

The term *phasing out* is another term which is often borrowed by Romance languages in the Europarl corpus. The figures obtained (30 occurrences in French and 40 in Italian for a total of 513 in English) suggest that phrasal verbs might be more likely to be borrowed than other two-word expressions, a fact which remains to be confirmed through the study of more numerous examples:

- […] the possibility of **phasing out** the special conditions must also be discussed.
- […] il faut aussi parler de la période de **suppression progressive** des mesures spécifiques supplémentaires.
- […] bisogna prevedere un **phasing out** delle condizioni speciali.

As suggested by the previous example, the expression tends to be borrowed more often in Italian than in French, and it is more likely to be borrowed when it is used in the *-ing* form (208 occurrences out of 513) in English, even though use in the passive voice in English may also trigger such borrowings:

- Either they are priority hazardous substances and must be phased out or they are not.
- Soit il s'agit de substances dangereuses prioritaires et elles doivent faire l'objet d'un **phasing out**, soit elles ne le sont pas.
- si tratta di sostanze pericolose prioritarie e, in quanto tali, sono destinate al **phasing out**, oppure non lo sono.

3.6. *Remailing*

Use of the word *remailing* is worth mentioning for several reasons. It is actually the only *-ing* form that we could find in the corpus that is actually used as frequently in some of the Romance languages under

study as it is in English (7 occurrences in both languages), as the borrowing is sometimes used in Italian or French to translate other English words such as *redirection* and *reposting*:

- A reserved sector, a universal service obligation, which is attacked, even undermined, by unauthorised **redirection** can never meet with our approval.
- Un domaine réservé, une obligation de service universel contrecarrée voire minée par un **repostage** illicite ne peut recevoir notre adhésion.
- Un'area riservata e un obbligo al servizio universale indeboliti, anzi minati da un inammissibile **remailing** non possono incontrare la nostra approvazione.
- Mr President, Mr Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, **reposting** is surely an aspect of the practice of dumping.
- Monsieur le Président, Monsieur le Commissaire, chers collègues, le **repostage** constitue certainement une pratique de dumping.
- Signor Presidente, signor Commissario, onorevoli colleghi, la **reimpostazione** è certamente una forma di concorrenza attraverso il dumping.

Even though users of the word *remailing* in French were never "named and shamed" by the French Academy or the CGTN, the word is not to be found in the French section of the Europarl corpus, where the equivalents *repostage* and *réexpédition* are used. The high rate of borrowing observed in Italian in this case might be due to the fact that the term is easily understandable because of the previous borrowing of *email*, although that argument would hold true for French as well.

4. Quantitative Results

Besides using the corpus by producing parallel extractions, we also created three monolingual corpora by extracting all the sentences containing words ending in *-ing* in all three languages involved, which made it possible to take all forms into account, including those that were used in French (e.g. *timing* for the English *timetable*) and Italian (e.g. *mobbing* for the English *harrassment*) when the English sentence did not contain the corresponding *–ing* form. Using the counts for all the words that consisted of a verb infinitive followed by the *–ing* morpheme, we then compared frequency of use of those forms in French and Italian, first focusing on the forms that were used at least ten times in either corpus, and in a second stage on all the forms that occurred at least twice. Table 7 shows the most frequently used forms in both languages. While most words can be found in both columns, some are specific to one language (*doping* or *overbooking* in Italian, *planning* and *timing* in French), and some other words (in bold characters) are much more frequently used in one language.

	Italian			**French**	
A.F.	R.F.	Word	A.F.	R.F.	Word
1505	25,4	rating	1495	22,5	dumping
1074	18,1	dumping	320	4,8	**lobbying**
383	6,5	mainstreaming	303	4,6	marketing
361	6,1	**screening**	291	4,4	mainstreaming

305	5,2	roaming	290	4,4	antidumping
267	4,5	doping	182	2,7	benchmarking
262	4,4	marketing	105	1,6	planning
247	4,2	benchmarking	87	1,3	screening
219	3,7	antidumping	85	1,3	e-learning
91	1,5	e-learning	77	1,2	timing
81	1,4	antidoping	72	1,1	shopping
71	1,2	**budgeting**	68	1,0	anti-dumping
65	1,1	shopping	66	1,0	monitoring
62	1,0	phasing	45	0,7	holding
60	1,0	overbooking	41	0,6	budgeting
60	1,0	lobbying	41	0,6	parking

Table 7: Most frequently used –ing forms in French and Italian in the Europarl corpus
(A.F. = Absolute Frequency, R.F. = Relative Frequency)

Close examination of all the forms used ten times or more showed that many of them were actually part of longer expressions such as those mentioned above (e.g. *paying but not playing*, *no trade without tracking*), which were almost systematically translated literally (Humbley (2010) actually considers that use of such forms as *naming and shaming* constitutes an intermediate category between borrowing and code switching).

4.1. *Most Frequently Used -Ing Forms in Italian*

Among the forms that were used almost exclusively in Italian and hardly ever (if at all) in French, we find the nouns *rating*, *doping* and *roaming*. As is the case in the example below, *rating* is mostly used in the terms *credit rating* and *credit rating agency*. In French, these are consistently translated by (*agence de) notation de crédit* or its shortened version (*agence de) notation*.

- a reasonable conclusion to the regulation of **credit rating agencies**
- una conclusione ragionevole sulla regolamentazione delle **agenzie di rating**.
- une conclusion raisonnable concernant le règlement sur les **agences de notation de crédit**.

The case of the word *doping* is slightly different in that the word used in French (*dopage*) is a kind of indirect borrowing, since the verb *doper* was borrowed from English and the suffix *–age* was subsequently added to form the deverbal noun. The compound *anti-doping* used in the example below is also a form that is often literally translated in Italian, both in its hyphenated and unhyphenated versions:

- The credibility of the anti-**doping** effort depends on it.
- Ne va della credibilità della lotta contro il **doping**.

- Il y va de la crédibilité de la lutte contre le **dopage**.

In contrast, use of both *dopage* and *doping* in French developed in the 1960s, but *dopage* quickly became the most prevalent form, as shown in Figure 1:
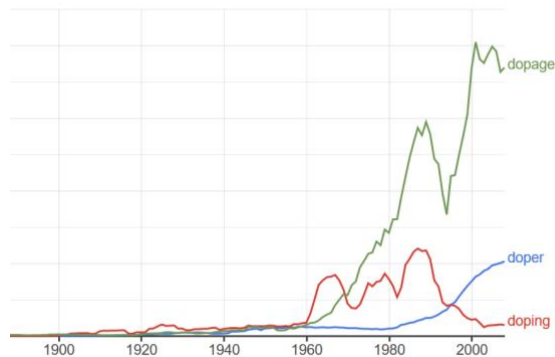

Fig. 1: Use of doper, dopage and doping in the French part of the Google Books Corpus

As for the word *roaming*, its prevalence in the corpus is both due to the high permeability of Italian to borrowings in the technical sphere, and to the fact that the subject of roaming fees was a frequently discussed issue in the European Parliament at the turn of the century. Most probably, the term will gradually disappear from use since roaming fees are no longer charged within the European Union.

- There is a risk of **roaming** for third generation mobile telephony being put in jeopardy.
- Può esservi il rischio di mettere a repentaglio il **roaming** per i telefoni della terza generazione.
- Le mode d'utilisation dit en **itinérance** des téléphones mobiles de troisième génération pourrait se trouver compromis.

Language planning measures such as those enacted by the French ministry of culture may of course have played a role in the fact that *roaming* was not used as systematically in French from the 1970s onwards as it was in Italian, as shown in Figure 2:
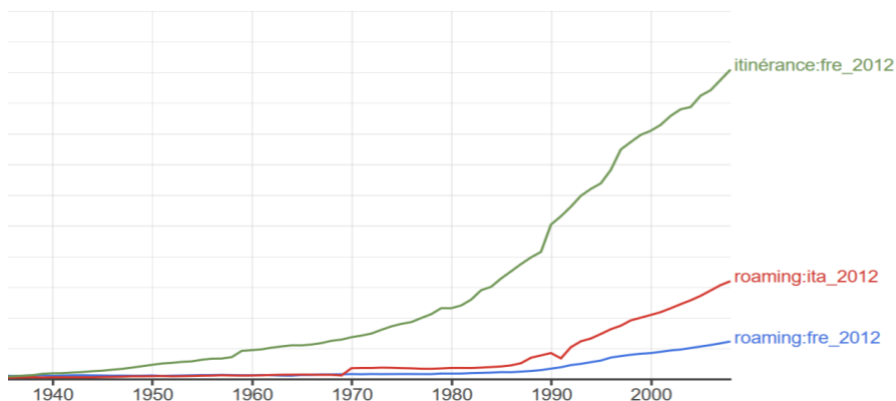
Fig. 2: Use of itinérance in French and of roaming in Italian and French in the Google Books Corpus

Even though the word *itinérance* did not feature in two of the most frequently used dictionaries until the present century (Petit Larousse added it to its nomenclature in 2005 and Petit Robert only in 2014), it gained currency much earlier on, probably thanks to the publication of the term *abonné itinérant* in the Journal Officiel in 2000 as a correct translation equivalent for the English *roaming subscriber*. The fact that the adjective *itinérant* was already well-implanted in French (it appeared in the late 19th century) probably helped, and although the *Trésor de la langue française*, whose nomenclature is based on the Frantext Corpus, only gives an example of use of the noun which goes back to 1966, the Google Books Corpus features several occurrences of the word that go back to the 19th century.

4.2. *Most Frequently Used -Ing Forms in French*

Among the forms that are used almost exclusively in French and much less frequently in Italian, the nouns *timing* and *planning* feature prominently. The noun *timing* has 77 occurrences in the French part of the Europarl corpus, as opposed to 17 in Italian. Most of the time, the loanword is used in French when it is also present in English, as in the example below:

- But I have come to the conclusion that it was in fact quite clever **timing**.
- Sono tuttavia giunta alla conclusione che, in realtà, vi è stato un ottimo **tempismo**.
- Mais je suis arrivée à la conclusion que c'était en fait un **timing** très approprié.

Timing is also used several times in contexts where the English equivalent is another compound containing the noun *time*, such as *timetable* or *time frame*. Besides *tempismo*, Italian equivalents such as *scelta di tempo*, *calendario*, *tempistica*, *fattore tempo* or *tempestività* are also present in the corpus. The noun *planning* has 105 occurrences in the French part of the Europarl corpus, as opposed to 17 in Italian. Since the English word describes an activity, unlike the French loanword, the latter is mostly used in contexts where another word is used in English, as in the example below:

- The Fifteen defined the parameters and the **timeframe** for the convention.
- I Quindici hanno confermato le linee guida e il **calendario** previsti per la Convenzione.

- Les Quinze ont entériné les lignes de force et le **planning** de la convention.

Besides the alternative spelling *time frame*, other English words that are used as translation equivalents for the French *planning* are *schedule* and *timetable*. The most frequently used Italian translation equivalents in contexts where *planning* is used in French are *programmazione*, *pianificazione*, *calendario* and the loanword *planning* as well. In their translation equivalents for the term *family planning*, both Romance languages use relational adjectives (*familiare* and *familial*) to translate the modifying noun, but only French retains the loanword *planning*:

- It is morally unacceptable to make our aid conditional upon their having to adopt our conception of **family planning**.
- È moralmente inaccettabile subordinare i nostri aiuti all'adozione coatta della nostra nozione di **pianificazione familiare**.
- Il est moralement inacceptable de conditionner notre aide à l'adoption obligatoire de notre conception du **planning familial**.

In the case of longer noun phrases in which *planning* is a coordinated modifier, as in the example below, the whole expression may be borrowed both in Italian and French:

- the European Union will use the **planning and review process** for countries which are not members of NATO.
- l'Unione farà uso del **planning and review process** per i paesi che non sono membri dell'Alleanza.
- l'Union européenne se servira du **planning and review process** pour les pays qui ne font pas partie de l'alliance.

When such complex noun phrases occur in a source language other than English (Portuguese in the example below), translators in the other Romance languages usually follow suit in using the original English expression:

- We are going to spend 18 months discussing the '**least cost planning**' for new nuclear power-stations.
- Passeremo un anno e mezzo a discutere il **least cost planning** delle nuove centrali nucleari.
- Nous allons consacrer une année et demie au débat du **least cost planning** des nouvelles centrales nucléaires.

4.3. *Prevalence of -Ing Forms in Italian and French*

After manual elimination of all words that were not of the V+ing type, we calculated the total number of types and tokens for words with 10 occurrences or more and for words whose frequency ranged from 2 to 9. The results are listed in Table 8.

Frequency>=10	Types	Type Ratio	Tokens	Token Ratio
French	55 (0,83)		4479 (67,56)	
Italian	55 (0,93)	1,12	6380 (107,77)	1,6
1<Frequency<10				
French	202 (3,05)		516 (7,78)	

| Italian | 235 (3,97) | 1,3 | 680 (11,49) | 1,48 |

Table 8: Type and token frequencies in French and Italian in the Europarl corpus for -ing forms used at least 10 times and for -ing forms whose frequency ranges between 2 and 9

The rationale for distinguishing the two categories was avoiding the bias created by the presence of a few high frequency items (such as *rating* in Italian, which accounts for almost a quarter of all occurrences of the larger set), which might have skewed the data of the larger set. Thus, the smaller set, with both a higher number of types and small number of tokens, is more likely to be representative of a general trend. In that smaller set, Italian has 16% more types (distinct words) than French and 32% more tokens (total number of occurrences of those types). For lack of time, the hapax legomena (forms with only one occurrence in the corpus) could not be analyzed manually in order to detect forms other than those that were queried for. In that category, Italian also has a frequency which is 21% higher than in French.

5. Conclusion

Based on our quantitative comparison between French and Italian, the latter seems to exhibit a lesser degree of resistance to borrowing of *-ing* forms than French (as shown by the frequent use of such loanwords as *roaming*, *doping*, *overbooking*, *trading*). Furthermore, these forms are occasionally used as translation equivalents for English words which do not include the *–ing* morpheme (e.g. *mobbing* for *harassment*).

However, some limitations of our study should be pointed out as they may have generated various biases. First of all, our results might be partially skewed by the very high values recorded for the most commonly found forms (e.g. the 1505 occurrences for *rating* in Italian, as opposed to 7 in French). Another fact which deserves consideration is that the Europarl corpus is two decades old, and consequently does not accurately reflect current language use: thus, some *–ing* forms which are widely used today in various European Romance languages (*streaming*, *bashing*, etc.) are very rare in the corpus. Also, insofar as the Europarl corpus may be considered as semi-specialized in content, borrowing seems domain-dependent as many loanwords relate to the fields of economy and finance (*rating, dumping, trading, holding, frontloading, pricing*) and technology and communications (*caching*, *roaming, remailing, spamming, unbundling*). Actually, many uses of loanwords that include the *-ing* morpheme refer to technical terms which are defined by the speaker when they are first mentioned, which probably plays a role in the frequency of literal use of the English word in translation, as shown in the following example:

- EN: […] particularly with regard to the article on copying for technical purposes, or **caching**, […]
- FR: […] en particulier en ce qui concerne l'article relatif à la copie technique, que l'on appelle également **caching**, […]
- IT: […] che riguardano innanzitutto l'articolo relativo alla copia tecnica, ovvero il cosiddetto **caching**, […]

Finally, another issue that needs to be investigated is the influence of the language of the original utterance on the form used in the target language. When the source language is not English (as in the example above), there is a higher probability that the *–ing* word will be translated literally, possibly because it has already been identified as a loanword by translators. Studying the influence of that

particular factor will require further examination of the Europarl corpus to find out how other European languages behave in that regard.