

1 **Impact of fashion specialized discourse – a case study**

2 **on the speech of French youths**

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5 **Abstract**

6 This study determines whether fashion terms from the fashion field are being accepted and integrated
7 into the speech of the young French adults under 25 years of age. In addition, the nature and factors for
8 this integration, as well as the most integrated terms are discussed. Fashion terms were selected from a
9 corpus and the favourite language of use for each concept was investigated by means of a questionnaire-
10 based social survey. We identified a clear integration of English fashion-specialised terms in the speech
11 of young French adults; given a list of terms, they were shown to favour the use of English alternatives
12 in approximately half of the cases. However, time, usage and area factors could not explain the greater
13 integration of certain terms over other ones. Data about the increase of technology development indicate
14 a possible continuation of the integration growth in the future.

15

16 **Keywords**

17 Terminology, Young adults, Internet, Specialised discourse, Fashion field

1 **Introduction**

2 Nowadays, young adults under 25 years of age are increasingly concerned with their image, and this can
3 be directly related to the arrival of Internet and the social media (Livingstone, 2008). A survey conducted
4 in 2011 by the Institut Français d'Opinion Publique (Ifop) stated that among *Facebookers*, those under
5 25 years old are the ones most interested in fashion with 35% of them having “liked” at least one brand
6 in Facebook compared to 23% for the population between 25 and 34, and 13% for the 35-49 years old
7 (Ifop, 2011). Young adults are also the most prone to *like* many brands with 19% of them *liking* more
8 than 3 brands against 6% in the other year ranges (Ifop, 2011). Livingstone (2008: 393) describes young
9 social networks users as “a generation that, supposedly, has many friends but little sense of privacy and
10 a narcissistic fascination with self-display”.

11 But globalization has also offered a global impact to fashion brands. Today, people hundreds of
12 kilometres away have access to the same products at the same time. With the evolution of communication
13 systems, social networks such as blogs and networking sites represent one of the easiest ways to reach
14 businesses such as fashion brands and are a largely untapped marketing channel for products and services
15 (Weinberg, 2011). As a result, the usage of social media by luxury brands surged (Mohr, 2013) and
16 encourages interaction between customers and brands. These interactions raise the notoriety of the brands
17 by increasing awareness, involvement, and engagement, and consequently stimulate brand recollection
18 and thereby purchases (Mohr, 2013). Blogs and social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube,
19 Instagram, and Pinterest offer fashion brands means to connect with audiences. Social media is now
20 viewed as an opportunity to improve customer relationships and to ultimately capture a larger audience.
21 For example, the timing was right for Gucci's multicultural social network site, “Guccieyeweb.com” for
22 the launch of a new sunglasses collection targeting digital generation customers. Gucci also updates its
23 Facebook site and sends Twitter tweets several times a day (Kim and Ko, 2012), thereby illustrating the
24 importance of social media for brand-customer communication. Businesses must continually find new

1 ways to connect with customers, build strong relationships, and increase social engagement to drive
2 growth (Mohr, 2013). The emergence of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) has boosted interest in
3 word of mouth and viral marketing among luxury brands (Mohr, 2013). There, they publish their
4 promotions, their latest marketing strategies and above all, develop a set of values and a culture to which
5 their customers identify so as to create a true culture and obsession with fashion. According to a recent
6 survey by the web statistics company Alexa, Facebook is the second world's most visited website,
7 YouTube the 3rd, Twitter the 11th, and Instagram the 41st. (Alexa, 2015)

8 With the advent of social networks, youths increasingly communicate by means of pictures posted on
9 the social networks virtual accounts (Lívia and Matté, 2014; Livingstone, 2008). The appearance of
10 pictures and videos as communication media and their increasing use on social networks by young adults
11 under 25 has created an obsession for their appearance (Livingstone, 2008). Their virtual identity has
12 become as important as their real one. Recent data from a survey carried out between 2006 and 2012 by
13 Cortesi et al. (2013) show that in 2012:

- 14 • 91% posted a photo of themselves (2006=79%)
- 15 • 71% posted their school name (2006=49%)
- 16 • 92% posted their real name into the profile they use most often
- 17 • 84% posted their interests, such as movies, music, or books they like
- 18 • 82% posted their birth date
- 19 • 62% posted their relationship status
- 20 • 24% posted videos of themselves

21

22 People with accounts most visited by others have become *influencers*: people who do have an influence
23 on others (Lo and Phau, 2007; Mohr, 2013). Currently, Twitter measures a *twitterer*'s influence as the
24 number of *followers* he has. The more *followers* one has, the more impact he appears to make in the

1 Twitter context, because he seems more popular (He et al., 2010). Some of those influencers even have
2 become public figures as Jay Alvarez, an Instagram star with 3.000.000 *followers* on Instagram, nearly
3 520.000 on YouTube, and 86.800 on Vine. Our culture gives an increasing importance to image and
4 appearance. Consequently, teenagers and young adults have become important players in the fashion
5 industry: they are consumers, critics and the models of their own pictures. Brands and specialized
6 magazines (Vogue, ID, etc.) are no longer the only ones talking about fashion; bloggers, influencers, and
7 anyone with an active and popular profile on social networks can start new trends. Fashion is everywhere,
8 mostly due to the internet. “Blogs” offer consumers an almost unlimited space for self-expression on the
9 Internet (Belk, 2006). Unlike fashion-focused magazines and television shows, there are millions of
10 fashion blogs worldwide that are updated regularly with new fashion trends. The effectiveness of blogs
11 is the result of its strong individual, personal, popular, and elitist point of view (Mohr, 2013). Its engaging
12 experience offers readers the opportunity to voice opinions and challenge fashion critics. Brands view
13 popular bloggers as the new journalists and influencers (Lo and Phau, 2007). Once considered fashion-
14 obsessed amateurs, style bloggers have matured into fashion trendsetters and these savvy marketers may
15 command four- and five-figure fees from brands (Mohr, 2013).

16 This whole activity related to the image is the source of a growing number of texts on the same topic:
17 fashion. It is likely that the growing importance of fashion in teens’ day-to-day has an impact on their
18 speech. Several studies have examined the impact of communication on social networks on the general
19 language (see AbuSa’aleek, 2015; Akkaya, 2014; Androutopoulos, 2006; Caruso, 2012; Crystal, 2001;
20 Denis and Tagliamonte, 2008; Montané, 2012; Nekipelova, 2015), but, to the best of our knowledge, the
21 impact of fashion-related texts and fashion terminology on the general language remains to be evaluated.
22 This work therefore analyses the impact of the specialised discourse of the increasingly international
23 fashion on the acceptance and integration of terms coming from foreign languages in another language.

1 Since behavioural differences may exist between countries, languages, and different age groups, this
2 paper will focus on French people under 25 years of age.

3 The main goal is to determine by means of a social survey, if fashion-specialized discourse has had an
4 impact in the matter of implementation and acceptance of fashion terms from foreign languages in the
5 language of French people under 25. The second objective is to determine and characterise the existence
6 of a specific foreign language with an outstanding integration in the speech of French people under 25.
7 The third objective is to identify the level of acceptance and integration of fashion terms in the identified
8 language and to determine the most accepted terms. The last goal is to identify the factors which resulted
9 in the integration of fashion terms of the identified foreign language within the language of young French
10 people under the age of 25.

11 We have extracted terms from a corpus made of fashion texts and conducted a social survey with the
12 selected terms and their French equivalent in order to see the level of integration of the foreign terms by
13 the target audience. We have analysed the results with several factors and observed the acceptance
14 trends.

15

16 **State of the art**

17

18 *Published work*

19 The evolution of language due to the massive integration of technology and social networks has attracted
20 much curiosity. Several studies have examined the language of social networks and their impact on the
21 general language (see AbuSa'aleek, 2015; Akkaya, 2014; Androutsopoulos, 2006; Crystal, 2001;
22 Montané, 2012; Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008). AbuSa'aleek (2015) talks about new types of
23 communication that generate significant modifications in the structure of written language because of
24 the electronic communication revolution. He worked on the creation of a concrete idea of electronic

1 discourse as a new variety of language. He demonstrated that only 25% of the corpus he analysed matches
2 electronic speech, a data inconsistent with the general idea that students' electronic speech is
3 incomprehensible and full of shortened words. The results of this study do contrast with that of
4 Tagliamonte & Denis (2008) who showed that the electronic discourse is a new language derived from
5 modification in the current language, and integrates combinations of both formal and vernacular variants.
6 Similarly, Akkaya (2014) reviewed existing work focused on computer-mediated communication
7 (CMC). He is interested in the idea of online community and wants to show the role of the use of language
8 and linguistic variation in building interpersonal relationships and social identities on the Internet. His
9 work, not limited to the study of CMC speech, focuses on the sociological aspect of computer
10 communication and the creation of an online community or community identity. But the evolution of
11 language is not only related to new media. The social processes caused the formation of a social order
12 (Nekipelova, 2015). It demands from language to be understandable and available to all bearers. Literary
13 form is the result of language area globalization. Nekipelova (2015) concluded that the globalization of
14 language is inevitable, caused by the globalization of society, and is necessary to protect viability and
15 survivability under severe competition.

16 While the fashion industry has also been the subject of numerous studies, these primarily focused on the
17 sociological impact of fashion on marketing strategies or on the relationship between fashion brands and
18 internet (see Baudoin et al., 2007; Carter, 2011; Davis Burns et al., 2007; De Vries et al., 2012; Egan and
19 Hardingham, 2014; Lueg, 2001; Martínez Caraballo, 2011). For example, Mohr (2013) wrote about the
20 impact social networks have had to re-stimulate the luxury goods market after the crisis of 2008 and
21 create a new marketing concept: marketing through social networks. In her article, she explains the way
22 many luxury brands from different sectors have reinvented themselves and managed their way through
23 the crisis partly thanks to social networks. Brands have strengthened their relationship with customers,
24 and social networks have had an important role on word of mouth and exponential distribution offering

1 (Mohr, 2013). This is a key information for our study as it shows that the spread of fashion-specialized
2 discourse is closely related to the emergence of fashion brands in social networks and its new relationship
3 with consumers.

4 Another recent study compared the percentage of teenage boys and girls within each of the five
5 categories of buying psychological process established by Rogers (1983) (innovators, early adopters,
6 early majority, late majority, laggards) with regards to their sensitivity to brands. In addition to the
7 categories and percentages of boys compared to girls, this study described the sensitivity of these
8 categories to brands and the proportion of innovation in their clothing habits (Baudoin et al., 2007).

9 While the aforementioned studies addressed important aspects of the impact of social networks and
10 internet-based communication on speech patterns and language evolution, the relationship between
11 language evolution, social networks, and fashion still needs to be described and quantified. This work
12 therefore endeavours to elucidate whether the specialized discourse used in fashion has had an impact on
13 the implementation and acceptance of fashion related terms in the common language. However, because
14 language evolution trends may differ between geographic areas and age ranges, this study focused on a
15 specific category: French people under 25 years of age.

16 *Context data*

17 The level of integration of loan words from foreign languages or of creation of neologisms is directly
18 related to the education policy of each country and of the protection of its national language. Wanting to
19 focus on countries with conservative policies, we analysed the evolution of education policy in France
20 and Quebec.

21

22 *Education policy in France and Quebec.* France became interested in protecting the French language
23 very early as the first language law appeared in 1539 (Caruso, 2012). This law is at the origin of the
24 purist ideology and of the French linguistic norm. Across the years, the French policy created a system

1 of enrichment of the French language that worked on the creation of a French specialised speech able to
2 replace foreign loan words (Caruso, 2012). In 1994, the Toubon Law changed this policy showing that
3 the French government was aware that the French language undergoes a process of continuous evolution
4 and that it no longer was entirely against the integration of foreign loan words depending on their
5 usefulness to the French language. But purism and its norms have left an important trace. On the other
6 hand, in Quebec, French was implanted and widespread in the seventeenth century. Initially, when New
7 France was annexed by Britain, French speakers were a majority when compared to English speakers
8 and, as a result, English was not considered a threat to their individuality. But the English policy forced
9 the Francophones to back up for almost 2 centuries in submission, religion, agriculture and conservatism.
10 However, the British couldn't have foreseen the defence and identity reaction of the French-speaking
11 Canadians, or their endeavour to conserve their language and culture (Leclerc, 2013). This reaction was
12 materialized in 1977 with the Charter of the French Language that has restored strength, courage and
13 energy to the French-speaking majority of Quebec. The Office Québécois de la Langue Française
14 (OQLF) is the body responsible to ensure that the status of the French language doesn't fall again into
15 contempt and that it keeps a major role in language issues of the Quebec society. It is also in charge of
16 the production and spread of the terminology and linguistic standards of Quebec. The preference of
17 Frenchmen for linguistic loan words instead of neologisms and the fact that the official terminology only
18 serves as a reference prove that the impact of the French Délégation Générale à la Langue Française
19 (DGLF) recommendations about the use is different to the one of the OQLF that enjoys -in its fight
20 against foreign terms- the support of the law and usually also of Quebeckers (Saint, 2013).

21

22 *First English loan words.* In France, the first English loan words appeared in the 18th century; at the
23 beginning of the French Revolution, everybody looked towards England, to which the future French

1 revolutionaries envied the parliamentary system (Saint, 2013). Very naturally, several English terms
2 relating to politics and justice make up the French lexicon (Saint, 2013).

3

4 *Anglomania*. In the 19th century, England was in full industrialisation. The “anglomania” that had begun
5 with the French Revolution became even stronger. Terms such as “rail”, “express”, “tunnel”, “wagon”
6 show up as well as terms such as “sport”, “football”, “tennis”, “golf”, or “handicap” (Saint, 2013).

7 The Second World War transformed the old anglomania into an invasion of anglo-american terms. The
8 war magnified the american supremacy in technical and economical areas inside a French country
9 weakened by six years of war and that was forced -in order to reboost its industry- to import a massive
10 amount of American materials (Saint, 2013). As such, the use of foreign terms in technical speech during
11 the years after the war does not come from an anglomania but from necessity (Chansou, 2003).

12 In the 1960s, France tried to recover its prestige and began to create links with the rest of the French-
13 speaking world. This is how the Haut Comité pour la défense et l’expansion de la langue française was
14 born in 1966 to be transformed in the Haut Comité de la langue française in 1973. This committee was
15 responsible for the determination of measures aimed at ensuring the defence and spread of the French
16 language, the establishment of links with other necessary operators -including in matters of cultural and
17 technical cooperation-, and to develop and encourage projects related to the defence and spread of the
18 French language (Bogaards, 2008). In 1984, the Haut Comité de la langue française was replaced by two
19 new bodies: the Comité consultatif and the Commissariat général. In 1989, these same agencies became
20 the Conseil supérieur de la langue française and the Délégation générale à la langue française, both under
21 the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture et de la Francophonie. In 1996, this ministry was divided in
22 two separate departments (Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France [DGLF],
23 2008). The Délégation générale à la langue française was put under the authority of the Ministère de la

1 Culture et de la Francophonie and was renamed Délégation générale à la française et aux langues de
2 France (DGLF) in 2001.

3

4 *Criticism of the French policy.* The French policy has been widely criticized for its distinctive approach
5 to the perfection of spelling and grammar, which, according to many, has slowed the development of this
6 language, creating a fear of using new words (Saint, 2013). For many generations, the way the French
7 language was taught ensured perfect spelling and grammar, so as to avoid any kind of error (Saint, 2013).
8 As a result, the French constantly comment on- and correct mistakes made by one another. As errors are
9 inevitable, speakers have grown nervous and wonder how their transgressions will be received (Saint,
10 2013). Only a very strong personality can feel free of making errors in French (Barlow and Nardeau,
11 2006). The fear of mistake leads Frenchmen to naturally reject innovations, new rules, new
12 pronunciations and new spellings (Saint, 2013). Purists have killed, in Frenchmen, the taste for lexical
13 creation. This fear of innovation, of error, and of being ridiculous leads bearers to resort to term loans
14 (Chansou, 2003).

15 **Methodology**

16 In order to assess the influence of the fashion industry on the integration of related terms, we composed
17 a corpus, selected specific terms and designed a questionnaire to evaluate the use of these terms by young
18 French people under the age of 25.

19

20 *Why French people under 25?*

21 First of all, we were interested in seeing the impact of language globalisation on a country with a
22 conservative language policy in order to see if a conservative policy would be able to block any foreign
23 contamination. For this reason, and as we will explain hereunder, France was selected as geographical

1 focus of this study. Another element we considered to be important is the age range. It is very unlikely
2 for a French teenager to react the same way as an adult to language globalisation because of lifestyle,
3 interests, and background differences. But why teenagers under 25?

4 In history, teenagers have not always been active fashion players. This trend evolved over time (Ashlock
5 Magie, 2008; Dworjan, 2015) together with increases in their growing buying power (Chong et al., 2002;
6 Dworjan, 2015). Specialists predict the future marketplace will be dominated by young consumers
7 (Ashlock Magie, 2008) though they already represent a very important consumers segment (Dworjan,
8 2015).

9 Teenagers and young adults also represent the segment most familiar with technology as their a
10 generation grew with the Internet and high use of computer technologies (Ashlock Magie, 2008; Lueg,
11 2001). In 2011, 98% of the French young people between 15 and 24 years of age were connected to the
12 Internet and 83% of them had a *Facebook* account (Ifop, 2011). Unsurprisingly, it is the age segment
13 that has integrated online shopping habits the most, presumably as online shopping was available for
14 most their lifetime, in comparison to older age segments that integrated this shopping modality later in
15 their lives (Lueg, 2001). Finally, as outlined earlier, this segment also has the particularity to have
16 developed a more image- and fashion-oriented communication through the social networks than older
17 segments (Cortesi et al., 2013).

18 For these reasons, we believe teenagers and young adults under 25 years old are the segment most likely
19 to be subjected to fashion terminology contamination and to integrate foreign fashion terms in its
20 language.

21

22 *Corpus creation*

23 As a brand, a constant interaction with authentic messaging on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Four
24 Square, and other platforms is the only way to engage with the youth from a social media perspective. In

1 addition to such social networks, other channels that teens may turn to for trends, particularly fashion
2 trends, are magazines, their friends, and blogs (Carter, 2011). Therefore, the sources most likely to have
3 an impact on the language of French youths are the major fashion magazines and fashion blogs, as well
4 as the fashion brands targeting this audience and most active on the social networks and the Internet. The
5 contents likely to have an impact on the language of French youths are closely related to the marketing
6 strategies of brands and the background of this audience. This corpus was created following an adaptation
7 of the methods described in Quirion (2003). Quirion's terminometric protocol is similar to a survey in
8 the way it is subject to the same sampling rules (Saint, 2013).

9 In order to form a representative corpus on the fashion-specialized discourse, we have decided to select
10 texts from the sources most likely to reach youths: websites of the most geographically widespread
11 fashion brands (e.g. Zara, Adidas, Nike, Levi's), the main brands targeting the youths under 25 customer
12 segment (e.g. Pull&Bear, Bershka, Stradivarius), fashion magazines with major impact (e.g. Vogue,
13 Elle), and some of the most important French fashion blogs with written content (e.g. Marie luv pink, le
14 blog de Betty, et pourquoi pas Coline, comme un camion, nizza girl) (Desneiges, 2008; Feutry, 2014).

15 We have created a corpus of 170 texts with 86.888 words from 25 sources (see Table 1). The texts that
16 include articles, product description, and press releases were extracted from websites, social network
17 accounts, blogs, and texts given by the brands.

18

1 *Table 1 Corpus data*

Source	Text typology	Words qty	# Texts
Adidas	Product description	6412	1
Bershka	Article	1494	8
commeuncamion	Blog	5313	16
Elle	Article	4595	7
etpourquoipascoline	Blog	2446	1
Gstar	Web content	1918	4
Inditex	Press release	4184	11
Jeans Denim	Article	3015	11
le blog de Betty	Blog	2504	6
Lefties	Press release	1651	12
Levi's	Product description	1524	1
Marie luv pink	Blog	1674	3
Massimo Dutti	Press release	2192	10
Nike	Product description	21100	1
nizza girl	Blog	1885	5
Oysho	Web content	2305	13
Pull&Bear	Web content	5823	11
Stradivarius	Web content	765	5
Stylistic	Blog	3607	14
Tempe	Web content	384	1
Tendencias	Blog	206	1
Universtyle	Article	2008	2
Uterqüe	Press release	2566	8
Vogue	Article	2253	12
Zara	Product description Press release	5064	6
Total		86888	170

2

3 *Extraction and selection of the terms*

4 The fashion terms extracted from this corpus were divided into in 6 categories: generic clothing names,
5 fitting, colour/effect, materials, models/styles, and other. A total of 135 terms were identified, and French
6 terms (n=64) were separated from foreign loan words (mainly English; n=71). Because this study focuses

1 on the integration of loan words coming from the fashion industry by French youths, French terms were
2 ignored. Next, all 71 foreign terms were mapped against the FranceTerme (FranceTerme, 2015),
3 Larousse (Larousse, 2015) and the Grand Dictionnaire Terminologique de Quebec (GDT) (Office
4 québécois de la langue française, 2015) databases. The percentage of words found in each database was
5 calculated and used to determine the level of acceptance of foreign fashion terms applied by each
6 database.

7 This study is interested analysing of the current state of the French language. For this reason, we decided
8 to work exclusively with the most recent terms, mainly those that appeared in French texts over the last
9 2 decades, even though they may not be indexed in official terminological databases. With this goal in
10 mind, four of the six previously defined categories of terms were selected: “fitting”, “colour/effect”,
11 “model/style” and “others”. The other categories were discarded as they essentially contained terms
12 already implemented in the common language and integrated in the official databases. After this initial
13 filtering step, only 47 terms remained. Next, were excluded all terms repeated several times in equivalent
14 ways (e.g. waist and mid waist) and those already implemented in the French language for years such as
15 “jogging” (1964), “jeans” (1954) or “short” (since 1910) (Rey, 2011). This helped to narrow the selection
16 down to 32 foreign fashion terms mainly not yet included in official databases but already appearing in
17 French texts (see Table 2).

18 Finally, French equivalents of the selected terms were searched in the three reference databases
19 (FranceTerme, Larousse, GDT), as well as in the IATE (IATE, 2015). These terms and their equivalents
20 were then used to design a questionnaire that was sent to the target audience (see Appendix 1).

21

22

23

1 *Table 2 List of foreign fashion terms as well as their French equivalents*

List of the selected terms with their French equivalents			
Foreign term	French term	Foreign term	French term
colour / effect		other	
allover print	imprimé sur l'ensemble	shooting	séance photo
coated	recouvert	look	allure
dark	foncé		style
destroy	détruit	blogueur	auteur d'un blogue
stonewashed	délavé à la pierre	boho	bohémien romantique
model / style		customiser	personnaliser
street	style urbain	lookbook	carnet de mode
tailoring	façon tailleur	outfit	tenue
seventies	années 70	sportswear	vêtements de sport
crewneck	col ras du cou	streetwear	vêtements urbains
hoodie	pull à capuche	zip	fermeture éclair
	collant sans pieds		fermeture à glissière
legging	pantacollant	fitting / cut	
	caleçon	high waist	taille haute
tregging	pantalon ultra-moulant	skinny	moulant
jeggings	legging en jean	straight	droit
	collant sans pieds en denim	slim	étroit
basket	basket	boyfriend	large
	chaussure de sport	bootcut	jambe semi évasée
clutch	pochette	flare	jambe très évasée

2

3 *Design and creation of the questionnaire*

4 Given the importance of the place that the internet has in the habits of youths, the questionnaire was
5 prepared and through the online survey platform SurveyMonkey. Given the extensive use of social
6 networks, emails and other web-based communication channels by our target group (French youths under
7 25), the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was circulated through the use of social networks and email after
8 having initiated the spread of the questionnaire through French universities, schools, as well as various
9 youth groups (political, sport clubs, educative, ...). As such, a total of 105 questionnaires were filled in

1 a less than two weeks. The questionnaire contained two sets of questions; initial questions identified the
2 origin, mother tongue, age and sex of the respondents, thereby ascertaining that they belonged to our
3 target group (French youths under 25 years of age) and providing metadata allowing for data
4 categorisation. In second part of the questionnaire, respondents were given a series of terms from our
5 final selection and choices to make between either the original English term or its French equivalent.
6 This allowed the determination of preferences of this social group for either loan words borrowed from
7 English or their French equivalent. Together these data would allow for an estimation of the level of
8 integration of the new terms coming from the fashion industry in the language of French youths. No
9 information was requested on the geographical area of residence or the social level of the respondents as
10 this study focuses on the analysis of the integration of the English fashion terms rather than an extensive
11 evaluation of sociological factors involved in such integration.

12

13 *Data analysis*

14 A variety of factors were considered in an attempt to understand why English was more used than
15 French for specific terms. Firstly, we divided the terms in three categories based on time factor: terms
16 used for >10 years, <10 years and <2 years in the language of French youths under 25. These
17 categories were created in order to verify if the level of acceptance of foreign words in French is
18 related to their time of use in French. Secondly, we considered the factor of usage of the terms. We
19 divided the terms in five term usage categories: generic fashion (basic wardrobe clothing), adult
20 fashion (characteristic elements of older generations styles), recent fashion (new clothes that appeared
21 in the last five years), textile industry (terms related to the textile industry that are not pieces of
22 clothing), and technology (terms related to the fashion industry technology). Thirdly, we tried to check
23 if English terms related to “jeans” -products that have taken an important place in the wardrobe of
24 youths during these last few years- were favoured over French alternatives. And finally, we analysed

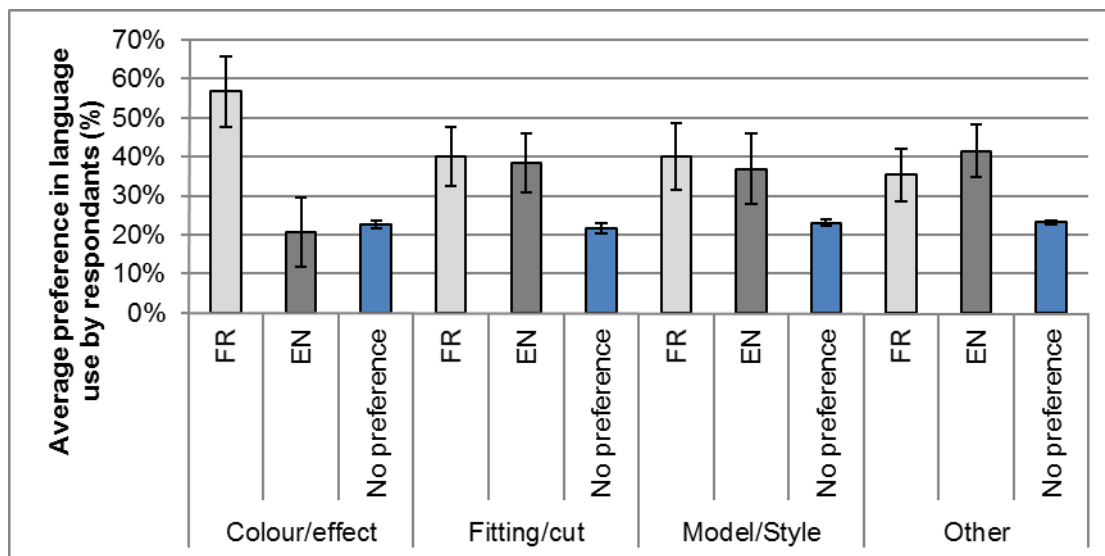
1 the initial categories created during the extraction of terms (fitting, colour/effect, models/styles, and
2 other).

3

4 **Results and analysis**

5 First of all, in the mapping of the 71 identified terms against the FranceTerme (FranceTerme, 2015),
6 Larousse (Larousse, 2015) and the Grand Dictionnaire Terminologique de Quebec (Office québécois de
7 la langue française, 2015) databases, it appeared FranceTerme only contains 2 of the selected terms
8 (2.8%) in its database, Larousse has 29 terms (41%) and the GDT 20 terms (28%), plus 10 terms
9 recognized only in English but with French equivalents. Larousse is the database that includes most
10 foreign fashion terms, and the GDT the most complete as it presents French equivalents to English terms
11 as well as recommendations on the use of certain terms over others. Likewise, following its policy of
12 protection of the French language, the GDT tends to prefer original French terms or French translations
13 of foreign terms instead of suggesting the implementation of foreign loan words.

14 With regards to the target audience, a total of 105 respondents took part in the survey, 34.09% of which
15 were male, and the rest 65.91% female, all French and under 25 years of age. This difference may reflect
16 varying levels of interest for the fashion industry, but exploring this further is out of the scope of the
17 present study. All of the 33 terms put forward in the questionnaire were English and received at least one
18 preference for the English term, indicating that the questionnaire included terms highly relevant to this
19 study. Interestingly, the survey revealed that English terms were favoured over their French alternatives
20 in nearly half of the answers (45.58%). These data compared to the proportion of foreign versus French
21 terms indicate that 23.97% of fashion terms used by our target audience are in English. Given that French
22 is the mother tongue of all respondents, this number is remarkable.



1

2 *Figure 1 Average preference (\pm Standard Error of the mean) in the use of English (EN), French (FR) or no preference*
 3 *when respondents were presented with a term or its French alternative. Terms are grouped in categories modified*
 4 *from Rogers (1983)*

5 When considering differences in language use preferences between the four term classification categories
 6 selected for the survey, it is interesting to see that, for every category except “Colour/effect”, the number
 7 of respondents favouring the use of French is indistinguishable from that of respondents favouring the
 8 use of English (Figure 1). This may be due to a higher technical nature of the terms included in that
 9 category and to a scarcer use of them. Overall, the proportion of respondents favouring the use of English
 10 terms over French equivalents is remarkably high considering that the audience is exclusively French
 11 and has been educated in a schooling system highly protective of the use of the French Language. In
 12 addition, while older age classes may have been significantly exposed to English in a professional
 13 context, this is likely not the case for youths under 25. The most accepted English terms were baskets
 14 (96.97%), blogueur (96.77%), legging (93.55%), shooting (83.87%), and slim fit (87.69%). A variety of
 15 factors were considered in an attempt to understand why English was more used than French for specific
 16 terms. Firstly, though it could be expected that foreign words that have been in use for a longer time may

1 be more accepted, no difference could be observed in the level of integration of English words in use for
2 >10 years, <10 years and <2 years in the language of French youths under 25.
3 Secondly, when considering different term usage categories (generic fashion, adult fashion, recent
4 fashion, textile industry, and technology), only terms used in the textile industry showed a marked
5 trend of preferred use of French terms (70% of choices) over English versions. This could be due to a
6 reduced knowledge of the terms of this category by the target audience, no matter the language of the
7 terms. Finally, we tried to check if English terms related to “jeans” -products that have taken an
8 important place in the wardrobe of youths during these last few years- were favoured over French
9 alternatives. While this could have been expected as most of the terminology related to this sector, even
10 in French documents, tends to make use of English terms, this was not the case.

11 **Discussion**

12 This study aimed to identify whether the fashion industry and the specific foreign vocabulary that it
13 uses has been integrated into the language of French youths under 25 years of age. This social category
14 was particularly selected for this work because France is known to have a highly conservative view
15 with regards to the integration and use of foreign words in French and youths under 25 years old are the
16 generation most connected to Internet and in contact with international contents. In the terms selection,
17 it appeared that most foreign fashion terms used in French are English. By means of a questionnaire-
18 based survey we showed that overall, English has been largely integrated into the day-to-day language
19 of French youths under 25. A categorisation approach, classifying the terms evaluated into categories
20 related to the context of use of these terms in the fashion industry, showed that the amount of use of
21 French terms was generally not distinguishable from that of English terms. The only exception to this
22 trend was for terms pertaining to the theme of “colour/effect”, which may be due to a higher technical
23 nature of the terms included in that category and to a scarcer use of them (e.g. coated). In addition, a

1 variety of factors (time, usage, jeans) were examined in an attempt to explain why certain English
2 words were better integrated than others by French youths under 25, however it appears English terms
3 were well accepted in all categories by the textile industry. This may be due to a reduced knowledge of
4 the terms of this category by the target audience. It is possible that new English terms such as blogger
5 or leggings are more easily accepted by French youths because using a French equivalent would mean
6 creating a new term or using a long and unpractical paraphrase.

7 Through mapping the 71 identified terms against the FranceTerme (FranceTerme, 2015), Larousse
8 (Larousse, 2015) and the GDT (Office québécois de la langue française, 2015) databases, it resulted
9 that FranceTerme has clear lack of fashion terms with only 4 fashion terms identified in the entire
10 database. Larousse presented a much more comprehensive fashion database, as did the GDT which was
11 also the most complete database out of the three -although it only contained 28% of the selected terms-
12 as it recognised up to 42% of them because of its bilingual nature, suggesting one or more French
13 equivalents to the terms identified exclusively in English. Historically, France has maintained a more
14 relaxed policy of implementation of foreign terms than Quebec, but recently the organisations in charge
15 of the protection of the French language returned to a more conservative policy. For this reason, the
16 Académie Française adapted its policy based on that of Quebec and now equally promotes the use
17 French terms over foreign terms in the common language (Alliance Champlain (Afrav) et al., 2009).
18 This could explain the lack of English terms in FranceTerme.

19 Overall, this study showed a direct impact of the fashion-specialized discourse on the language of
20 French youths under 25. In addition, the percentage of use of English and French terms being generally
21 equivalent, this study clearly demonstrates a level of acceptance and implementation of English terms
22 by French youths. The development of globalisation and Internet as well as the use of social networks
23 by young people suggest that this integration may follow a growing curve. Given that in 2011, 98% of
24 French youths aged between 14 to 24 were already connected to the Internet, which is much more than

1 the other age ranges (Ifop, 2011), increased internet usage by this social category will likely contribute
2 to increased exposure to English terms, and therefore potentially result in further integration of foreign
3 fashion terms by this target group. Another important factor that may influence further integration of
4 English fashion terms in French, is that, despite the growing emergence of major international brands
5 websites in French (e.g. Nike, Adidas, GAP), many of them keep product descriptions in English.
6 Furthermore, as recently shown, around 88% of potential consumers can now be considered as “Full
7 Web” customers, meaning that they both research articles and purchase them online (BVA, 2013).
8 Considering that French youths between 14 to 24 years of age are the most active category on internet
9 (Ifop, 2011), there is no doubt that this new trend to research and buy online can be the source of
10 further integration of English terms in French. While the general trends in the fashion market all
11 suggest future increases in the use of English fashion-related terms in French, it was not possible to
12 link the preferred use of some terms over others to any specific trend.
13 For future works, it would be interesting to analyse the impact of the fashion-specialised discourse on
14 older generations in order to see if they have a similar level of integration of foreign words and to
15 analyse the impact of internet on the use of the English language by youths under 25 years of age.

16

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5

6 **Appendix**

7 Appendix 1

Questionnaire
Êtes-vous français(e) ou francophone ?
Oui / Non
Quel est votre sexe ?
Homme / Femme
Avez-vous moins de 25 ans ?
Oui / Non
Veillez choisir le terme que vous utilisez le plus parmi les options suivantes :
low-high waist / taille basse-haute (jeans)
skinny / moulant (jeans)
straight / droit (jeans)
slim fit / étroit (jeans)
boyfriend / large (jeans)
bootcut / jambe semi évasée (jeans)
flare / jambe très évasée (jeans)
allover print / imprimé sur l'ensemble
coated / recouvert
dark / foncé
destroy / effet détruit
stonewashed / délavé à la pierre
street / style urbain
tailoring / façon tailleur
seventies / années 70
crewneck / col ras du cou

hoodie / pull à capuche
legging / collant sans pieds / pantacollant / caleçon
tregging / pantalon ultra-moulant
jeggins / legging en jean / collant sans pieds en denim
baskets / chaussures de sport
clutch / pochette
shooting / séance photo
look / allure / style
blogueur / auteur d'un blogue
boho / bohémien romantique
customiser / personnaliser
lookbook / carnet de mode
outfit / tenue
sportswear / vêtements de sport
streetwear / vêtements urbains
zip / fermeture éclair / fermeture à glissière