

## **Multi-word echoes of English: Visible vs. invisible Anglicisms in Danish**

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**Abstract:** The focus of this article is the developments in contemporary Danish of direct vis-à-vis indirect borrowing strategies regarding English expressions. In order to distinguish direct borrowings of such items from codeswitches, the author presents a number of approaches found in the existing literature and suggests an operational definition of codeswitching. Eight scenarios involving the adoption and/or translation of English multi-word or polymorphemic expressions are presented, and the trajectories over three decades of forty-four Danish Anglicisms representing all scenarios are investigated. The basis for this empirical research is the gigantic Danish text archive Infomedia, and the results show the relative success of ‘invisible’ multi-word and polymorphemic expressions: Anglicisms using all-Danish material but calquing their English etymons and thus representing Anglo-American concepts in Danish disguise.

**Keywords:** English, Danish, Anglicisms, codeswitching, language contact, phraseology, multi-word units, calques.

### **1. English elements abroad: Distinguishing borrowing from codeswitching**

This study investigates a number of ‘visible’ as well as ‘invisible’ echoes of English in Danish – English multi-word expressions either adopted (e.g. *make my day*) or translated (*få enderne til at mødes*, from ‘make ends meet’) by Danish speakers.

In order to stay focused on (multi-word) borrowing and avoid being side-tracked by instances of codeswitching – interesting as that venture may be – we need to separate the two phenomena. In today’s world, where societies like Denmark are becoming increasingly ‘globalized’ (a euphemism for ‘Anglified’), English serves as an all-encompassing relay, filtering intercultural exchange globally. This means that individuals, institutions and companies worldwide use English – or fragments of English – in their communication. This bilingual state of affairs is two-pronged: Speech communities integrate English ‘borrowings’ (that are never returned, of course) in their domestic language, and ‘real’ English is used in certain communicative and societal domains, either as a lingua franca or alternating with the domestic language, i.e. as codeswitches.

This phenomenon of codeswitching is by no means new, and the mixing (*Mischung*) of languages among bilinguals was already described by the German linguist Hermann Paul in 1880:

Die meiste Veranlassung zur Mischung ist gegeben, wo es Individuen gibt, die doppelsprachig sind, mehrere Sprachen neben einander sprechen oder mindestens eine andere neben ihrer Muttersprache verstehen. Ein gewisses Minimum von Verständnis einer fremden Sprache ist unter allen Umständen erforderlich. (Paul 1880: § 275)<sup>1</sup>

Paul’s view is reflected in a recent definition put forward by Irish translation scholar Marion Winters:

I understand code switches as a superordinate category comprising words, proper names, phrases and quotations, all of which are in a foreign language but are nevertheless intended to be understood by the reader as if the reader were ‘bilingual’ even in the most

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<sup>1</sup> In my translation: “Mixing is mostly found in persons who are bilingual, speak several languages or at least understand one foreign language. At any rate, a certain minimum of foreign-language comprehension is necessary.”

limited sense. (Winters 2004: 249)

Although, as mentioned by Winters and nicely illustrated in a major German study<sup>2</sup>, single words from a ‘foreign’, non-matrix (L2) language may pop up in L1 (the domestic language), codeswitches typically consist of stretches of words in L2 alternating with, or embedded in, discourse in L1. This may have to do with the fact that “the cognitive and processing costs of [switching both lexicons and grammars] for a lone other-language item are appreciably greater than those incurred by simply allowing the already activated grammar to continue operating, handling native and etymologically foreign forms the same way.” (Poplack & Dion 2012: 309).

As noted by Swiss-based linguist Ian MacKenzie, “the growth in the number of Europeans who are bilingual with English will necessarily result in crosslinguistic interaction and the increased Anglicization of discourse in Europe.” (MacKenzie 2012: 30).

And indeed, in recent decades, the Danish speech community has started moving from being an EFL<sup>3</sup> country to obtaining ESL status; practically all Danes now speak (some) English as their second language, used by default when communicating with foreigners (Gottlieb 2020a: 160 ff). In informal discourse aimed at and/or produced by young Danes, codeswitching between Danish and English is becoming common, rendering it increasingly difficult to distinguish between Anglicisms and codeswitching when investigating utterances by and for Danes (Gottlieb 2020a: 423).

In a comparative study of the use of three English phrases in Norwegian, Swedish and Danish, the author, Gisle Andersen, suggests that categorizing such items as either “borrowed phrasemes or instances of multiword code switching” should depend on “the regularity and degree of entrenchment of these phrases in the language of native speakers” (Andersen 2020a: 7).

Expressing the same awareness of a quantitative rather than qualitative difference between borrowing and codeswitching, a Danish linguist has suggested considering codeswitching and loanwords as belonging in a continuum rather than representing two disparate phenomena:

There is no absolute boundary between the extraneous elements in code-switching and loan-words (direct loans). Loan-words can be said to be the institutionalization of code-switching, and there is no objective way to determine at what point a foreign element has become an institutionalized part of the recipient language. (Larsen 1994: 22)

Based in France, Penelope Gardner-Chloros (1987: 102) has offered a no-nonsense analysis of the gradual nature of codeswitching that deserves to be cited *in extenso*:

All in all, it would appear that the distinction between code-switching and loans is of a ‘more-or-less’ and not an absolute nature:

1. loans are *more* likely to be brief (one word or phrase) than code-switches, though the majority of code-switches are also lexical;
  2. loans are *more* likely to be linguistically integrated into the receiving language than code-switches;
  3. loans are *more* likely to be filling a semantic gap in the language than code-switches.
- Whilst all these criteria may be of some help in carrying out an analysis, the most important criterion would seem to be a psychological one: is the imported element in some sense *felt* to be part of the surrounding language by the speaker and those listening

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<sup>2</sup> Citing *Der Spiegel*, Alexander Onysko (2007: 274) shows that single-word quotes may qualify as codeswitches: “Der Lebeamann Lord Louis Mountbatten, der hier als letzter Vizekönig regierte und 1947 für das Empire *Farewell* sagte ...”.

<sup>3</sup> This abbreviation, plus a dozen others, is explained in the List of abbreviations before the Reference section.

to him, or is it *felt* to be part of a different system? If it is an innovation on the speaker's part, it is a code-switch. If it is frequently used in that speech community – whether or not in free variation with a native element – then it is at least on its way to becoming a loan. In short, a loan is a code-switch with a full-time job.

Acknowledging the lack of an absolute distinction between codeswitches and direct borrowings, it still makes sense to operate with these two concepts (Gottlieb 2021). As shown in Gottlieb 2020a and Gottlieb et al. 2018, when focusing on English-Danish language contact, the watershed runs between (1) embedded *ad hoc* ‘innovative’ all-English discourse in an otherwise Danish utterance (codeswitching), and (2) English-derived stock phrases, e.g. *you name it*, inserted in Danish discourse, classified as Anglicisms.<sup>4</sup>

Codeswitching (CS) may be defined as “oscillation between elements of two or more languages in discourse produced by and meant for plurilinguals” (Gottlieb 2020a: 85-86). When you codeswitch, you communicate in (at least) two languages; when you borrow, you merely use -isms (Anglicisms, for instance) that you consider part of your own language. Conversely, when you codeswitch, you use elements from other languages according to their ‘native’ (heritage) norms; ‘foreign’ (non-matrix) elements are never adapted.

As innovation and spontaneity are key features of codeswitching, elements repeatedly found in CS today may be entrenched as Anglicisms tomorrow. Thus, only from a synchronic point of view does it make sense to distinguish between codeswitching and direct borrowing. As the Anglophone glacier keeps feeding the surrounding ocean with icebergs of English, these will later lose their shape and become assimilated as (icy) water.

In their article titled “Loan translations versus code-switching”, Ad Backus and Margreet Dorleijn (2009: 78) have phrased this shift in a less metaphorical way:

Every synchronic utterance has diachronic effects, i.e. it contributes to the development of the language involved. The result of insertional CS, especially if the same foreign word is repeatedly used in discourse by many different people, may be that the foreign word in question becomes a *normal word* in the recipient language discourse: it becomes a loan word. [italics added for emphasis]<sup>5</sup>

True as this statement is, the ‘normality’ pointed out here is a slippery concept; a word normally used by one group of speakers of a recipient language (RL) may sound abnormal to other RL speakers – one person’s loanword may still be seen as a non-RL expression by others.

However, when using the terms ‘community’ and ‘code’, and interpreting them at a subcultural level, the following attempt by Alexander Onysko (2019: 39) at distinguishing between CS and borrowing successfully avoids the vagueness of the concept of normality:

[B]orrowings represent accepted lexical items and grammatical structures across a community of speakers sharing the same code (L[anguage]a) whereas codeswitching involves the use of language units from another code (Lb) that are not part of the habitual

<sup>4</sup> Viewed diachronically, what began as individual instances of Anglophone material found in non-Anglophone discourse may later – due to phonological and/or formal integration and/or increased usage – qualify as Anglicisms, and thus become relevant for scrutiny in studies like this.

<sup>5</sup> The two authors operate with the distinction between “Alternational CS: the alternation of material in two languages in bilingual discourse” and “Insertional CS: the use of material from one language, the Embedded Language (EL), in bilingual discourse. In this type, the foreign material is embedded in clauses that are clearly recognizable as in the Matrix Language (ML)” (Backus & Dorleijn 2009: 76-77).

forms of expression in La.

Moving now from the ‘borrowing-codeswitching’ distinction to looking at the usage of all types of English in RL communities, the following typology of RL discourse involving recognizable features of English can be established:

*All-English discourse:*

- English used as a lingua franca (often involving non-native speakers only)
- English used as a result of domain loss<sup>6</sup> (typically written communication)

*Codeswitching* (involving *ad hoc* usage of English elements)

- ‘Random’ zigzagging in and out of English<sup>7</sup>
- Intrasentential switches into English
- Extrasentential use of English, including untranslated quotations

*Anglified RL usage* (direct Anglicisms)

- Prefabricated multi-word chunks from English (stock phrases, interjections, etc.)
- Direct single-word borrowings embedded or integrated in the RL

As stated earlier, these categories are not one hundred percent mutually exclusive, nor are they immune to changed language attitudes and practices in a given speech community or subculture. Still, from a synchronic point of view, the following illustration of the steps from (1) Anglified usage including Anglicisms over (2) codeswitching to (3) all-English discourse should make sense. The color-coding marks the four levels of ‘Englishness’ in the utterances – with red illustrating English without any RL elements.

In Table 1, only utterance (a) is authentic; the other constructions are made up for the occasion, but at least utterances b, c, d, and e might be encountered in the Danish speech community – in its capacity as a bilingual society in the making:

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<sup>6</sup> Domain loss is here defined as the use of solely English in a given domain. Other scholars prefer to see domain loss as the loss of L1 *terminology* only (cf. Hultgren 2016).

<sup>7</sup> This type of codeswitching is commonly found in diglossic societies, when speakers mix acrolect content words with basilect function words (see Myers-Scotton 1993, Stell 2012 and Gottlieb 2020b for the English impact on Afrikaans).

Table 1: The cline from embedded Anglicisms via codeswitching to all-English discourse

Utterance	Type
(a) “For mit eget vedkommende tænkte jeg: <i>Mission accomplished</i> .” <sup>8</sup> (Danish Afghanistan veteran in the daily <i>Information</i> , June 26, 2021)	Anglicism: borrowed stock phrase
(b) Jeg følte at vores mission <sup>9</sup> var <i>accomplished</i> . (c) Jeg følte at vores <i>mission</i> <sup>10</sup> var <i>accomplished</i>	Anglicism: borrowed adjective only Anglicism: stock phrase decomposed
(d) Jeg følte at <i>our mission was accomplished</i>	Intrasentential codeswitching
(e) Jeg følte at vi havde <i>accomplished our mission</i>	Intrasentential codeswitching
(f) Jeg følte: <i>We had accomplished our mission</i> <sup>11</sup>	Extrasentential codeswitching
(g) <i>I felt that we had accomplished our mission</i>	All-English discourse

## 2. Inconspicuous vs. visible multi-word Anglicisms in Danish

Having in the previous chapter established a distinction between codeswitching and borrowing, we will now focus on the main topic of this study: English-based multi-word units – including polymorphemic calques – in modern Danish usage. Using the codeswitching vs. borrowing distinction, this study will not deal with English phrasemes as found in brand names, slogans, etc. – no matter how frequently such ‘undigested’ tokens of codeswitching may occur in contemporary Danish oral and written communication.

The presence of multi-word Anglicisms in a language is a sign of a rather advanced stage of English impact:

The borrowing of phraseological types, as opposed to simple and compound loanwords, which historically represent the most common types, testifies to a more intimate contact with the English language, including the spoken register through the mass and social media. (Pulcini 2020: 129)

These multi-word types form part of the complex notion of Anglicism, defined as “any individual or systemic language feature adapted or adopted from English, or inspired or boosted by English models, used in intralingual communication in a speech community in which English is not the home language.” (Gottlieb 2020a: 32).

This comprehensive definition includes English-based influence at all levels, from orthography to pragmatics,<sup>12</sup> and covers direct as well as indirect borrowings from English. Direct borrowings comprise all types of (more or less visible) *imports* from English, while indirect borrowings encompass English-*impacted* RL features, including semantic borrowings and loan translations (also known as calques) – types constituting “a covert form of cross-linguistic influence” (Meriläinen et al.

<sup>8</sup> In my translation: “Personally, I thought: Mission accomplished.”

<sup>9</sup> This noun, originally borrowed from French, is here pronounced in standard Danish fashion, with stress on the final syllable. The sentence in English translation: “I felt that our mission was accomplished.”

<sup>10</sup> In this utterance, *mission* is pronounced as in English.

<sup>11</sup> In English: “I felt: We had accomplished our mission.”

<sup>12</sup> Pragmatic aspects of borrowing from English have gained increased academic attention in recent years, cf. Andersen 2017 & 2022a, Andersen et al. 2017, Peterson & Beers-Fägersten 2018, Núñez Nogueroles 2019, and Zenner et al. 2018.

2016).<sup>13</sup>

Contrary to commonly held views, the earliest Danish Anglicisms were not just direct single-word lexemes (often linked to English culture and society), words like *golf* and *parliament*. Also several multi-word units were introduced in Danish before 1900, as either direct borrowings (e.g. *all right*, used in a letter to Hans Christian Andersen in 1855<sup>14</sup>) or indirect borrowings (like *i fuldt sving*, from ‘in full swing’, attested in Danish since 1886).<sup>15</sup>

As pointed out by several Danish scholars (Larsen 1984; Sørensen 1995; Gottlieb 2020a: Chapter 4), translations from English have often paved the way for Anglicisms later to become entrenched in the RL – in our case, Danish. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an era preceding film and other modern mass media, many Danish newspapers included front-page episodes of (translated) pulp fiction, resulting in the introduction of direct Anglicisms – words like *veranda*, *terrier* and *brandy* – as well as indirect and ‘invisible’ borrowings, typically multi-word units.

A 19<sup>th</sup> century example of an English phraseme translated into Danish and soon becoming common in Danish parlance is *i en nøddeskal*, from ‘in(to) a nutshell’. This calque was found in the Danish newspaper “Fædrelandet” of February 13, 1850 – 72 years prior to the earliest attestation of the similar calque in Norwegian sources (Andersen 2019). In an installment of the Danish translation of Chapter 25 of “David Copperfield Junior’s Life and Adventures” – where direct borrowings as *Gentleman* and *Mr.* reveal the text’s origin – it says “Denne sætning, der ligesom sammenpressede det almindelige Spørgsmål i en Nøddeskal, vandt almindeligt bifald ...” [This sentence, which in a way compressed the usual question into a nutshell, was widely applauded]<sup>16</sup>

Also verbal idioms were often calqued, an early example being ‘cry over spilt milk’ disguised as *græde over spildt mælk*, as attested in an installment of another English (uncredited) story published in the local Danish paper *Middelfart Avis* of December 3, 1867 – still using German-style *Frakturschrift*:

Kapitain Ritfon begyndte:  
 „Stille, Kvartermester. Det er ikke Tiden nu at  
 græde over spildt Mælk. Jeg ønsker ikke at faare Deres  
 Følelser, for De er en retskaffen Mand, kjøndt De somme  
 Tider har drevet det vel vidt med Groogaaen. Sea er en

In the last line, we witness a direct Anglicism, now obsolete in Danish, *Groggen* (from English ‘grog’) in the sentence following “Det er ikke Tiden nu at græde over spildt Mælk.” [Now is not the time to cry over spilt milk.]

An 1888 issue of a Danish magazine presented the perhaps earliest published anti-Anglicism statement, in which the author lamented the success of the Anglicism *sport* (first attested in Danish 1866) – a term seen as a threat to established Danish synonyms (Gottlieb 2020a: 251). As German was then the most dominant donor language in Denmark, several Anglicisms were introduced in Danish via German, which in turn had adopted many Anglicisms from French. Starting in 1899, Hermann Dunger, a German linguist, warned against the *Engländerei* in the German language, criticizing – among other things – the use of multi-word units like *political gossip* and *Matter-of-fact-man* by German authors (Dunger 1909: 41). Such direct borrowings were also introduced in Danish,

<sup>13</sup> For comprehensive typologies of Anglicisms, see Gómez Capuz 1997, Sunde 2018, and Gottlieb 2020: Chapter 2.

<sup>14</sup> “Gid De maa være fri for Bylder og Cholera, og hele Deres Reise igjennem maa kunne sige: all right.” [May you avoid abscesses and cholera, and throughout your journey be able to say: all right.]

<sup>15</sup> Earliest Danish attestations of these and thousands of other Anglicisms are listed in the Global Anglicism Database (GLAD): <https://glad.ivdnt.org/lexit2/?db=publicglad&lang=en>.

<sup>16</sup> The original phrasing in this English novel deviates somewhat from the Danish translation (back-translated verbatim above): “This sentiment, as compressing the general question into a nutshell, gave the utmost satisfaction, ...”.

e.g. *common sense* (1853), *toastmaster* (1853), *gentlemanlike* (1856), and *sleeping partner* (1874).

Calques (aka loan translations), however, constituted a more frequent multi-word type of Anglicism in Danish: By 1945 – a year often said to be signalling the acceleration of the influence of English in European speech communities – more than four hundred English-based loan translations were attested in Danish, the earliest ones including *den offentlige mening* (1797, from ‘public opinion’), *kræmmernation* (1834, from ‘nation of shopkeepers’), and *på krigsstien* (1845, from ‘on the warpath’).

Returning to German, several studies have looked at the English influence on phraseology, and as stated by Sabine Fiedler, referring to both calques and direct multi-word borrowings, “[s]ome phraseological Anglicisms seem to have started a life of their own in the German language and people apply them according to their communicative needs.” (Fiedler 2012: 257; see also Fiedler 2014 and 2017.)

Also speakers of Slavonic and Romance languages have coined large numbers of calques based on English models, as documented in several scholarly works, including a monograph by Alicja Witalisz (2015; Polish) and articles by Martí Solano (2012; French), Oncins-Martínez (2021; Spanish), and Klégr & Bozděchová (2022; Czech). A cross-linguistic overview on the inventory of direct multi-word Anglicisms and calques in the then embryonic GLAD database was offered by Virginia Pulcini (2020), with the most productive English elements in the creation of (Italian) multi-word units listed in Pulcini 2023: 74.

A comparative study looked at the fate of English-based calques in German and Spanish (Rodríguez González & Knospe 2019), but hardly any studies have focused on usage as documented in the relative success of directly borrowed multi-word Anglicisms vis-à-vis English-based calques in a given RL.<sup>17</sup>

Based on corpus data, this article seeks to fill that gap by suggesting a way to systematically chart how the various manifestations of English multi-word units fare in contemporary written discourse.

### 3. Purpose and methodology of this study

This empirical study aims at measuring how successful direct English multi-word borrowings are in comparison with English-based calques – many of which, as we have seen, were coined already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Are calques – invisible and inconspicuous to the average speaker<sup>18</sup> – still going strong in modern (written) Danish? Or are – in line with the Danes’ increased familiarity with English – direct, visible borrowings enjoying more widespread use in recent years?

The answer to this question may partly depend on how the recipient speech community evaluates visible traits from the donor (or dominant) language, English in this case. If any prestige is attached to the wholesale import of donor-language words and expressions, calquing may be reserved for those expressions that are easily translated into the RL. A study on Dutch influence on Frisian has shown that ‘predictable’ lexemes, i.e. compositional words and phrases with semantically transparent elements, lend themselves well to part-by-part translation, resulting in calques. In contrast, non-compositional entities tend to be adopted in the RL untranslated, as direct borrowings (Hoekstra &

<sup>17</sup> Oncins-Martínez 2021 (192) presents one such corpus-based comparison: In Spain, the English compound *brainstorming* is more frequent than the calques *tormenta de ideas* and *lluvia de ideas*, while in American Spanish the latter calque is dominant.

<sup>18</sup> Of course, this begs the question whether a given Danish construction is in fact an English-based calque and not an independent development – or a calque based on German or French, for example. A method for testing the alleged English origin of such constructions (found in Norwegian) is demonstrated in a number of articles by Gisle Andersen (2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2021, 2022b). Due to the large number of items investigated in this Danish study, Andersen’s diachronic-contrastive corpus method was not used, yet there are no indications of a non-English provenance of the calques randomly selected for this study.

van der Kuip 2017). Regarding the English-Danish contact situation, this might mean that expressions like ‘eye-opener’ and ‘not in my backyard’ are more likely candidates for loan translation than are more opaque (and, admittedly, rare) English constructions like the exclamation ‘ups-a-daisy’ and the noun ‘shooting brake’ – the former converted into *upsedasse* and the latter adopted wholesale as *shooting brake*.

To determine the quantitative developments of selected English-based compounds and phrasemes – whether imports or calques – the gigantic Danish text archive *Infomedia* will serve as the primary source, while authoritative Danish dictionaries will be used for determining the dating of these Anglicisms. Realizing that many such items, whether directly or indirectly based on English, are rare in sheer numbers, searches will not look at frequencies for single years, as such figures may not show the overall trajectories of the items under scrutiny. Instead, two periods, 1990-2009 and 2010-2019 were selected for comparison. In that way, although finer details may be overlooked, general trends should be more visible, and figures ought to be more valid.

As mentioned above, the English-based multi-word (and polymorphemic) units in modern Danish may represent either *visible* or *invisible* Anglification (Gottlieb 2020a). While visible (and often mental) influence is often linked to direct borrowings such as *fatshaming*, invisible influence may have the same societal impact hidden behind indirect borrowings as *tak for din tid*, a direct echo of the Anglo-American mindset represented by the expression ‘thanks for your time’.

In addition to multi-word calques, even monomorphemic words may represent indirect influence from English, in the shape of semantic borrowing. Thus, in many languages, the English semantic expansion of the word ‘mouse’ (now including the IT sense ‘hand-held device for moving the cursor’) has been echoed, as already documented in the *Dictionary of European Anglicisms*, DEA (Görlach 2001). Also in Danish, the ‘rodent’ sense has been supplemented by the IT sense; *mus* has taken over the additional electronic properties of ‘mouse’.

With words and expressions composed of several morphemes, the indirect English influence seldom changes the semantics of existing lexemes; it typically takes the form of calquing, i.e. the coinage in the recipient speech community of loan translations of the elements constituting the English donor item, also known as the etymon.

In order to learn whether calquing – as a relatively invisible type of borrowing – or direct borrowing may have the upper hand in contemporary Danish, this study will focus not only on the fate of English-based *multi-word units* in Danish; it will also include *polymorphemic lexical items*. In addition, we will investigate the success of such complex Anglicisms against all-Danish synonyms, whenever these exist.

This means that a total of eight scenarios will be investigated:<sup>19</sup>

- 1) Direct multi-word borrowings without synonymous calques (*grand old man*)
- 2) Direct multi-word borrowings with synonymous calques (*Take it easy!* vs. *Tag det roligt!*)
- 3) Multi-word calques without established synonyms (*så meget for* + NP<sup>20</sup>, from ‘so much for’ + NP)
- 4) Multi-word calques with established synonyms (*skudt og dræbt*, from ‘shot and killed’, vs. *skuddræbt* or *skudt*)
- 5) Direct polymorphemic borrowings without synonymous calques (*art director*)
- 6) Direct polymorphemic borrowings with synonymous calques (*fringe benefit* vs. *frynsegode*)
- 7) Polymorphemic calques without established synonyms (*køkkenrulle*, from ‘kitchen roll’).

<sup>19</sup> I have used a simple and operational typology here; for a more comprehensive taxonomy of loan translations, see Witalisz 2015: 87-92.

<sup>20</sup> This and all other abbreviations are explained in the List of abbreviations before the References.



- 8) Polymorphemic calques with established synonyms (*øjenåbnende*, from ‘eye-opening’, vs. *øjnefaldende*).

Whereas scenarios 1-4 involve ‘udtryk’ (expressions) in Danish, scenarios 5-8 simply deal with ‘ord’ (words). As a rule, Danish compound nouns are (supposed to be) spelled in one word: Solid spelling is the norm, as opposed to English (*Retskrivningsordbogen* 2012). However, several English-based compounds found in written Danish are often spelled in two or more words, as in English. Hence, the searches in this study include authorized as well as unauthorized spellings of the Anglicisms investigated. This means that, for instance, statistics for words like *hightech* will include figures for the variants *high tech* and *high-tech*.

#### 4. Selecting items to be studied

When investigating the fate of the eight possible Anglicism scenarios under scrutiny here, care has to be taken to avoid bias in the selection of items deserving close examination (Gottlieb 2012 & 2020a: 169 ff.). To this end, I have randomly picked Anglicisms for each scenario listed above from the Danish contribution to the online GLAD database (open access since spring 2023 at <https://lexit.inl.nl/lexit2/?db=glad&lang=en>).<sup>21</sup> By August 17, 2023, the Danish contribution consisted of 15,305 Anglicisms, many of which are simple, monomorphemic words irrelevant in this context, whether adopted (as *veggie*), adapted (as *entitet*; from ‘entity’), or semantically calqued (as *vindue* used metaphorically, cf. ‘window of opportunity’). However, no less than 4,616 of these Danish Anglicisms were listed as loan translations, thus representing a significant share, 30.2 percent, of the total.<sup>22</sup>

The word-class distribution of the 2,887 loan translations listed in the Danish GLAD contribution is shown in Table 2, together with the figures for all types of Anglicisms:

Table 2: Word-class distribution of Danish loan translations from English vs. all GLAD Anglicisms

Word class (POS)	Danish loan translations		All Danish Anglicisms	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Adjectives	405	8.8%	1,935	12.6%
Adverbs	121	2.6%	284	1.9%
Interjections	99	2.1%	393	2.6%
Nouns	2,699	58.5%	10,565	69.0%
Verbs	1,219	<b>26.4%</b>	1,986	<b>13.0%</b>
Other	73	1.6%	142	0.9%
Total	4,616	100.0%	15,305	100%

Although still dominant, nouns hold a smaller share of loan translations than of Anglicisms in general: Table 2 highlights the fact that more than a quarter of the Danish loan translations are verbs, while the share held by verbs is only half that size for Anglicisms in general.

In the comprehensive “Dictionary of Anglicisms in Danish” (DAD), 80.4% of the 6,180 entries are nouns, against 9.5% verbs and 8.9% adjectives (Sørensen 1997: 4). In contrast, as seen in Table 2, only 69 percent of the entries in the Danish GLAD contribution are nouns, against 13 percent verbs and a similar percentage of adjectives. Based on the fact that the DAD includes the same categories

<sup>21</sup> Apart from frequency checks yet to be made, all items in the Danish GLAD contribution comply with the criteria for inclusion mentioned in Gottlieb et al. 2018 and Gottlieb 2021.

<sup>22</sup> In Polish, a language dissimilar to Danish, an almost similar figure seems to apply: Having compiled 547 Polish loan translations from English, Alicja Witalisz (2015: 96) compares this figure to the approximately 2,000 Anglicisms listed in a Polish dictionary of Anglicisms (Mańczak-Wohlfeld 2010). As for German, nearly one third of the entries in the *Anglizismen-Wörterbuch* (Carstensen, Busse & Schmude 1993-96) are *Lehnprägungen*, i.e. calques and semantic loans (Munske 2020: 15-16).

of Anglicisms as those represented in the GLAD database, it is fair to say that regarding Anglicisms, recent Danish represents more grammatical diversity than Danish spoken a couple of decades ago – in line with the analysis in Heidemann Andersen 2019: 47-51.

#### 4.1. Loan translations: Scenarios 3, 4, 7, and 8

Due to the size of the Danish database, only a small percentage of all relevant items, *in casu* loan translations, could be included for close investigation in this study. To obtain a manageable, yet representative selection of entries, items representing one percent of each of the relevant Anglicism types were selected. This random selection process was conducted in May 2020, when the number of listed loan translations amounted to almost 2,200 items. The process of picking items from the alphabetical listing at intervals of 100 entries thus yielded 22 items – all of which qualifying by definition as calques, cf. scenarios 3, 4, 7 or 8 listed in Chapter 3 above. In this way, starting with number 50 in alphabetical order and ending with number 2,150, a microcosmos of twenty-two loan translations was established, cf. Table 3:<sup>23</sup>

Table 3: Items randomly selected representing scenarios 3, 4, 7 and 8

Loan translation item	English etymon	Scenario number
{aldrig/ikke} se sig tilbage	never look back	3 (Multi-word calque, no DK synonym)
atten måneder <sup>24</sup>	eighteen months	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
det har ikke været det samme	it hasn't been the same	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
e-brev	e-letter	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
den dybe stat	the deep state	3 (Multi-word calque, no DK synonym)
fastforwardknap	fast-forward button	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
gadebarn	street kid	7 (Polymorphemic calque, no DK synonym)
grøn revolution	green revolution	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
hawaiiiskjorte	Hawaii shirt	7 (Polymorphemic calque, no DK synonym)
holde {krudtet/sit krudt} tørt	keep your powder dry	3 (Multi-word calque, no DK synonym)
hvis ikke for +NP	if not for +NP	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
ikke min ting	not my thing	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
jobbeskrivelse	job description	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
kommunikationssatellit	communications satellite	7 (Polymorphemic calque, no DK synonym)
lederskab	leadership	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
ned ad mindernes boulevard	down memory lane	3 (Multi-word calque, no DK synonym)
nultolerance	zero tolerance	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
presset på tid	pressed for time	4 (Multi-word calque with DK synonym)
slipstrøm	slipstream	7 (Polymorphemic calque, no DK synonym)
teddybjørn	teddybear	8 (Polymorphemic calque with DK synonym)
vægtvogter	weight watcher	7 (Polymorphemic calque, no DK synonym)
åbent ægteskab	open marriage	3 (Multi-word calque, no DK synonym)

Before investigating the trajectories of these 22 Anglicisms, along with the fates of the all-Danish synonyms of the scenario-4 and scenario-8 items, let us have a look at relevant details for each scenario:

<sup>23</sup> As no scenario-3 items were found in the randomized process described above, which yielded ten scenario-7 items, six scenario-4 items, and six scenario-8 items, the first five scenario-7 items were replaced by scenario-3 items found at equidistant intervals in the list of nearly 2,200 loan translations.

<sup>24</sup> This item, although rare in Danish usage, is included here as an English calque, as it is now mainly used in the 'English' sense, namely 'roughly one and a half years' – synonymous with the Danish expression *halvandet års tid*.

Table 4: Multi-word calques without established Danish synonyms (Scenario 3)

Danish item	POS	Dating <sup>25</sup>	English etymon
{aldrig/ikke} se sig tilbage	verb	1990	never look back
den dybe stat	noun	1999	the deep state
holde {krudtet/sit krudt} tørt	verb	1894	keep your powder dry
ned ad mindernes boulevard	adverb	1992	down memory lane
åbent ægteskab	noun	1972	open marriage

Three word classes are represented in this small selection, which includes one expression dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Moving now on to multi-word calques in competition with existing Danish synonyms, we come across a disambiguation problem, as shown in Table 5:<sup>26</sup>

Table 5: Multi-word calques with established Danish synonyms (Scenario 4)

Danish item	POS	Dating	English etymon	Danish synonym	Back-translation
atten måneder	noun	1983	eighteen months	halvandet år	one and a half years
grøn revolution	noun	1991	green revolution	den grønne omstilling	the green transition
ikke min ting	adjective	2004	not my thing	ikke noget for mig	not something for me
presset på tid	adjective	1994	pressed for time	under tidspres	under time pressure
{smide/kaste} håndklædet i ringen	verb	1948	throw the towel in the ring	opgive ævred	give up
{tjekke/checke} op på	verb	1993	check up on	se nærmere på	have a closer look at

Now moving from multi-word to polymorphemic items, all selected Scenario 7 and Scenario 8 items turn out to be nouns – hardly surprising:

Table 6: Polymorphemic calques without established Danish synonyms (Scenario 7)

Danish item	POS	Dating	English etymon
gadebarn	noun	1976	street kid
hawaiiskjorte	noun	1960	Hawaiian shirt
kommunikationssatellit	noun	1961	communications satellite
slipstrøm	noun	1934	slipstream
vægtvogter	noun	1970	weight watcher

Table 7: Polymorphemic calques with established Danish synonyms (Scenario 8)

Danish item	POS	Dating	English etymon	Danish synonym	Back-translation
e-brev	noun	1994	e-letter	elektronisk brev	electronic letter
fastforwardknap	noun	1987	fast-forward button	knap til fremadspoling	button for winding forward
jobbeskrivelse	noun	1974	job description	stillingsbeskrivelse	description of position
lederskab	noun	1946	leadership	ledelse	management
nultolerance	noun	1996	zero tolerance	ingen pardon	no pardon
teddybjørn	noun	1917	teddybear	bamse	cuddly toy

<sup>25</sup> In all tables, the term ‘dating’ refers to earliest known attestation in Danish printed sources.

<sup>26</sup> Due to the syntactic complexity of some calques and the related difficulties in sorting out false positives in corpus searches, two calques had to be replaced by two other calques picked randomly from the end of the alphabet. The fact that both of these (in red in Table 5) happened to be verb phrases resulted in a nice balance between the three dominant parts of speech.

#### 4.2. Direct borrowings: Scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6

We now turn to direct borrowings, found in scenarios 1, 2, 5 and 6. For easy comparison with the randomly selected examples of calques (cf. Tables 4-7), five Anglicisms for scenarios 1 and 5, plus six Anglicisms for scenarios 2 and 6, were selected. Of the more than 4,000 Anglicisms listed as unadapted borrowings (as of May 2020), five Scenario-1 multi-word items were picked randomly, at equidistant intervals. These items, typically used in informal Danish discourse, are shown in Table 8:

Table 8: Direct multi-word borrowings without Danish calques (Scenario 1)

Danish direct borrowing	POS	Dating
Case closed!	interjection	1992
face the music	verb phrase	2002
I dare you!	interjection	1998
the real thing	noun	1989
you name it	noun	1984

Moving on to scenario-2 items, these direct multi-word borrowings sharing their English etymon with Danish calques turn out to be quite rare; only eighteen such pairs were found. Using the method described earlier, six of these were selected for further investigation, cf. Table 9:

Table 9: Direct multi-word borrowings with Danish calques (Scenario 2)

Danish direct borrowing	POS	Dating	Danish calque	Dating
another day {in/at} the office	noun	2000	endnu en dag på kontoret	1995
do-it-yourself	adjective	1957	gør-det-selv-	1955
God's own country	noun	1990	Guds eget land	1945
It ain't over till the fat lady sings	interjection	1996	ikke før den fede dame har sunget	1993
not in my back yard	adverb	1992	ikke i min baghave	1991
Take it easy!	interjection	1990	Tag det roligt!	1908

It is worth noting that all six randomly chosen Scenario-2 direct borrowings were attested later in Danish than were their synonymous calques, highlighted in blue.

Remaining now are scenarios 5 and 6. Starting with the former scenario, the five items to be examined were randomly selected (among several hundred entries) in the same way as the Scenario-1 items. This yielded the Anglicisms, all nouns, displayed in Table 10:

Table 10: Direct polymorphemic borrowings without Danish calques (Scenario 5)

Danish direct borrowing	POS	Dating
case-study	noun	1965
executive summary	noun	1992
human beatboxing	noun	2006
raveparty	noun	1991
young adult	noun	2004

Finally, the six Scenario-6 Anglicisms, constituting with their Danish equivalents, i.e. calques, a relatively limited number of Anglicisms, had to be selected manually from the entire Danish A-Z list – as was the case of the Scenario-2 items. Table 11 shows this last group of items, all randomly selected, except for the pair *peer-reviewed* vs. *fagfællebedømt*, a rare example of a conscious effort by the Danish Language Council to promote a ‘replacement word’ (*fagfælle* means ‘co-expert’ or ‘peer’ and *bedømt* means ‘reviewed’ or ‘evaluated’):

Table 11: Direct polymorphemic borrowings with Danish calques (Scenario 6)

Danish direct borrowing	POS	Dating	Danish calque	Dating
afterparty	noun	1993	efterfest	1994
dickpic	noun	2013	pikbillede	2014
gamification	noun	2011	spilificering	2011
lame duck	noun	1996	lam and	1983
peer-reviewed	adjective	1997	fagfællebedømt	2007
rush hour	noun	1929	myldretid	1937

The datings highlighted in blue show that – as opposed to the Scenario-2 findings, where multi-word calques preceded direct borrowings – only one of the six Scenario-6 ‘single-word’ calques, *lam and*, was attested earlier than its synonymous direct borrowing.

English compounds (like *afterparty*) thus may be more easily adopted by Danes than multi-word constructions (e.g. *another day {in/at} the office*), with calques paving the way for later adoption of the original English expressions (see also Hansen 1999 and Bergh & Ohlander 2012).

## 5. Findings

The sizes of *bona fide* text corpora, as for instance the American *COCA* (Davies) and the Danish *TiDK* (Asmussen 2019/2021) corpora, are typically made public, thus allowing for judgments of absolute frequencies of the items searched for. However, the size of the main source of this study, *Infomedia* – a gigantic news text archive which keeps growing exponentially – is no longer publicized. We do know, however, that in 2013 *Infomedia* announced that it contained more than 50 million articles, typically news stories. With an estimated average of some 400 words per article, the number of running words may then have amounted to 20 billion (Gottlieb 2020a, 216), meaning that by 2021 *Infomedia* may have contained at least 30 billion running words, but no exact figures are available. This lack of data would not matter if this diachronic study only investigated the relative numerical success of direct English borrowings vis-à-vis calques. However, four of the eight scenarios present borrowings and calques with no synonyms in Danish. Thus, in order to determine the potential success of such ‘uncontested’ items, a method for assessing the (approximate) numerical growth from the first to the second period investigated (1990-2009 and 2010-2019, respectively) should be found. To this end, in each of the two periods I searched for the isolated frequencies of the words in a simple Danish sentence representing five parts of speech: *kvinder lever længere her i Danmark* [women live longer here in Denmark]:

Table 12: Assessing the growth of the Infomedia text archive<sup>27</sup>

Expression	Frequency in KorpusDK <sup>28</sup> (58 million words)	Infomedia period 1: 01.01.1990-31.12.2009	Infomedia period 2: 01.01.2010-31.12.2019	Infomedia growth
kvinder (noun) <sup>29</sup>	32,844 (566 ppm)	1,366,693	3,097,542	126.6%
lever (verb)	24,547 (423 ppm)	1,517,406	3,352,046	121.0%
længere (adjective)	76,017 (1,310 ppm)	5,009,780	12,039,699	140.3%
her i (preposition)	13,590 (234 ppm)	571,175	1,433,224	150.9%
Danmark (proper noun)	57,628 (994 ppm)	3,337,746	8,086,531	142.3%
Average growth rate period 1 > 2: <b>136.2%</b>				

As shown in Table 12, the average growth in size between the two periods investigated is 136 percent. In addition, the standard deviation turns out to be reassuringly small (10.9%), as all five elements in the sentence show a growth of between 121 and 151 percent. In other words, rejecting the null hypothesis of ‘no change’ from period 1 to period 2 in the frequencies of the Anglicisms investigated would mean that changes should deviate markedly from the average of a 136% growth from period 1 to 2.

In the following tables, this growth rate of 136% will be used to compensate for the lack of available data on the size of *Infomedia* and will serve as a way to normalize the number of hits found in the two periods investigated. Thus, in Table 13 and the following tables, positive growth rates exceeding the span (from 121.0% to 150.9%) in Table 12 with more than the standard deviation of 10.9%, i.e. rates from 167 percent and up, will be highlighted in **red**, whereas negative growth rates and rates below 89.1% of the interval, i.e. rates below 108 percent, will be highlighted in **green**.

<sup>27</sup> *Infomedia* was not designed as a proper language corpus. This means that the number of hits in this and the following tables does not refer to individual instances of the search node, *in casu* a given multi-word or polymorphemic unit; only the number of (newspaper, journal or blog) articles containing the search node is given. However, this is of no concern here, as we compare the number of hits found in two periods within this text archive. What does matter is the lack of oral communication represented – a drawback shared with most *bona fide* language corpora.

<sup>28</sup> This open-access Danish text corpus includes mostly written sources and covers the period 1982-2002.

<sup>29</sup> All searches are lemmatized. This means that the search for the plural indefinite form ‘kvinder’ returns all hits for all eight forms of the lemma ‘kvinde’, including the definite singular (‘kvinden’) and plural (‘kvinderne’) forms, plus the genitive forms ‘kvindes’, ‘kvindens’, ‘kvinders’, and ‘kvindernes’.

Table 13: Direct multi-word borrowings without Danish calques (Scenario 1)

Danish direct borrowing	Dating <sup>30</sup>	Infomedia <sup>31</sup> 1.1.1990-31.12.2009 (number of hits)	Infomedia 1.1.2010-31.12.2019 (number of hits)	Period 1 > 2 change
Case closed!	1992 I	57	137	140.4%
fear of missing out <sup>32</sup> {FOMO/fomo}	2007 I 2007 I	1 0	881 103	88,000% ↑
I kid you not <sup>33</sup>	2001 I	7	67	857.1%
the shit out of <sup>34</sup>	1998 I	2	3	50.0%
you name it	1984 N	2,330	4,352	86.8%

As we will see later on, results are mixed: The two most recent items display impressive growth, while two other (predominantly oral) items fail to keep up (*you name it*) or stay very infrequent (*the shit out of*) in this archive of written sources.<sup>35</sup>

Turning now to the competition between direct and indirect English borrowings, the most typical result is the growth of both competitors, shown as two red percentages in the ‘change’ column of Table 14. Apart from the *trial and error* pair, where the direct borrowing is all-dominant, the calques are doing well, with a ‘semantic market share’ of between 45 and 95 percent, the average being 61.9%, against a modest 38.1% share of direct borrowings.

<sup>30</sup> In this and the following tables, the sources for dating, i.e. first attestations, of Anglicisms are abbreviated as follows: *Arkiv for Dansk Litteratur* (A); *KorpusDK* (K); *NoiD*, an online dictionary of Danish post-1955 neologisms (N); *Infomedia* (I); *Retskrivningsordbogen*, the official Danish spelling dictionary (R); *ODS*, the comprehensive Danish pre-1955 dictionary (O); *DDO*, the Danish corpus-based post-1955 dictionary (D); Sørensen 1997: “A Dictionary of Anglicisms in Danish” (S).

<sup>31</sup> In order to exclude English-language sources, news agencies were deselected as sources when searching *Infomedia*. All searches were made in the ‘Præcis sådan’ (‘exact wording’) mode.

<sup>32</sup> Due to polysemy, a factor also mentioned as a potential source of error in a similar Dutch study (Zenner et al. 2012), corpus searches of several of the randomly selected expressions yielded tokens that turned out to refer to proper nouns, e.g. film or song titles. In this case, the selected Scenario-1 string *face the music* was found to be homographic with several song titles, so the next ‘eligible’ Scenario-1 entry was selected from the alphabetical GLAD Database list.

<sup>33</sup> Ditto: The Scenario-1 item *I dare you* is also the title of a song and a film.

<sup>34</sup> Also occurrences of the item *the real thing* turned out to refer to a song. Instead, the next relevant GLAD Scenario-1 entry was chosen: *the shit out of* – which yielded 24 hits in period 1, 22 of which were English quotations or instances of codeswitching. Likewise, in period 2, only 3 out of 93 hits qualified as Anglicisms.

<sup>35</sup> Future studies using sources of a more oral nature, including social media messages, may show different results for vernacular expressions like the ones investigated here.

Table 14: Direct multi-word borrowings with Danish calques (Scenario 2)

Competing expressions	Dating	Infomedia 1 1990-2009	Infomedia 2 2010-2019		Period 1 > 2 change (number of hits)
		Number of hits	Number of hits	Share of calque(s)	
another day {in/at} the office <i>endnu en dag på kontoret</i>	2000 I <i>1995 I</i>	152 520	147 1,275	89.7%	- 3.3% 145.2%
do-it-yourself; <i>gør-det-selv-</i>	1957 S <i>1955 N</i>	560 21,109	1,961 41,590	95.5%	250.2% 97.0%
graphic novel; <sup>36</sup> <i>grafisk roman</i>	2005 I <i>1987 I</i>	325 349	1,629 1,340	45.3%	401.2% 284.0%
(It ain't over) till the fat lady sings; { <i>før/når</i> } <i>den fede dame har sunget</i>	1996 I <i>1993 I</i>	45 198	139 572	80.5%	208.9% 188.9%
not in my {back yard/backyard}; <i>ikke i min {baghave/baggård}</i>	1992 I <i>1991 I</i>	261 189 baghave 10 baggård	409 471 baghave 53 baggård	56.2%	56.7% 108.0% 430.0%
<i>trial and error</i> ; <sup>37</sup> forsøg-og-fejl(-metoden) forsøg-fejl(-metoden)	<i>1938 N</i> 1974 N 1962 N	228 7	721 33	4.4%	216.2% 371.4%
<b>Average share: calques</b> Average share: direct borrowings				<b>61.9%</b> 38.1%	

In Table 14 (as in Tables 16, 18, and 20) the earliest attested item in a given set of competitors is highlighted in blue. Five out of the six calques preceded the direct borrowings in Danish usage – four of them still dominant in the 2010-2019 period, yielding an average share for calques of almost 62 percent. The only exception here is *trial and error*, which preceded the Danish calque by decades and still reigns supreme. The conclusion seems to be that when a calque introduces a new concept, chances are that it will remain successful even when later challenged by the arrival of its etymon in the shape of a direct loan with the same denotation.<sup>38</sup>

Looking once more at ‘uncontested’ items, Table 15 shows a direct correlation between the dating of a calque and its growth from period 1 to period 2, with the 19<sup>th</sup> century expression *holde krudtet tørt* displaying only insignificant growth and the 1970s calque, *åbent ægteskab*, only modestly ‘overperforming’ – against the three successful Danish calques coined in the 1990s:

<sup>36</sup> Due to proper-name homography (cf. previous notes), *God's own country* was replaced by *graphic novel*.

<sup>37</sup> Also acting as a well-known Danish song title, *take it easy* was replaced by the next Scenario-2 item, *trial and error*.

<sup>38</sup> Admittedly, when – as with several of these pairs – first attestations are separated by only a few years, sweeping statements as to which type of Anglicism introduced the English concept should be avoided.



Table 15: Multi-word calques without Danish established synonyms (Scenario 3)

Danish calque	Dating	English etymon	Bakspejlet 1983-2021 <sup>39</sup>	Infomedia 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019	Change
{ikke/aldrig} set sig tilbage	1990 I	never looked back	167 (0.15 ppm)	266	5,876	2,109.0%
den dybe stat	1999 I	the deep state	3 (0.00 ppm)	31	316	919.4%
holde {krudtet/sit krudt} tørt	1894 O	keep your powder dry	119 (0.10 ppm)	517	1,315	154.4%
{ad/på} mindernes boulevard	1992 I	down memory lane	71 (0.06 ppm)	167	547	227.5%
åbent ægteskab	1972 N	open marriage	69 (0.06 ppm)	293	823	180.9%

Table 16: Multi-word calques with Danish synonyms (Scenario 4)

Competing expressions	Dating <sup>40</sup>	English etymon	Infom. 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019		Change
			Hits	Hits	Calques	
atten måneder {of a deadline, etc.}; halvandet år [one and a half years]	1983 I 1845 O	eighteen months	331 130,230	267 284,748	0.1%	- 19.3% 118.7%
grøn revolution {= climate-friendly r.}; grøn omstilling [the green transition]	1991 I 1992 K	green revolution	1,202 342	1,866 112,107	1.6%	55.2% 32,679.8%
(er) ikke min ting; ikke noget for mig [not for me]	2004 I 1900 A	(is) not my thing	2 3,053	47 7,805	0.6%	2,250.0% 155.7%
presset på {tid/tiden}; under tidspres [under time pressure]	1994 I 1983 K	pressed for time	326 2,156	3,117 4,490	41.0%	856.1% 108.3%
{smide/kaste} håndklædet i ringen opgive ævred	1948 O 1700 O	throw the towel in the ring	11,056 2,836	28,229 4,742	85.6%	155.3% 67.2%
{tjekke/checke} op på se nærmere på [have a closer look at]	1993 I 1872 A	check up on	1,290 47,149	9,037 139,874	6.1%	600.5% 196.7%
<b>Average share: calques</b> Average share: Danish synonyms					<b>22.5%</b> 77.5%	

As indicated in Table 16, the concept of a ‘green revolution’ is much discussed in Danish media, with the extremely successful Danish synonymous neologism *grøn omstilling* (typically found as *den grønne omstilling*, i.e. ‘the green revolution’) nearly monopolizing this semantic niche after 2010.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> This corpus of written contemporary Danish (Asmussen 2019/2021), with 1.15 billion running words, was consulted to illustrate the relatively low frequencies of many of the expressions presented in this study. Thus, even a well-known calque like *holde krudtet tørt* occurs in (written) Danish only once every ten million words.

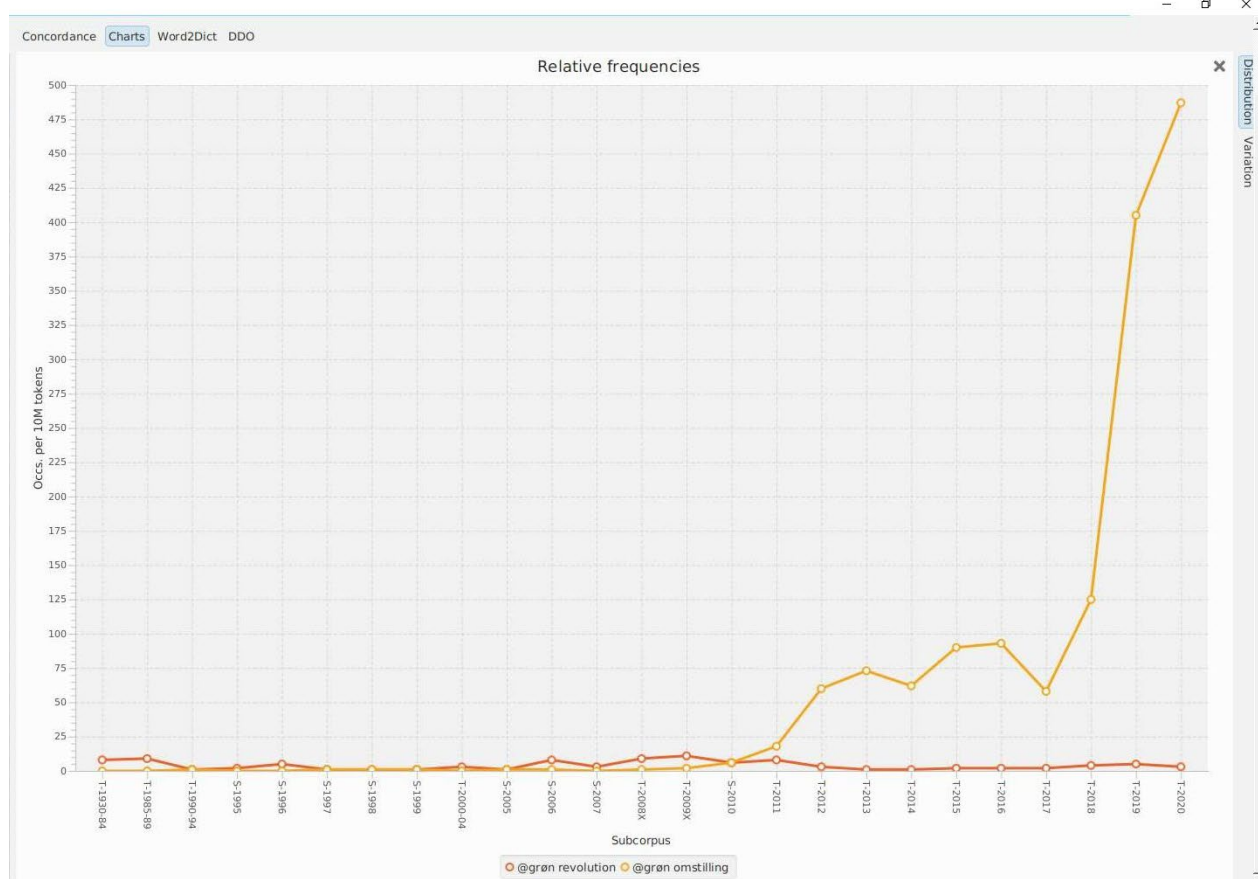
<sup>40</sup> Highlighted in blue, several of the established Danish synonyms in this table may date much further back than indicated. Due to the scarcity of pre-19<sup>th</sup> century sources, expressions like ‘halvandet år’ are presented as more recent than they probably are.

<sup>41</sup> The ‘environmental’, English-inspired sense of *grøn* may represent the most frequent Anglicism in 21<sup>st</sup>-century written

Figure 1 shows this success, catapulting *grøn omstilling* from less than 1 ppm to almost 50 ppm in 2020 – far outnumbering the calque *grøn revolution*.

All other Danish synonyms were firmly established when the English calques were first used, and although some of these newcomers, especially *presset på tid/tiden*, enjoy (relative) success, the average share of the calques remains a modest 22.5 percent. It is worth noting that the oldest calque, *smide/kaste håndklædet i ringen*, is the only calque having obtained near-monopoly in its semantic field.

Figure 1: The developments of ‘grøn revolution’ and ‘grøn omstilling’ in the Danish Bakspejlet corpus



Yet, as was obvious from the figures in Table 16, the trajectory of ‘grøn omstilling’ is not typical of the developments of established synonyms over the decades studied; results point in all directions, so to speak.

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Danish, with *okay* as a candidate for the most common oral Anglicism.

Table 17: Direct polymorphemic borrowings without Danish calques (Scenario 5)

Direct borrowing	Dating	Infomedia 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019	Change
casestudy <sup>42</sup>	1965 N	75	143	90.7%
executive summary	1992 I	25	71	184.0%
human beatboxing	2006 I	21	34	61.9%
{rave party/rave-party/raveparty}	1991 N	170	128	- 24.7%
young adult [literary genre]	2004 I	5	775	15,400.0%

As could be expected, the category of Anglicisms displayed in Table 17, often naming new concepts or inventions, is susceptible to shifting fashions, and three of these five nouns have in fact lost ground between periods 1 and 2. Conversely, the neologism *young adult* was catapulted from obscurity to common usage. All in all, a sort of equilibrium is found between the frequency of these borrowings in the two periods investigated.

Table 18: Direct polymorphemic borrowings with Danish calques (Scenario 6)

Competing expressions	Dating	Infomedia 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019		Change
		Hits	Hits	Calques	
afterparty {after party/after-party}; {efterfest/efter-fest}	1993 N	1,693	3,976		134.8%
	1993 I	738	524		- 29.0%
	1994 I	484	1,785	28.4%	268.8%
{dick pic/dick-pic/dickpic}; pikbillede	2013 I	0	130		↑
	2014 I	0	35	21.2%	↑
gamification; spilificering	2011 I	0	431		↑
	2011 I	0	9	2.0%	↑
(en) lame duck; (en) lam and	1996 I	59	114		93.2%
	1983 S	69	40	26.0%	- 42.0%
peer-reviewed fagfællebedømt	1997 I	161	1,092		578.3%
	2007 I	9	291	21.0%	3,133.3%
(er) rush hour; myldretid	1977 S	8	18		125.0%
	1937 O	11,852	21,580	99.9%	82.1%
Average share: direct borrowings				66.9%	
<b>Average share: calques</b>				<b>33.1%</b>	

Unlike the situation regarding multi-word borrowings (Scenario 2, presented in Table 14), most of which were coined after the introduction of the Danish calques, no clear pattern applies to Scenario 6. One calque, *myldretid*, was coined early on and is still totally dominant, but most other calques were coined shortly before or after the introduction of the direct borrowing. A feature common to four of the six calques is that they occupy around a quarter of their respective semantic fields, with an average share of 33.1 percent.

<sup>42</sup> To avoid including titles, etc., only the standard spelling, *casestudy*, was searched for. Affected by English, unauthorized spellings (here 'case study' and 'case-study') are quite common in Danish. As stated earlier, they are included whenever practical, cf. *raveparty*.

Table 19: Polymorphemic calques without established Danish synonyms (Scenario 7)

Danish calque	Dating	English etymon	Infomedia 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019	Change
gadebarn	1976 N	street kid	4,791	7,868	64.2%
{hawaiiskjorte/hawaii-skjorte}	1960	Hawaiian shirt	786	1,537	95.5%
kommunikationssatellit	1961 N	communications satellite	560	836	49.3%
slipstrøm	1934 O	slipstream	4,728	15,930	236.9%
vægtvogter	1970 N	weight watcher	122	186	52.5%

This random selection of Anglicisms as sole occupants of their respective semantic niches once again proves that, at least individually, Anglicisms hardly constitute a flood of regrettable neologisms. All but one of these five compound nouns have lost terrain over the thirty years investigated. The only exception is the oldest item, *slipstrøm*, now often used in its metaphorical sense (inspired by English, no doubt).

Figure 2 shows the minimal relative frequencies of these Anglicisms in the Danish *Bakspejlet* diachronic corpus (Asmussen 2019/2021); none of the items obtains a frequency of more than 0.5 ppm in any year between 1984 and 2020.

Figure 2: English-based compound nouns: known by all Danes, but still rare

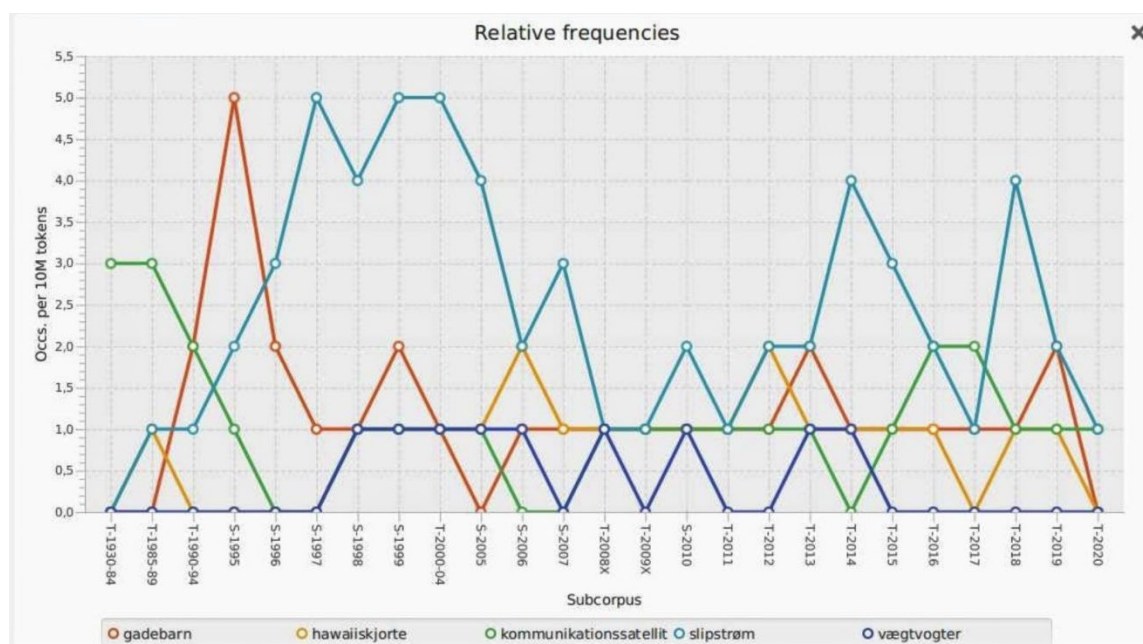


Table 20 shows another instance of low success rates for Anglicisms, this time compound nouns challenged by Danish synonyms. Only two of the sixteen nouns compared display more-than-average growth, *nultolerance* and *bamse* – the latter of these being an all-Danish synonym, a semantic extension of a Danish word for ‘bear’, coined after the introduction of teddybears in Denmark.<sup>43</sup> To

<sup>43</sup> A major reason that the outdated Anglicism *teddybjørn* is still found in Danish media discourse is that it typically refers to the Anglosphere, as in this example from *Politiken* of September 14, 2017: “Mark Wahlberg spiller drengerøven John Bennett, hvis bedste ven er den levende teddybjørn Ted.” [Mark Wahlberg plays the immature John Bennett, whose best friend is the live teddybear, Ted.]

be fair, the near-monopoly of the direct borrowing *e-mail* should be noted,<sup>44</sup> as well as the fact that *jobbeskrivelse* and *lederskab* manage slightly better than their Danish competitors.

As for the potential success of the Scenario-8 calques, figures once more point in all directions, with the semantic market share of calques ranging from 1.5 to 95.3 percent. The average throughout is 43.1%, a figure without statistical significance due to the extreme variation displayed here.

Table 20: Polymorphemic calques with Danish synonyms (Scenario 8)

Competing expressions	Dating	English etymon	Infomedia 1990-2009	Infomedia 2010-2019		Change
			Hits	Hits	Calques	
e-brev	1994 I	e-letter	160	127		- 20.6%
e-post	1992 I	email	11,199	7,432	95.3%	- 33.6%
elektronisk post	1977 I	electronic mail	4,148	2,923		- 29.5%
elektronisk brev [electronic letter]	1983 I		718	518		- 27.9%
e-mail	1992 N	E-mail	183,590	373,501		103.4%
{femte kolonne/femtekolonne}	1945 O	fifth column	843	855	36.0%	1.4%
5. kolonne	1940 O		301	248		- 17.6%
kollaboratør [wartime collaborator]	1945 O		2,199	1,960		- 10.9%
jobbeskrivelse	1974 N	job description	3,471	8,638	77.5%	148.9%
stillingsbeskrivelse <sup>45</sup>	1951 O		1,363	2,511		84.2%
[description of position]						
lederskab	1946 O	leadership	28,522	74,850	5.3%	162.4%
ledelse [management]	1700 O		635,182	1,347,974		112.2%
nultolerance	1993 I	zero tolerance	4,347	15,693	95.2%	261.0%
ingen pardon [no pardon]	1722 O		1,267	796		- 37.2%
teddybjørn	1917 O	teddybear	3	5	1.5%	66.7%
bamse [cuddly (toy) bear] <sup>46</sup>	1923 O		101	329		225.7%
<b>Average share: calques</b>					<b>43.1%</b>	
Average share: Danish synonyms					56.9%	

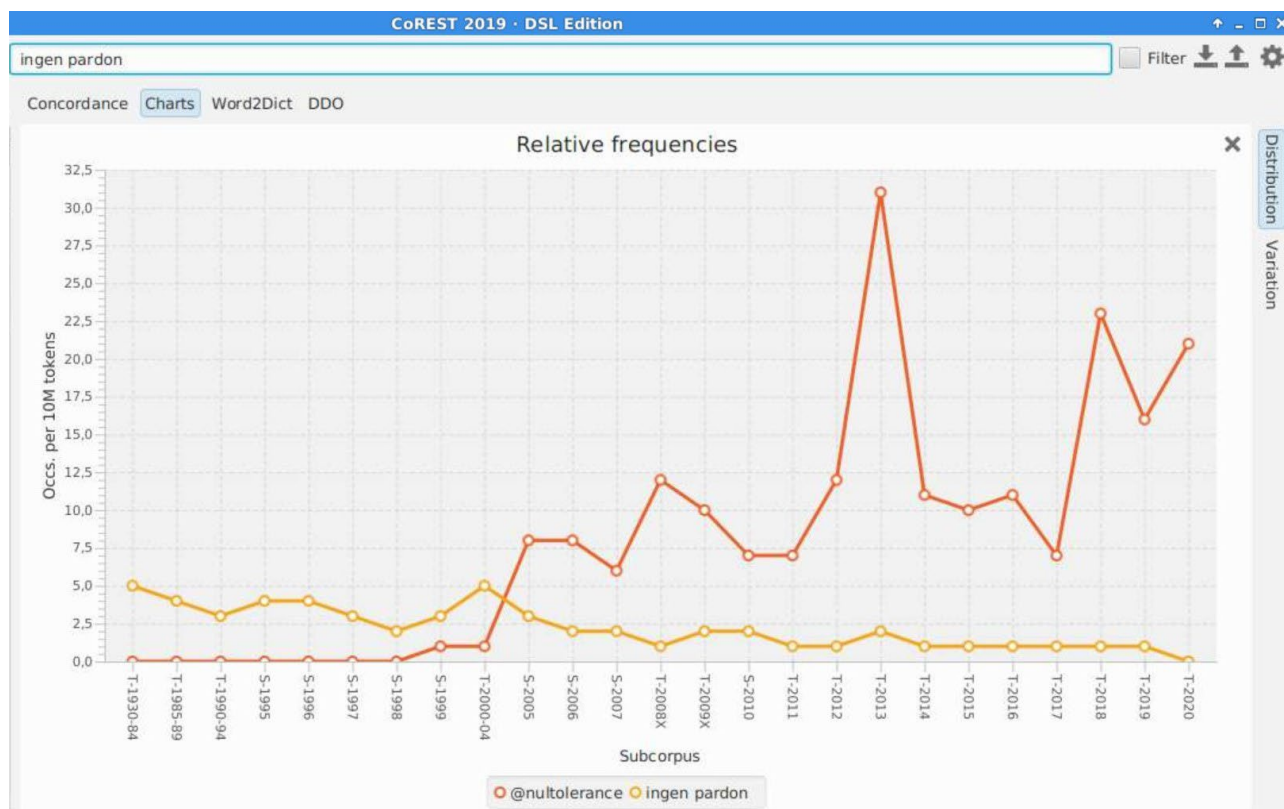
Like a textbook example, Figure 3 illustrates the worries of Danish purists, as we watch the established Danish expression *ingen pardon* (with the Gallicism *pardon* pronounced in a mock-French fashion) being ‘suppressed’ almost year by year by the ‘invisible’ Anglicism *nultolerance*. After 2020, according to the *Bakspejlet* corpus (Asmussen 2019/2021), we may declare *ingen pardon* dead and gone, at least in written usage.

<sup>44</sup> This directly borrowed term was added to the listing for reference.

<sup>45</sup> A Danish 1954 handbook claims that this term is based on the English ‘job specification’.

<sup>46</sup> To disambiguate the ‘teddybear’ sense from other senses and names, the search node ‘hendes bamse’ (‘her teddybear’) was used, hence the small number of hits. For comparison, ‘hendes teddybjørn’ had to be used as well.

Figure 3: An example of an English-based calque ousting an established Danish synonym



## 6. Discussion and conclusion

It is now time to put all the pieces together and see whether any general trends can be observed with regard to the two key objectives of this study:

1) *How do calques fare over time compared with a) direct English borrowings, and b) established Danish synonyms?*

2) *Are multi-word and polymorphemic Anglicisms becoming more frequent in (written) Danish?*

Starting with the second objective, the results are very mixed indeed. In Table 21, a green arrow ↓ indicates an Anglicism with lower frequency in the period 2010-19 than in the period 1990-2009. Similarly, red arrows ↑ indicate higher frequencies, and bidirectional black arrows ↓ represent items that showed neither significant growth nor decrease in frequency.

Although the forty-four items investigated were randomly selected, their number is too limited to justify sweeping generalizations. Still, hypotheses regarding the potential success of the Anglicisms in the eight different scenarios may be formulated. The arrows in Table 21 suggest growing success of both direct multi-word borrowings and their calques (Scenario 2), of ‘uncontested’ multi-word calques (Scenario 3), and of direct polymorphemic borrowings plus their calques (Scenario 6).

Conversely, uncontested direct polymorphemic borrowings seem to become less frequent (Scenario 5), a fate shared with uncontested polymorphemic calques (Scenario 7) as well as polymorphemic calques plus their synonyms (Scenario 8). With Scenarios 1 and 4, neither an upward nor a downward trend is discernible.

Table 21: The success of Danish phraseological Anglicisms: all scenarios

Scenario		Frequency span: ↔ (Infomedia hits 2010-19) Success ↑ or loss ↓ (Hits 1990-2009 vs. 2010-19)		
		Synonyms	Direct loans	Calques
1	Direct multi-word borrowings <i>without</i> calques		3 ↔ 4,352 ↑↑↓↓↓	
2	Direct multi-word borrowings <i>with</i> calques		45 ↔ 560 ↑↑↑↓↓	33 ↔ 41,590 ↑↑↑↑↓
3	Multi-word calques <i>without</i> synonyms			316 ↔ 5,876 ↑↑↑↑↓
4	Multi-word calques <i>with</i> synonyms	4,490 ↔ 284,747 ↑↑↓↓↓		47 ↔ 28,229 ↑↑↑↓↓
5	Direct polymorphemic borrowings <i>without</i> calques		34 ↔ 775 ↑↑↓↓↓	
6	Direct polymorphemic borrowings <i>with</i> calques		18 ↔ 4,500 ↑↑↑↓↓	9 ↔ 21,580 ↑↑↑↑↓
7	Polymorphemic calques <i>without</i> synonyms			186 ↔ 15,930 ↑↓↓↓↓
8	Polymorphemic calques <i>with</i> synonyms	329 ↔ 1,347,974 ↑↓↓↓↓		5 ↔ 15,693 ↑↑↓↓↓

As for the first objective, i.e. the fate of calques vis-à-vis direct Anglicisms on the one hand and all-Danish synonyms on the other, Table 22 shows that in sheer numbers, multi-word calques without Danish synonyms – at least the ones investigated here – enjoy considerable success, followed by multi-word calques with Danish synonyms. Polymorphemic calques, whether contested by Danish synonyms or not, straddle the fence and show neither marked growth or decline. The losers seem to be calques competing with direct borrowings from English, whether these are multi-word or polymorphemic – scenarios 2 and 6.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> A Norwegian study on ‘pragmatic’ Anglicisms found that when RL speakers have to choose between a direct borrowing and a domestic term, “the domestic and borrowed variants are not interchangeable in all contexts” (Andersen 2022a: 270). In the same way, continued co-existence of English-based calques and domestic phrasemes is only feasible if the pragmatic circumstances differ enough to justify two synonymous expressions.

Table 22: The success of Danish phraseological Anglicisms: calques only

Scenario	Infomedia hits 1990-2009	Infomedia hits 2010-19	Change
2 Calques competing with direct multi-word borrowings	22,382	45,334	102.5%
3 Multi-word calques <i>without</i> synonyms	1,274	8,877	596.8%
4 Multi-word calques <i>with</i> established synonyms	14,207	42,563	199.6%
6 Calques competing with direct polymorphemic borrowings	12,414	23,740	91.2%
7 Polymorphemic calques <i>without</i> synonyms	10,987	26,357	139.9%
8 Polymorphemic calques <i>with</i> synonyms	52,994	110,771	109.0%

This finding ties in with one of the results from a large-scale Belgian study on the success of English loanwords in Dutch – more specifically, person reference nouns (like *babyboomer* and *foodie*). It was found that these direct loans will turn out more successful than their potential Dutch counterparts “if the loanword is introduced in Dutch as a necessary loan<sup>48</sup> for which a Dutch alternative was only coined later” (Zenner, Speelman & Geeraerts 2012: 781).

A Danish example of this limited success of calques vis-à-vis direct borrowings is the pair *graphic novel / grafisk roman*. As we saw in Table 14, the calque was coined in Danish 18 years prior to the introduction of the direct Anglicism in 2005,<sup>49</sup> and in the period 1990-2009 it still had the upper hand, with 349 *Infomedia* hits against 325. In the period 2010-19 the balance had shifted, with *graphic novel* now occupying 55% of this semantic field. Yet, both terms gained ground in absolute numbers, and writers no longer had to explain the concept, as they did in a news item from *Horsens Folkeblad* of June 10, 2005, defining the genre as “det, der med en moderne og præcis beskrivelse kaldes a graphic novel – en grafisk roman.” [something which, with a modern and accurate term, is called a graphic novel – en grafisk roman.]

Summing up, the present study reveals that in early 21<sup>st</sup> century written Danish,

(1) the success of multi-word and polymorphemic direct borrowings from English is largely unpredictable, and

(2) calques competing with direct English borrowings have a hard time, whereas

(3) calques not competing with direct English borrowings (and often not recognized as Anglicisms) enjoy growing popularity.

### List of abbreviations

CS: Codeswitching

DDO: Den Danske Ordbog (The Danish Dictionary)

DL: Donor Language

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ESL: English as a Second Language

GLAD: Global Anglicism Database

<sup>48</sup> The (dubious) notion of necessary vs. unnecessary loans is discussed in Gottlieb 2020a, 200.

<sup>49</sup> Interestingly, the Danish calque seems to have escaped the attention of the leading editor at a Danish publishing house, who in *Berlingske Tidende* of September 3, 2005 claims that the concept of ‘graphic novel’ “findes endnu ikke i en dansk oversættelse” [still has no Danish translation].



NoiD: Nye Ord i Dansk (New Words in Danish)

NP: Noun Phrase

ODS: Ordbog over det Danske Sprog (Dictionary of the Danish Language)

POS: Part of Speech (= word class)

ppm: Parts per million

RL: Recipient Language

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<sup>50</sup> All websites were accessed on August 18, 2023.

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