

LANGUAGES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES ON YOUTUBE: A CROSS-CULTURAL AND CROSS-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND ITALIAN MAKEUP TUTORIALS

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Abstract

Since its launch in 2005, YouTube has become the hosting platform of many virtual communities, including makeup lovers. A few of them have achieved such popularity that they are referred to as ‘makeup gurus’. Thanks to their notoriety and influence, these YouTubers have been able to make a profession out of makeup video posting and are often recruited as digital influencers by cosmetic brands. In order to appear as makeup experts (thus generating revenue from their videos), these so-called ‘gurus’ typically adapt the specific language of makeup and cosmetics to the new Internet video medium, leading to the creation of a new Web genre, the YouTube makeup tutorial.

Inspired by the success of English-speaking ‘makeup gurus’, Italian YouTubers have emulated them, thus bringing this relatively new genre into the Italian ‘makeupsphere’. In spite of the potential borderlessness of the Web, this process entailed a degree of linguistic and cultural adaptation which this study investigates by focusing on the generic, rhetorical and linguistic practices of English- and Italian-speaking ‘makeup gurus’ and highlighting how these languages and their associated discursive strategies are used in different cultural contexts, albeit within the same virtual platform and utilizing the same generic resources. Starting from the assumption that it represents an instance of language for specific purposes (LSP) largely unexplored so far, the verbal component of makeup video tutorials is examined and a comparison is drawn between the rhetorical, discursive and lexical preferences in the language in which this genre originated (English) and within a new linguo-cultural environment (Italian). Analysis suggests an ongoing tension between the global and the local dimension of YouTube makeup culture, as highlighted by the frequent phenomena of language contact and interference described in the chapter.

1. YouTube makeup tutorials: background information

Social media discourses currently play a major role in the general perception of the social and cultural transformations of the body (Katz 2015). More specifically, social media makeup discourse significantly contributes to the long ongoing debate over the body as a social object, which can undergo a process of re-creation, enhancement of ‘fixing’ through the use (and consumption) of cosmetic products (see, among others, Phak-

deephassok 2009; Kaur *et al.* 2013; Ringrow 2016). Thanks to their ubiquitous reach, Web 2.0 media have become the privileged means of communication for transnational virtual communities of consumers and have contributed to confer makeup discourse a global dimension.

On account of its heavy reliance on the visual component, YouTube has come to be one of the preferred social media hosting platforms for cosmetic communication and has favoured the creation of a very active and widespread video community of makeup lovers. Users from all countries typically use their YouTube channels to share information and tips, do product reviews, announce new collections, and post tutorials and how-to's (Kedveš 2013). The makeup tutorial, the main object of this study, is a hybrid genre which combines the instruction genre with a vlogging component, i.e. a diary or blog relying on the video medium. Most of these videos are produced in English as the YouTube makeup tutorial phenomenon first originated in the USA, but more and more content is being uploaded on the global video platform in other languages.

The reasons underlying such a vast growth of footage about makeup are multiple: first and foremost, YouTube has a free sharing policy which allows anyone with a camera and an Internet connection to post videos. This means that many users enjoy uploading content and they do it as a hobby. For a limited number of makeup lovers producing videos has instead become a profession. They are so popular on the platform and are regarded as so authoritative by the online community that cosmetic brands have started to recruit them as so-called 'digital influencers'. These YouTubers, commonly referred to as 'makeup gurus', are often paid through sponsorship or endorsement deals to incorporate and promote products in their videos (Wu 2016). This business practice seems successful and is therefore very widespread¹.

Since the launch of YouTube in 2005, many cosmetic companies have opened accounts on the platform to use them as channels featuring advertorial content. However, consumers show a tendency to prefer amateur videos produced by makeup YouTubers as they look more genuine and trustworthy. Inspired by the success of English-speaking 'gurus', Italian YouTubers have emulated them, thus adapting makeup videos to a different linguo-cultural context.

This study explores English and Italian makeup video tutorials in a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspective. It rests on the assumption that genres, such as the makeup tutorial which represents the main object of this analysis, are "clusters of typified responses to recurrent communicative needs and situations [and] are firmly embedded in the cultural contexts where they are used and are thus highly sensitive to cultural variations" (Garzone 2004: 312; cf. Miller 1984) and aims to provide an explanation of what 'culture' may mean within the YouTube makeup domain. The earliest definitions of 'culture' within Cultural Studies gave much prominence to national and ethnic identities from a historical standpoint (cf. Williams 1981), whereas later research problematized the role and importance of the concept of nation and ethnicity. Studies on globalization and its transformative effects on identity put the emphasis on the emergence of a tension between 'global' and 'local' cultures. Drawing on Giddens (1990: 17-21) who identifies it as one of the constitutive elements of the globalized so-

¹ In 2014, beauty was the fourth-leading industry with the largest reach of influencers in online marketing in the United States (cf. Statista 2016).

ciety, Hall *et al.* (1996: 619) describe time-space compression as the aspect that mostly affects cultural identities and contend that the global does not replace the local, but a new ‘articulation’ emerges between them. Robertson (1995) also addresses the issue of how homogenization and heterogenization are only seemingly opposing trends, and he utilizes the notion of “glocalization” to refer to communication practices that are both aimed at increasingly global audiences as well as adapted to differentiated local and particular realities². In this regard, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) notice that the presence of fuzzier margins between the global and the local dimension and the subsequent increase in interaction across linguistic and cultural boundaries often lead to the appearance of hybrid discourses.

This arguably applies to Web-mediated communication, which, thanks to the affordances of the electronic medium it relies on, offers the opportunity for both a “global reach” (Askehave and Ellerup Nielsen 2005) and the tailoring of messages. YouTube videos are a case in point: they are posted on a global platform and can therefore be watched by anyone, but they are produced within and possibly address specific cultural and linguistic contexts. YouTube’s affordances allow groups of people who – in spite of having different cultures and languages – share the same passion about a topic and wish to deepen their knowledge and expertise to interact on an ongoing basis (Wenger *et al.* 2002: 4). This type of interaction gives rise to digital communities of practice, i.e. communities defined by common interests, conventions, tool usage, values, and standards (Wenger 1998). After the advent of online global platforms such as YouTube, communities of practice with cross-national and cross-linguistic backgrounds have become increasingly more widespread. The identity of their members is extremely intricate as it is shaped by both their national and linguistic (local) culture as well as by the (global) culture of their digital community of practice.

The virtual community of makeup artists and lovers represents an interesting example in this regard. Their remarkable abilities in exploiting the potentials of video social media – and of YouTube specifically – has enabled them to increase their networks and sharpen their communication skills, adjusting traditional off-line genres to the new medium and even creating new ones. The genre of the makeup tutorial first originated in English-speaking countries and then spread to other regions of the world, thus undergoing a process of adaptation. As a consequence, it is possible to hypothesize that the tension between the online global discourse of makeup lovers’ community of practice and the diversified local linguo-cultural environments in which the latter is articulated may result in hybrid, glocalized communication.

2. Method and study design

Starting from these premises, this study sets out to compare the generic, rhetorical and linguistic conventions of English- and Italian-speaking ‘makeup gurus’, illustrating how these languages and their associated discursive strategies are used in different cultural contexts, albeit within the same virtual platform as well as within the same type of video, i.e. the makeup tutorial.

² Robertson stresses that glocalization is a widespread phenomenon in the marketing domain.

Drawing on the assumption that it represents an instance of language for specific purposes (LSP) that has, as yet, attracted scant academic interest, the discussion of the language of YouTube makeup tutorials is informed by the various linguistic contributions to the study of LSP (see, among others, Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993; Gotti 2003; Candlin and Gotti 2004; Garzone 2006; Garzone *et al.* 2016). Specifically, the verbal component of English and Italian makeup videos is explored in order to bring out differences and similarities across cultures and languages³: particular attention is devoted to the rhetorical organization of YouTubers' monologues (Section §3) (see Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993), the text type(s) they tend to prefer (Section §4) (see Werlich 1976; Hatim and Mason 1990), and the specialized terminology they utilize in their tutorials (Section §5) (Calsamiglia and van Dijk 2004; Garzone 2006).

In order to explore these issues, a corpus consisting of thirty makeup tutorials uploaded on YouTube over the course of seven months (October 2014 - April 2015) has been collected⁴. Videos were selected on the basis of their representativeness: content uploaded by some of the most popular English- and Italian-speaking 'beauty gurus' was chosen and analysed. More precisely, the 15 tutorials in English were posted on three of the most subscribed *YouTube How to & Style* channels (also ranking within the top 300 most subscribed channels of the whole YouTube platform)⁵, i.e. Michelle Phan's (USA), Tanya Burr's (England), and Lauren Curtis' (Australia). Michelle Phan is probably the most famous makeup YouTuber: she is a 30-year old American and her videos have been watched more than a billion times. Tanya Burr is an English makeup artist with almost 3.7 million subscribers: she is famous for her 'celebrity looks'. Lauren Curtis is a 24-year old Australian who has 3.6 million followers.

As regards the 15 videos included in the Italian subcorpus, they were also produced by the best-known 'gurus', that is to say Clio Zammatteo (*ClioMakeup*), Nicole Husel (*Kissandmakeup01*) and Giuliana Arcarese (*Makeupdelight2009*). Clio Zammatteo was born in Italy and moved to New York City (where she currently lives) in 2007. With 980,000 subscribers, she is the most famous Italian makeup YouTuber. Nicole Husel was born in Trieste, Italy, to a Slovenian father and an Italian mother. She recently moved back to Italy after spending some years in Amsterdam. Giuliana Arcarese is 42. When she was 22 she moved to the United States and she now lives in San Diego (CA)⁶.

The above selection suggests that, in spite of its American origins, the makeup tutorial genre has spread extensively in the English-speaking world (namely to the UK and to Australia). Moreover, it is important to note that the most popular Italian users seem to have a hybrid cultural identity: in actual fact, two out of the three makeup artists selected for this research currently reside in the USA (Zammatteo and Arcanese) and the third one has a double nationality, comes from Trieste (a city famous for its mixed

³ Although videos mainly rely on images and are semiotically very complex, the main focus of this study is the verbal component of makeup tutorials because they have hardly been tackled from a linguistic perspective until now.

⁴ See Appendix for more details.

⁵ Data collected in May 2015 (*YouTube*).

⁶ With the exception of Lauren Curtis, all the makeup YouTubers selected for this study have published non-fiction beauty guides and autobiographies. Moreover, thanks to their YouTube success, most of them have also been able to launch their own makeup line (data collected in February 2017; see *YouTube*).

ethnic background) and has spent part of her life in the Netherlands (Husel). This multifaceted identity of ‘beauty gurus’ seems to be in keeping with the international and cross-cultural character of global platforms such as YouTube and with the transnational and translinguistic nature of digital communities of practice.

3. The rhetorical organization of makeup tutorials in English and Italian

Makeup tutorials are one of the most popular typologies of videos posted by ‘beauty gurus’. Although frequency of publication mainly depends on the single YouTuber, those who achieve a certain degree of notoriety typically upload content quite often (i.e. more than once a week), so that they can maintain their level of exposure as well as keep their audience’s attention high. A strategy that allows makeup celebrities to produce topical as well as timely content is to match the makeup looks they propose to the calendar and to yearly festivities, seasons, holidays and events. This stratagem can be observed in both English and Italian makeup channels: for example, all the YouTubers (with the exception of Tanya Burr) posted a Valentine’s Day makeup tutorial. Famous televised happenings featuring VIPs also provide a good source of inspiration: another common kind of makeup tutorial is the recreation of a specific makeup look worn by a public figure on one of these occasions. Albeit with differences regarding the events and the people mentioned in the videos, both English- and Italian-speaking makeup artists instruct their audience on how to reproduce celebrities’ looks (e.g. in her *“TUTORIAL TRUCCO Charlize Theron SANREMO 2015”*, Clio Zammatteo explains how to recreate Charlize Theron’s makeup look which the actress wore as a guest at the Sanremo Festival).

Whereas the time contexts in which the genre of the tutorial is realized are analogous in both subcorpora, a certain tension between generic integrity and innovation can be observed (Bhatia 1999), especially in the Italian subcorpus, as regards their rhetorical organization. If Swales’s (1990) and Bhatia’s (1993) models are applied to gurus’ monologues, it is possible to identify a common set of communicative intentions as well as a similar internal structure⁷. Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) adopt a functional approach to genre which highlights the centrality of the notion of “communicative purpose” and explores the relation between the aims and the rhetorical organization of texts. Both their models suggest that genres rely on a series of “moves” (further subdivided in “steps”) in order to perform the “typified rhetorical action” (Miller 1984) underlying their use. Analysis shows that, for a beauty video to feature as a tutorial, it only needs to realize one main communicative purpose, that is, to instruct the audience⁸. Consequently, it may be stated that providing an expert explanation of the makeup application process represents the typified rhetorical action carried out in tutorials: the

⁷ See Riboni (2017a) for a more detailed analysis of the communicative purposes and the rhetorical structure of YouTube makeup tutorials.

⁸ A makeup tutorial typically realizes more than just one communicative purpose: for example, self-promotion always plays a crucial role in social media and it arguably accomplishes one of users’ aims in making videos. Moreover, as suggested before, makeup brands often employ famous YouTubers as digital influencers to advertise their products. However, providing some guidance as to how to create a makeup look is what makes a beauty video a tutorial, therefore it may be stated that giving instructions is the main communicative purpose of the genre.

makeup application part of the video is therefore the main and obligatory move of the genre. As a matter of fact, this move usually takes up most of the video and can be found in all the tutorials collected.

However, the Italian makeup tutorials collected for this study sometimes deviate from their English counterparts. Giuliana Arcarese's videos are a case in point when she occasionally blends the how-to component of her footage with the review of the product(s) she is about to utilize for the look she intends to create. Consequently, it may be stated that this kind of video accomplishes two rhetorical actions, i.e. providing an opinion on makeup items and showing how they can be used.

Italian YouTubers appear to be more innovative not only as regards the communicative purposes of the makeup tutorial genre, but also as regards their constitutive moves and steps. Typically, this kind of video starts with a Greeting/Welcoming section followed by a short Introduction leading to the makeup application part, which, as already stated, represents the central and core move of the genre. Tutorials normally end with a Leave-Taking move, which may include a Call to Action (i.e. an appeal for the viewer to do something). Codas are non-obligatory final moves: in actual fact, users realize them very rarely (see Riboni 2017a).

As already anticipated, significant differences emerge in the subcorpora as far as makeup tutorial moves are concerned. This can be observed, for examples, in the two initial sections of the videos, i.e. Greetings/Welcomings and Introductions. Greetings carry out a double function: first of all, they mark the beginning of the video which, although featuring a monologue performed in front of the camera, is rhetorically constructed as a conversation with a virtual friend. Additionally, Greetings normally consist of formulaic expressions repeated in all their videos and which acquire the status of a linguistic catch phrase, a feature that helps 'gurus' distinguish themselves from the many other similar YouTubers. For example, Michelle Phan usually starts her videos by saying "*Hey gorgeous!*" whereas Clio Zammatteo is famous for her "*Ciao ragazze!*" [*Hello girls!*]

Introductions consist of a summary or 'abstract' of the makeup look described in the tutorial (Riboni 2017a; see also Chou *et al.* 2011); this rhetorical move is crucial and occurs at the beginning, because it is used to reassure viewers that they are watching precisely the video they want to watch (i.e. the one showcasing the makeup look they wish to recreate)⁹.

Whereas English-speaking gurus always realize both moves and always realize them verbally (although introductions also rely on visual resources), their Italian counterparts seem less adherent to the genre's requirements. Nicole Husel and Giuliana Arcarese often skip the Greeting/Welcoming move and occasionally opt for a visual demonstration of the makeup look which may consist in a series of pictures (such as in Husel's case) or in a very short footage of the person sporting the final look¹⁰. Through these strategies they ensure that the videos do not start too abruptly (in spite of the

⁹ Video titles can be non-specific or deceptive (sometimes even intentionally so), therefore it is important for YouTubers to provide a summarized description of the makeup look right at the beginning of the tutorial.

¹⁰ Arcarese often films tutorials in which she applies makeup on her friends and not on herself. The introduction of this kind of video normally includes the footage of these girls' reaction to the final makeup look.

absence of proper greetings) and provide the audience with an initial display of the look, even though this second move is not realized in a verbal form.

As regards the ending moves of the tutorial, a similar variety can be observed. Just like Greetings, leave-taking formulaic expressions are also utilized as distinguishing linguistic trademarks. By and large, the Leave-Taking move is realized by all users, whereas the Call to Action and the Coda can either be carried out or not. The Call to Action step consists in a request for the viewers to interact with the tutorial or the YouTuber by subscribing to the channel, liking or commenting on the video. Even though the ultimate goal of all channels is to widen their follower base, not all of the content creators selected for this study explicitly ask their audience to perform an action, possibly in order to appear disinterested, as if they simply wanted “to share their passion with others by turning on their webcam and performing their favorite routines” (Spyer 2013). Consequently, some makeup artists do not make a verbal Call to Action but display the words “subscribe”/“like”/“share” in one of the last video frames before showing links to their contact information, logo, social media addresses and so forth on the screen, whereas others do not perform this move at all. This variability does not seem to depend on the linguo-cultural environment of the user, but on her personal preference. The same applies to the last optional move, i.e. the Coda. Only one instance of Coda was identified in the corpus (at the end of Michelle Phan’s video “*Butterfly Kisses*”). Codas represent completely separated texts which do not have anything to do with the makeup look presented but have a different communicative purpose (codas may include “bloopers”, or provide non-makeup lifestyle advice, etc.)

To conclude this analysis of the rhetorical organization of makeup tutorials, it may be stated that a tension between generic integrity and generic innovation can be noticed in this kind of video (as to be expected with all genres, especially recent ones such as those involving YouTube). However, a more distinct tendency towards innovation is perceivable in the Italian subcorpus, which may indicate that the genre of the makeup tutorial is much more consolidated in the English-speaking domain, where it originated, than in the other countries. As a result, Italian makeup artists tend to follow the English model, but they do not adopt it wholesale. This seems to suggest that, as regards the way tutorials are rhetorically organized in the two languages, similarities far outnumber differences, even though it cannot be denied that, when appropriating the genre, Italian YouTubers appear more likely to innovate it, whereas their English-speaking counterparts are more inclined to conform to the established generic format.

After describing and comparing the rhetorical structure of tutorials, in the next section I narrow my analysis to their obligatory move, i.e. the makeup application phase, to study its most relevant textual features.

4. The makeup application move: preferred text types and modes

The examination of the rhetorical organization of tutorials has highlighted the fact that this genre is typically constructed as a virtual conversation with a friend rather than as some kind of lesson. This hypothesis is arguably even further confirmed by the investigation of its main move, which is also the most instructional in nature, that is to say, makeup application.

Whereas it would be legitimate to expect this part of the video to consist in a series of instructions, the analysis shows that users tend to construct it as a narration of the application process instead, as if they were creating a makeup look on themselves and explaining what they were doing to a friend¹¹. Consequently, it is the expository text type (Werlich 1976: 71) and not the instructional text type (*ibid.*: 40) that prevails in tutorials. More specifically, the investigation of discourse markers and predominant verb modes seems to suggest that this makeup application phase represents an instance of (expository) narrative text, as it focuses on its subsequent stages and their relation in time (Hatim and Mason 1990). In fact, the main functional category of discourse markers to be found both in the English and in the Italian videos is time discourse markers which – together with comparable expressions – abound in order to provide a temporal sequencing to the description of the application process:

1. *Now it's time for concealer and you guys are gonna think I'm crazy because when I was getting my products ready to use in this video I picked out five different concealers.* (TB)
2. *Ora passo al primer occhi.* (NH)
3. *Then for under my eyes I'm using [brand name and product].* (TB)
4. *Poi passo il fondotinta – questo è di [brand name] – e lo stendo.* (NH)
5. *Last but not least I'm going to apply this [brand name] lipstick all over my lips just to bring everything in together.* (LC)
6. *Ed infine le vado a rendere un po' più realistiche con il gel per sopracciglia della [brand name] che aggiunge un po' di spessore.* (CZ) [emphasis added]^{12,13}

Examples 1-6 arguably show that not only are time discourse markers extremely common in both languages, but that equivalents of the same discourse marker are also often utilized. A similar correspondence seems to appear in the use of verb modes and tenses, too. In both English and Italian tutorials the first person pronoun and the indicative mode prevail, as YouTubers illustrate the different steps they are taking and the products they are applying. With the exception of Michelle Phan¹⁴, users mainly opt for the indicative rather than for the imperative (the mode which one would legitimately expect to recur in a genre such as the tutorial) to describe makeup application from their perspective, as they are experiencing it:

7. *To conceal and highlight underneath my eyes I'm gonna use the [brand name and product].* (LC)

¹¹ Some exceptional videos feature the YouTubers' friends (cf., for example, Arcarese's "*Trucco "DAY/NIGHT" con MICHELA! Makeup Tutorial!*") or even their mothers (cf. Curtis's "*Makeup 'Makeover' on my MUM!*").

¹² The transition from step to step is also realized through the use of verbs indicating sequencing, such as "to start" or its Italian equivalent "iniziare".

¹³ 2. *I now move on to the eye primer.* (NH) 4. *Then I apply the foundation –this is by [brand name] – and I spread it.* (NH) 6. *And finally I'm going to make them look more realistic by applying [brand name] brow gel which makes them thicker.*

¹⁴ Unlike the other YouTubers, Michelle Phan tends to use the imperative rather than the indicative. This may have to do with the fact that, whereas the other girls typically recreate a virtual chat with a friend in their tutorials, she confers a more professional-looking quality to her videos. As already noted, for the time being she is the most successful and popular YouTube 'makeup guru' and her notoriety well extends beyond the platform.

8. Then *I'm just going to use* what's left on the brush to go underneath my eyes and do my lower lashes (...). (TB)
9. And *I'm just adding* it a bit more shape with the pencil (...). (TB)
10. *Inizio applicando* il primer su tutto l'occhio. (CZ)
11. *Continuo* con il verde acqua. (GA)
12. *Vado a correggere* il tutto con il fondotinta. (NH) [emphasis added]¹⁵

The *going to* form (and its contracted variant *gonna*; cf. example 7) is the preferred option in the videos of the English-speaking YouTubers (even though other similar structures such as the present continuous – cf. example 9 – can be identified in the corpus). Italian makeup artists typically describe their actions using the present indicative (with a continuous meaning) but also extensively rely on the expression *andare a [to be going to]*, as example 12 as well as the following ones suggest:

13. Adesso *andiamo a fissare* tutto con la cipria. (CZ)
14. Ed inizio con l'ombretto "Veiled" che è un color vaniglia satinato e *lo vado ad applicare* sull'angolo interno. (GA)
15. *Vado a disegnare* le sopracciglia, sapete già come le faccio. (CZ) [emphasis added]¹⁶

Andare a represents the exact equivalent of the *going to* form; what may be interesting to note is that, whereas English speakers utilize the latter rather regularly, the same cannot be said for its Italian counterpart. *Andare a* may not be defined as a calqued expression, but it arguably represents a marked form. This possibly indicates that the English model, in which the first as well as the most popular instances of the genre of the tutorial were and are still performed, exerts such a heavy influence on the language utilized by makeup artists of other countries that it generates phenomena of linguistic interference (just as in the case at hand)¹⁷. This hypothesis is further explored in the following section, where the specialized lexicon of makeup in English and in Italian videos is investigated and compared.

5. Specialized lexicon in makeup tutorials and linguistic interference

From the lexical standpoint, one of the most distinguishing characteristics of tutorials (in both English and Italian) is the significant use of specific terminology. The adoption of specialized lexicon represents a strategy to emphasize users' membership of the professional makeup artist community of practice (cf. Wenger 1998), a strategy

¹⁵ 10. *I start* by applying the primer all over my eyelid. (CZ) 11. *I carry on* with the aquamarine. (GA) 12. *I'm going to conceal* everything with foundation. (NH)

¹⁶ 13. Now we *are going to set* everything with powder. (CZ) 14. And I start with the "Veiled" eyeshadow, which is of a satin vanilla shade that *I am going to apply* on the inner corner. (GA) 15. *I'm going to draw* my eyebrows. You already know how I do that. (CZ)

¹⁷ Although two out of the three gurus selected for the study live in the USA and supposedly have a good command of the English language, the widespread presence of instances of linguistic contact in Italian makeup tutorials cannot be explained as their own, idiosyncratic use of the language. This is firstly because Nicole Husel, the third Italian guru, does not live in an Anglo-Saxon country but avails herself of numerous English words and phrases, too. Moreover, the occurrence of many English words may be a common trait which tutorials share with the advertisement of cosmetic brands.

shared by both English- and Italian-speaking YouTubers. Typically, specialized lexicon in both languages refers to three main domains (Riboni 2017b): makeup application, products/tools, and face parts.

It is interesting to note that, although they are aimed at providing guidance, tutorials do not entirely fit into the expert-layman communication category: in fact, ‘gurus’ almost never use popularizing features such as exemplification, definition, reformulation etc. (cf. Calsamiglia and van Dijk 2004; Garzone 2006), even when the specific terms may be opaque or unknown to their viewers:

16. Now I’m not a big fan of *contouring* these days, which is quite strange ’cause I used to absolutely love it. (LC)

17. And, if you want a fuller *lash line*, *tightline* your *upper water line*. (MP)

18. Niente *eye-liner* ma nella *rima superiore* [dell’occhio], prendo un po’ del colore più scuro della *palette* della [brand name]. (CZ)

19. Ora passo al *primer* occhi. Vado a stenderlo su tutta la zona, insomma sulla *palpebra mobile* e su quella *fissa*. (NH) [emphasis added]¹⁸¹⁹

This decision seems to depend on YouTubers’ intention to make their monologues appear as an instance of expert-to-expert communication, thus emphasizing that they feel they are on an equal footing with their audience. Utilizing very specific terminology to refer to makeup and face parts without providing an explanation for it implicitly rests on the assumption that the viewers are familiar with it, even when this may not be the case. However, this is in keeping with the YouTube tutorial genre, which characteristically aims to draw attention to the skills and expertise of the ‘guru’ while, at the same time, recreating a virtual conversation with the watchers, rhetorically constructed as peers or even as friends and not as learners.

Examples 18-19 contain a typical feature of the specialized lexicon of Italian makeup videos, i.e. a combination of specific terms belonging to the two languages under examination. By and large, the lexical examination of the Italian subcorpus seems to highlight a significant degree of linguistic interference of the genre model language, English. Language contact can result in different phenomena, mainly lexical borrowings (see, among others, Weinreich 1953; Jespersen 1964; Thomason 2001; Haspelmath and Tadmor 2009) and code-mixing²⁰ (see, among others, Blom and Gumperz 1972; Heller 1988; Myers-Scotton 1993, 1997; Gross 2000) whose distinction may not always be straightforward.

Lexical non-integrated borrowings are mostly utilized when an Italian equivalent for the English term does not exist: this is the case of *eye-liner* and *primer* (see examples

¹⁸ As already noted in Riboni (2017b), explaining what products or face parts are involved in the application process may not be totally necessary given the prominent visual component of makeup tutorials. However, the choice of introducing specialized lexicon without clarifying it mainly seems to represent a strategy aimed to discursively create an audience of peers.

¹⁹ 18. No eyeliner but in the upper lashline [of the eye], I take a little of the darker shade of [brand name]’s palette. (CZ) 19. Now I move on to the eye primer. I spread it all over the area, so on the movable and on the non-movable lid. (NH)

²⁰ In this study the term ‘code-mixing’ is preferred to ‘codeswitching’ as makeup artists typically insert words in English within sentences in Italian, whereas the latter term usually applies to inter-sentential phenomena.

18 and 19)²¹. Other borrowings, instead, have been assimilated into the Italian morphological system through affixation. Very often, this process has led to the creation of hypocoristic forms, as suggested by the following examples:

20. Poi, sempre dalla stessa *palettina*, vado a prendere il rosa e un pizzico del viola. (NH)

21. È bello perché sono dei *microglitterini* che si notano soprattutto quando, appunto, come lei apriamo l'occhio o chiudiamo l'occhio. (CZ) [emphasis added]²²

The use of these terms of endearment probably represents another strategy which Italian users adopt to confer a sensation of informality and friendliness to their videos. Hypocoristics convey the idea that these YouTubers are extremely fond of makeup – a passion that bonds them with their audience – and they also suggest a close relationship with them. It is to be noted that, besides this type of integrated borrowing (which can obviously be found in the Italian videos only), colloquial terms and expressions belonging to the makeup domain are present in both subcorpora as a strategy to enhance the impression that tutorials feature virtual conversations among friends²³:

22. And this is instead of using a lip liner because sometimes if I use a lip liner with this lipstick I find it looks a bit too like *boom lips* on my face. Obviously it is very like *wow lips* anyway [...] (TB)

23. Mi piace perché rispetto a una volta che [brand name] faceva delle *beauty blender* cioè delle *fake beauty blender* [gestures air quotes] orribili perché erano *gnucche gnucche*, la nuova versione è più *morbidina*, vedete? [sic] (CZ) [emphasis added]²⁴

Example 23 is particularly interesting as it contains both instances of colloquialisms and of intra-sentential code-mixing. Given the abundant presence of English words in the Italian videos, distinguishing between loan words and code-mixing items may not be immediately straightforward. However, it can arguably be stated that, whenever they opt for foreign terms or expressions instead of their Italian equivalents, YouTubers are mixing languages rather than borrowing from English. Examples 24-27 indicate that most code-mixing also concerns makeup specialized lexicon:

24. Credo che ormai la maggior parte degli ombretti, se non tutti, sono [sic] *wet or dry*. (GA)

25. Se c'è qualche *fallout*, qualche ... appunto... un po' di colore che è caduto sulle guance [...]. (NH).

26. E poi con questo ombretto, che è un ombretto invece *shimmer* ma in polvere, vado ad illuminare l'arcata sopraccigliare. (NH)

²¹ As regards the makeup domain, the term *palette* (in turn borrowed from the French; see OED Online, Third Edition, March 2005) does not have an Italian equivalent either. *Tavolozza* is not normally used to indicate eyeshadow trays, the English *palette* is the preferred option.

²² 20. Then, from the same palette, I am going to take some pink and a little bit of purple. (NH) 19. It's nice because they are microglitters you can see, especially when we open and close the eye, just like she does. (CZ)

²³ Both colloquial expressions and specialized lexicon refer to the makeup domain: this is probably because users typically construct their YouTube persona by striking a balance between their professional and their amateur identities (see Riboni 2017b).

²⁴ 23. I like it because, unlike before when [brand name] used to produce *beauty blenders*, that is to say "*fake beauty blenders*" which were horrible because they were all stodgy, this new version is lovely and soft, see? (CZ)

27. La inizio a prendere dalla parte del sedere [sic] e... *stamp stamp stamp!* (CZ) [emphasis added]²⁵

Italian makeup artists possibly utilize both languages (even within the same sentence) because they are heavily influenced by the much more famous English-speaking 'beauty gurus' whose videos have contributed to shaping the genre and have inspired non-English-speaking YouTubers to make similar ones, adapting the latter to new linguo-cultural contexts.

Another possible (but not mutually exclusive) explanation may have to do with the strong interdiscursive link which makeup tutorials share with advertising²⁶. Numerous studies about code-mixing in advertising (see, among others, Cardona 1974; Cook 1992; Kelly-Holmes 2000; Piller 2000, 2001, 2003; Santulli and Silvestri 2004; Lee 2006) contend that this type of linguistic phenomenon stems from a close connection between a language and its associated (cultural) identities. The foreign language (English in this case) is mixed with the language of the audience not simply for its communicative function, but for its symbolic value, so that it can evoke the cultural stereotype of the country with which the foreign language is associated (Kelly-Holmes 2000). In Italian cosmetic advertising English has been replacing French (traditionally tied to notions of sophistication, seduction and elegance) because of its ability to call to mind the values typical of American culture, namely modernity, youthfulness, and technological advancement (Santulli and Silvestri 2004: 239).

The same dynamics seems to apply to Italian makeup tutorials. The choice of the English language, due to its relation with the notion of Americanness, allows YouTubers to promote themselves (instead of cosmetic products): their persona is thus perceived by the Italian audience as professional and up-to-date as well as international, youthful and friendly. The utilization of specialized lexicon in English may suggest that Italian makeup artists are knowledgeable about the most advanced products and techniques which come from the US, currently considered the homeland of makeup innovation. This may also account for the fact that all Italian YouTubers have opted for usernames in the English language and belonging to the makeup domain, a choice significantly not shared by their English-speaking counterparts.

6. Concluding remarks

The interplay between the different dimensions of 'culture' (i.e. that connected with makeup artists' national and linguistic context and that linked with the transnational and translinguistic community of practice they belong to) which characterizes the YouTube makeup domain cannot be fully appreciated only by recourse to the analysis of the rhetorical, textual and lexical features of video tutorials. However, this study has provided a codification of this relatively new genre and may offer interesting insights into some of the distinctive cultural and linguistic phenomena of the genre and present

²⁵ 24. I think that now most eyeshadows, if not all eyeshadows, are either *wet or dry*. (GA) 25. If there's any *fallout*, any...yeah.. a bit of colour that has fallen onto your cheeks.... (NH) 26. And now, with this eyeshadow which instead is *shimmer*[y] but powdery, I am going to illuminate my eyebrow. (NH) 27. I start by taking it from its bottom end and*stamp stamp stamp!* (CZ).

²⁶ Cf. § 1.

a comparison between videos realized in the language in which they were first produced (English) and videos adapted to a new linguo-cultural context (Italian).

On an online hosting platform such as YouTube, the tension between the global and the local dimensions of culture is not difficult to grasp; nonetheless, determining which of the two prevails is hardly viable. The impact on Italian tutorials of the globalized, cross-national and cross-linguistic community of practice of makeup artists appears rather clearly in the widespread instances of language contact. The genre originated in Anglophone countries and the English model has been implemented by the digital makeup community worldwide, thus generating phenomena of interference when adapted to other languages.

However, the global influences exerted by the transnational and translinguistic culture of YouTube makeup lovers' community of practice are probably counterbalanced by the impact of the (local) Italian language and national culture. This may be observed in the only partial adoption of the rhetorical structure of English tutorials: whereas the main move, the makeup application part of the video, is always realized and with comparable language and discursive resources, Italian videos seem more varied as regards the Greeting, Introduction and Leave-Taking sections. A more marked tendency towards innovation may also be interpreted as a cultural difference between Italian and English native YouTubers²⁷.

The fact that tutorials have been adjusted to another local, linguo-cultural context is also noticeable in the significant occurrence of code-mixing instances. Users insert English terms or phrases within Italian sentences as a strategy to evoke the values traditionally associated with the foreign culture(s) where the language is spoken. The use of English words is therefore a communication strategy employed by YouTubers to be perceived by their fellow nationals as possessing some of the typical qualities connected with the American cultural stereotype, i.e. modernity, friendliness, youthfulness and innovation (applied, in this case, to the makeup domain).

By and large, it may be stated that although studies on the tension between the local and the global dimension of culture have been flourishing for decades, the issue is still extremely topical. Linguistic and cultural phenomena originating from language and culture contact such as those described in this research are not new, but they have become more marked since the spread of the Internet, especially with the development of Web 2.0 platforms in conjunction with the rise of user-generated media. Since English is the language of globalization, users who are native speakers have the chance to post entries which simultaneously address both local and transnational audiences, thus belonging to their national as well as their international virtual community of practice. The advantage provided by the full command of the language and the consequent possibility of being members of both local and worldwide communities allows English native speakers to establish their leadership at the global level.

Against this backdrop, non-native English speakers have to find strategies to boost their authoritativeness although they necessarily have a more limited audience than their English counterparts. The study has arguably highlighted that the acceptance and adoption of the globalized models is not wholesale; on the contrary, a certain tradeoff

²⁷ The validation of such a hypothesis may be the object of a future investigation as the scope of this study does not allow for further exploration of the matter.

between languages and cultures emerges. In conclusion, it may be stated that the investigation of communication practices (both long-established and new as is the case of the genre of the makeup tutorial) reveals that the latter do not simply reflect notions about identities but they also create identities (Bondi 2004: 59).

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Appendix - Video List

Michelle Phan

1) Butterfly Kisses

17 April 2015 5:58

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfvPDTbnplQ&list=PLDm3KH9jNzQmFrVXOjaHLL-572mQe7zOv>

2) Glowing Skin Look ◊ Ethereal Aura

20 March 2015 6:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3CmBjdoHNc&index=3&list=PLDm3KH9jNzQmFrVXOjaHLL-572mQe7zOv>

3) Lunar New Year Beauty

19 February 2015 8:33

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDciknUOA7w&index=5&list=PLDm3KH9jNzQmFrVXOjaHLL-572mQe7zOv>

4) 5 Lipstick Looks & A Valentine's Day DIY!

13 February 2015 3:37

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_VIWu5Tbz0&list=PLDm3KH9jNzQmFrVXOjaHLL-572mQe7zOv&index=6

5) Glam X / (^ x ^) \

13 December 2014 5:34

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sn2YzWqnS7M&list=PLDm3KH9jNzQmFrVXOjaHLL-572mQe7zOv&index=7>

Tanya Burr

1) Emma Stone Flawless Skin Makeup Tutorial! ad | Tanya Burr

19 April 2015 13:58

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPIOSoT_BEQ&list=PLt_BERL98BiftO9uquOF7wJ97d-AzsOWf

2) My Smoky Night Out Makeup Tutorial! | Tanya Burr

22 March 2015 11:58

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dRk2PrTZchE&index=2&list=PLt_BERL98BiftO9uquOF7wJ97d-AzsOWf**3) Golden Goddess Makeup Tutorial! | Tanya Burr** 22 February 2015 13:39https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6BMkt65rke&list=PLt_BERL98BiftO9uquOF7wJ97d-AzsOWf&index=3**4) Selena Gomez Everyday Makeup Tutorial! | Tanya Burr**

25 January 11:59

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhr3cvSVK40&list=PLt_BERL98BiftO9uquOF7wJ97d-AzsOWf&index=5**5) My Autumn Makeup Tutorial! | Tanya Burr**

23 October 2014 13:29

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcZ6XUdD_bQ&list=PLt_BERL98BiftO9uquOF7wJ97d-AzsOWf&index=5**Lauren Curtis****1) Inverted Smoked-Out Eyeliner & Ombre Vampy Lips! | Lauren Curtis**

19 February 2015 11:48

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQn1CkXOLTI&list=PLa4Mpt4BD3Pb_Dh6iENxdUZQakFqX2O0D**2) How To Apply EYELINER + Graphic Liner! (ONE BRAND)**

15 February 2015 11:25

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T68caIDzOlo&list=PLa4Mpt4BD3Pb_Dh6iENxdUZQakFqX2O0D&index=2**3) Valentine's Day Makeup Tutorial - Soft & Pretty!**

9 February 2015 7:49

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLc6nOYxDWw&index=3&list=PLa4Mpt4BD3Pb_Dh6iENxdUZQakFqX2O0D**4) Makeup 'Makeover' on my MUM!**

28 January 2015 14:11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ27fFddwGE&list=PLa4Mpt4BD3Pb_Dh6iENxdUZQakFqX2O0D&index=4**5) Removing Makeup In Front of BOYS! Tips & Advice!**

13 January 2015 15:04

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IkBQsMzjJs&index=6&list=PLa4Mpt4BD3Pb_Dh6iENxdUZQakFqX2O0D**Clio MakeUp****1) TUTORIAL TRUCCO Charlize Theron SANREMO 2015**

22 February 2015 16:10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv8LQQM0i_U

2) TUTORIAL TRUCCO SAN VALENTINO 2015 MARSALA

12 February 2015 18:16

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTggYO8Ks6g>**3) TUTORIAL TRUCCO EXODUS LOOK ANTICO EGITTO**

15 January 2015 11:47

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4ixu6E9BPU>**4) TUTORIAL TRUCCO CAPODANNO VIOLA SEXY**

30 December 2014 16:36

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OC_ETduE4CI**5) TUTORIAL TRUCCO CAPODANNO FACILE ECONOMICO SCINTILLANTE ESSENCE**

28 December 2014 12:37

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58wRbCD49lg>**KissandMakeup01****1) Carnevale 2015 - Madre Malkin - Il settimo figlio**

17 February 2015 5:35

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7v1LDtAZP9g>**2) Mi Trucco con Voi - San Valentino - Santa o Peccatrice?**

12 February 2015 5:44

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yGMkH60rBU**3) Mi Trucco Con Voi - Sexy e Glam anche a Gennaio!!**

14 January 2015 5:36

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72yez9DF8oU>**4) Mi preparo con voi - Speciale Natale!**

29 December 2014 8:08

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnaKoK2_9Z0**5) Mi Trucco Con Voi - Festeggiamo!!**

17 December 2014 4:56

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOFkzsT5XB0>**Makeup Delight2009****1) San Valentino a Colori! Makeup Tutorial**

11 February 2015 5:55

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFcHwCr8-Kc>**2) Trucco di San Valentino - Makeup Tutorial**

5 February 2015 5:05

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6-1hpmB_QI**3) Review e Tutorial SMASHBOX Double Exposure!**

21 January 2015 7:49

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_V-KsDrN8E

4) Trucco COLORE DELL'ANNO Marsala - Makeup Tutorial

16 January 2015 5:44

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXgQOULNWBw>**5) Trucco "DAY/NIGHT" con MICHELA! Makeup Tutorial**

12 January 2015 8:48

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjUzULhxUxk>