

THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINARY OF ROMGLISH IN CYBERSPACE AND FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT. *The Collective Imaginary of Romglish in Cyberspace and Face-to-face Interactions.* The activity of Romanian users in digital spaces oftentimes exhibits a dynamic code containing Romglish (the combination of Romanian and English features), which also reverberates in offline discourses and has an ongoing boomerang effect between offline and online interactions. By means of a survey, this paper investigates the Romanian collective imaginary which is set in the linguistic data. As the Romanian language constitutes a matrix in which English and Globish (a simplified pragmatic form of English) are embedded and they become part of a new dynamic code, destined to be changed at all levels (lexical, morphological, and syntactical), Romanian native speakers' perception of Romglish is an important dimension. As such, this paper will analyse how individuals perceive their personal use of Romglish online and in face-to-face interactions: the use of the code created, the preferences and mechanisms of linguistic choices and linguistic creativity, the frequency of code-switching and code-mixing both in formal and informal contexts, and the degree of universality

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of the code used. The findings will provide insight not only specific to the aspects of the Romglish, but also related to the cognitive processes involved and the reasons which trigger such processes.

Keywords: *collective imaginary, Romglish, Globish, cognitive processes, online and offline interactions*

REZUMAT. *Imaginarul colectiv al romglezei în spațiul digital și în interacțiunile față în față.* Activitatea utilizatorilor români în spațiile digitale prezintă de multe ori un cod dinamic conținând romgleza (combinația dintre elemente de română și engleză), care reverberează și în discursurile offline și are un efect de bumerang între interacțiunea offline și cea online. Prin intermediul unui chestionar, această lucrare investighează imaginarul colectiv românesc care se reflectă în datele lingvistice. Întrucât limba română constituie o matrice în care engleza și *globish* (o versiune pragmatică simplificată a limbii engleze) sunt încorporate și devin parte a unui nou cod dinamic, menit să fie modificat la toate nivelurile (lexical, morfologic și sintactic), percepția vorbitorilor native de română asupra *romglezei* reprezintă o dimensiune importantă. Ca atare, această lucrare va analiza percepția nativilor cu privire la utilizarea *romglezei* în spațiul cibernetic și în interacțiunile față în față: utilizarea codului creat, preferințele și mecanismele de selecție a unor structuri, frecvența *code-switching-ului* și a *code-mixing-ului* atât în contexte formale, cât și informale, precum și gradul de universalitate al codului utilizat. Rezultatele vor oferi nu doar o perspectivă asupra aspectelor ce țin de romgleză, ci și asupra proceselor cognitive implicate și a motivelor care declanșează aceste procese de selecție.

Cuvinte-cheie: *imaginar colectiv, romgleză, globish, procese cognitive, interacțiuni online și offline*

Introduction

In the context of globalisation, increased use of new technologies and social media platforms, the Romanian language has acquired a new dimension, Romglish, which is a dynamic code that reflects people's adoption and adaptation of global values, elements, and trends both at the sociocultural level, and the linguistic level. Wanting to document the features of this code and its propensity to render an up-to-date representation of Romanian collective imaginary, our attention to Romglish is linked to its rapid creative, dynamic, and fluid nature, changing from a controversial and rejected code to an embraced and highly investigated linguistic reality (see for example Zafiu 2001; Călărășu 2003; Stochițoiu Ichim 2006; Ungureanu 2010a, 2010b; Nicolaescu 2015; Radu 2020; Radu, Cotoc 2021).

This paper contains a theoretical part in which we present the state of the art regarding the use of Romglish in Romanian society: the use of Romglish as an embedded practice in everyday discourses both online and face-to-face and its role in articulating identities and revealing the current Romanian collective imaginary. The paper also contains a practical part in which we analyse the results obtained in a survey administered in the timespan October-November 2022 with the purpose of investigating the current use of this code and respondents' perception of the situations in which they use this code, the reasons for using this code and the impact this code has on them.

Romglish: State of the Art

Romglish represents a new facet of the Romanian language, showing how malleable this language is, how much potential it has, and that English influences current Romanian to a great extent. The term has been used to label cases "perceived as *excessive borrowing* or for the adaptation of lexical elements or phrasal constituents from English into Romanian, such as calques, and sometimes for the cases of code-mixing" (Vişan, 2016, 138). Nevertheless, in recent years, the effects of globalisation, the impact of digital technologies, and new realities which emerged as a consequence (new devices, new apps, new fields of expertise, and new jobs) have changed the status of this new code and the interactional patterns and linguistic manifestations in which we encounter it. Hence, we could state that its occurrence is already established in Romanian society, even though it is always changing and evolving in accordance with the rapid changes in the sociocultural context influenced by global trends. This makes it a dynamic code, "a new glocal (global and local) variety of language, which is created online and expands offline as well, acting like a boomerang between the online and the offline discursive spaces" (Radu, Cotoc 2021, 723).

We consider Romglish to be a *modus vivendi* because the use of this code constructs the reality for the discursive participants and the cognitive frameworks operating in day-to-day interactions. We could also adapt Saxena's reflections (2014) and state that Romglish reflects 'lifestyle diglossia', as "the language choices (such as language change or shift) people make are closely connected to chosen lifestyles" (Lytra 2016, 137). These chosen lifestyles are represented by an entire conglomeration of facts, activities, products, situations, events, and festivals which are extended from a global level to different local communities worldwide (Globish phenomena). The Romanian sphere acts like a magnet to this rapid expansion and integration of global elements into the culture and everyday practices, acquiring new ways of acting faster and more efficiently than the conventional ways (see Marinescu 2012, 88). Moreover, the manner in which information is displayed and disseminated through social media promotes

increasingly homogeneous societal patterns with a visible effect in the Romanian sociocultural sphere where foreign elements are integrated rather than rejected or ignored. In this respect, the digital environment is the engine of communication at the global level, contributing to the creation of a global society (see Marinescu 2012, 88). Other researchers mention the concept of “global village” to define the way in which people “are increasingly connected by electric (or electronic) technologies, which virtually eliminate the effects of space and time so that the globe contracts into one interconnected, metaphorical ‘village’” (Gibson and Murray 2012, 312). We witness the global village effects in every field of activity and we provide several concrete examples to support this view: fitness programmes include and are based mainly on English terminology. For instance, fitness trainers use *squats* instead of *genuflexiuni*, *push-ups* instead of *flotări*, there are new exercises which do not even have a Romanian equivalent (*burpees*); new methods have been developed in landscaping and gardening (see the example of *raised beds*); more and more people watch Netflix instead of/more than local/national TV channels (PRO TV, Atena 1, TVR 1, etc.); eating out and cuisine (see the examples of *steak*, *brunch*, *fine dining*, *happy hour*). Regular exposure to the same content triggers the integration of English terms in the flow of discourses in an automatic, even unconscious manner, the result being Globish and the feeling of overfamiliarity while code-switching and code-mixing. We thus experience an imaginative work that is “part of backstage cognition, invisible to us and taken for granted” relatable to what Fauconnier and Turner employ to refer to the use of desktop interface (2002, 23).

This code shows a clear link between language and identity, articulating identities and stories which activate the current Romanian collective imaginary and revealing collective imagination which is encoded in linguistic facts. Even more so, the use of Romglish shows: “the desire of users to be connected to a reality through the use of new technologies, but also the desire not to lose sight of the prestige attracted by the use of the English language, the temptation of the West, without omitting the mother tongue, the awareness of belonging to the Romanian linguistic space”³ (our translation). Thus, Romglish contributes to the performative construction of a desired up-to-date ‘prestigious’ individual and group identity and Romanian collective imaginary. In the same line of thought put forward by Lytra who states that “language users move fluidly and flexibly across languages in social contexts” (2016, 137), we could say that Romglish stands as an example of fluidity and flexibility in discourses in which and through which identities are constructed. Also, using and understanding

³ dorința utilizatorilor de a fi conectați la o realitate trecută prin prisma noilor tehnologii, dar și dorința de a nu pierde din vedere prestigiul atras de folosirea limbii engleze, tentația Occidentului, fără a omite însă limba maternă, conștiința apartenenței la spațiul lingvistic românesc (Radu 2020, 404).

Romglish entails power relations and inclusion-exclusion dynamics in terms of group identification and membership. We also agree with Lytra, adapt her line of thought to the use of Romglish and state that “beliefs about language are never neutral; rather, they provide a window to investigating how individuals and groups make sense of their own language activity, how some languages, language varieties or linguistic forms are more valued than others and how ascribed values may be accepted or resisted” (2016, 135). This makes Romglish a social and cultural construction specific to and adopted in different manners by various individuals, groups and communities with the desire to mark group membership through linguistic resources and attitudes towards language and linguistic codes.

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the attitude of native speakers of Romanian towards the use of Romglish both in online and face-to-face interaction. This would provide insight into the Romanian collective imaginary in the context of a digital and globalised world, reflecting local identities and stances.

Participants and Procedure

The research method used was the survey (Google Forms) which was administered in the timespan October-November 2022. We analysed the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively.

The first section of the survey collects demographic information, and we analysed the responses provided by 159 participants in the research, out of which 133 were female (83.6%) and 26 male (16.4%). The age of the participants is 18-20 (23.3%), 21-30 (21.4%), 31-40 (42.8%), 41-50 (11.3%), 51-60 (1.3%). Roughly half of the participants declared having a Bachelor degree or being enrolled in a Bachelor programme (52.2%); 23.9% of the respondents have a Master degree or are enrolled in a Master programme; 13.8% of the respondents have a high school diploma; 9.4% are either enrolled in doctoral studies or hold a PhD (see Figure 1 below). As shown by these socio-demographic variables, the vast majority of our respondents are women who live in urban areas and who hold a university degree (or are enrolled at a university). As such, the results of the study are based, in their vast majority, on the perspective of a highly educated urban feminine group.

159 responses

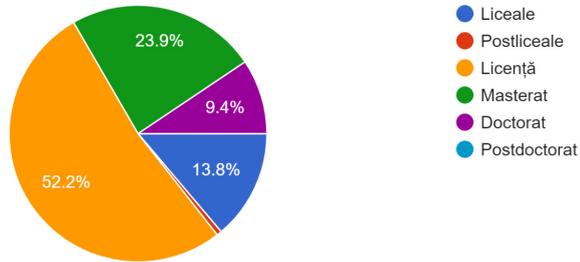


Figure 1 Studies

The vast majority of the participants live in an urban area (89.9%), while the remaining 10.1% live in a rural area (see Figure 2 below).

159 responses

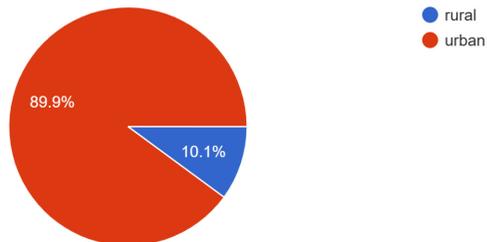


Figure 2 Urban versus Rural Area

We also asked our participants to select the social network sites on which they have an account. The results show that the preferred social network sites can be organised in sets of three: set 1 includes the three most used platforms by the Romanians, namely WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube, set 2 follows closely and is represented by Pinterest, LinkedIn, and TikTok, set 3 includes the least used platforms: Twitter, Reddit and Telegram. It comes as no surprise that all respondents have a social media platform as none of them chose the option “I do not have an account on any social media platform” (see Figure 3 below).

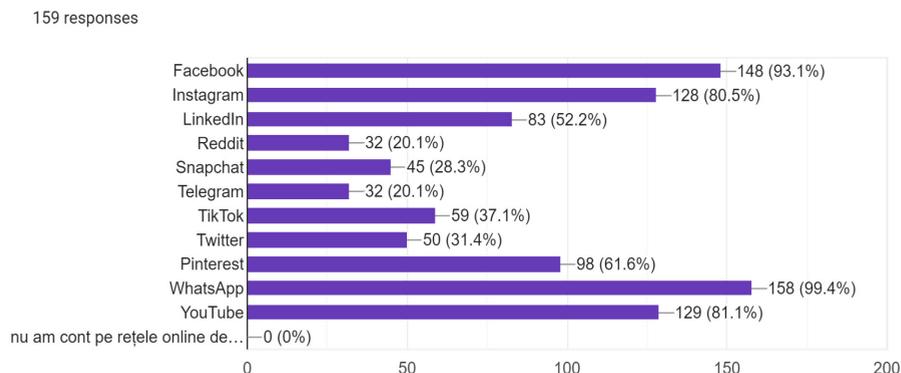


Figure 3 Social Media Presence

Research Instruments

The survey contains 3 main sections: the first section (Demographic information) contains the 5 items described above; the second section focuses on features of Romglish and includes 8 items (two open questions, a 5-point Likert scale, 3 checkboxes, 2 multiple choice items) and the last section focuses on concrete examples of Romglish (12 items), including 1 multiple choice item; 7 checkboxes and 4 open questions.

Research Hypotheses

Our study targeted the following research hypotheses:

1. Romglish has become as popular in face-to-face interactions as it is in cyberspace.
2. Native speakers of Romanian use Romglish in their discourse in order to show distance in relation to various situations, rendering taboo words and ideas.
3. It is used to mark prestige in communication and interaction and it constructs layers of individual and group identity.
4. When using this hybrid idiom, Romanians are motivated by the familiarity, precision, and up-to-dateness of Romglish.

Results and Analysis of Results

The study analyses a selection of the responses, placing the findings in line with our research hypotheses, and demonstrating how respondents perceive the use of Romglish in everyday interactions. We provide our translation for each of the responses selected in this study.

The first section of the survey, *Romglish: general aspects*, focuses on our respondents' general use of Romglish: their understanding of the concept, the extent to which they use Romglish in general and in swearing, the kind of structures they use, the context and reasons for using it. This offers us an overview of the status quo of Romglish both in online and offline interactions.

Related to the Romanians' perception of the use of Romglish, we started our research by asking our respondents to define Romglish. According to them, the use of Romglish is seen negatively or positively in the Romanian collective imaginary. We notice that the responses analysed configure five broad representations of Romglish that are set in the linguistic data.

Familiarity Framework Representation: 72 of the respondents associate Romglish with a certain degree of familiarity, stating that Romglish represents for them familiarity, frequent and colloquial use and a smooth flow in communication. For these respondents, Romglish means "combining the Romanian language with phrases from the English language that have become much more often used nowadays than their Romanian version"⁴, "the use of English words in current Romanian speech"⁵, "English words that are used in Romanian and everyone knows what they mean"⁶, "Romanian and English lexis and grammar combination, a means to simplify interactions or make them more interesting"⁷.

Negative and Unfavorable Representation: 12 users consider Romglish in the frame of a negative perspective on language change, constituting what Crystal labelled as prophets of doom (1999, 2005) who do not swim with the tide in this sea of language change. Their answers reflect reluctance, rejection, invalidation and disapproval: "adaptation/improper use of English words when

⁴ Combinarea limbii romane cu sintagme provenite din limba engleza care au devenit mult mai des folosite în zilele noastre, decat varianta lor in romana.

⁵ Folosirea de cuvinte din engleza în vorbirea curentă în limba română.

⁶ Cuvinte din engleza care se folosesc în română și toți știu ce înseamnă.

⁷ Folosirea in conversatii a unui amestec de cuvinte din limba engleza si limba romana cu scopul de a simplifica conversatia sau de a o mai interesanta , aparent doar.

speaking Romanian”⁸, “a broken mix between the 2 languages”⁹, “barbarisms used extensively”¹⁰, “a mumble jumble”¹¹, “the process by which the Romanian speaks faster than she/he thinks and adds terms from English in speech”¹².

Force of habit and Frame of Mind Representation: 28 respondents view Romglish as a spontaneous, practical, and fast linguistic production. In this respect, a respondent highlights the reasons that prompt the use of Romglish: “the intention of emphasising a message or a particular state of mind”¹³, “the purpose of rendering an idea faster by selecting English words when forgetting the Romanian equivalent”¹⁴, “By Romglish I understand using words from English and Romanian to form sentences/phrases faster.”¹⁵ Another user mentions the genuineness and easiness of expressing one’s ideas using English words embedded in the Romanian language: “In general, when English sounds better than Romanian, it is easier to express the idea”¹⁶. 4 respondents even use Romglish in defining the concept: “*the switch* between Romanian and English in the same sentence”¹⁷ (our emphasis). It is also noted by some respondents that Romanians modify English words using Romanian morphology: “modifying some English words to make them sound Romanian (by attaching Romanian suffixes, etc.)”¹⁸.

Fil-in-the-gap and Prestige Representation: The embeddedness of words/phrases/structures in English by native speakers of Romanian in their discourse is associated by 20 respondents with the rendering of concepts, ideas, and situations with precision, fidelity, and accuracy. Operating within this representation sometimes entails that people use words in English even if there are words in Romanian to describe the reality expressed by these words, but the English version is preferred, nonetheless. As such, some respondents state: “The usual use of words of foreign origin to better iterate certain feelings,

⁸ adaptarea/folosirea în mod necorespunzător a cuvintelor englezești în vorbirea în limba română

⁹ Un mix stalcit între cele 2 limbi

¹⁰ Barbarisme folosite extensiv

¹¹ O varza în care nu știi ce vorbești

¹² Procesul prin care românul vorbește mai repede decât gândește și adaugă termeni în vorbire provenite din engleză.

¹³ scopul de a accentua mesajul sau o anumită stare

¹⁴ scopul de a-ți termina ideea într-un timp mai rapid prin încorporarea unor cuvinte în engleza în cazul în care ai uitat pe moment corespondentul aceluși cuvânt sau acelei expresii în limba română.

¹⁵ Prin romgleză înțeleg folosirea cuvintelor provenite din engleză și română pentru a forma propoziții/fraze rapide.

¹⁶ În general când engleza suna mai bine decât romana sau e mai ușor de exprimat ideea.

¹⁷ *Switch-ul* între română și engleza în aceeași fraza

¹⁸ Modificarea unor cuvinte din engleza astfel încât să pară românești (prin atașare de sufixe românești etc).

actions, etc., because we have the impression that the Romanian language does not have an equivalent.”¹⁹; “Using English words and expressions, either to be 'cool' or to fill a real gap in the Romanian language”²⁰; “replacing words in speech when we have a slip of the tongue and instead of explaining what it means we find an English term for that word to ease the conversation”²¹, “To use words or expressions in English in a conversation in Romanian to better express a thing, a state or a situation”²².

Representation connected to the Digital medium: The last broad representation of Romglish shows that the respondents consider this mix as being connected to the world of social media, the Internet, and professional communication. This representation is different from the fill-in-the-gaps and prestige representation in that it covers a new reality. 23 of the respondents' answers include: “Words/expressions taken from the English language and adapted to the Romanian language, most often encountered in the business environment or the Internet.”²³; “A combination between Romanian and English, usually used by young people, both in face-to-face interactions and on social networks.”²⁴; “A linguistic phenomenon, a hybrid between the Romanian and English languages as an effect of globalization in various fields (IT, economy, finance, mass media, advertising, etc.)”²⁵. In the Romanian collective imaginary, Romglish is already perceived also as an independent idiom as can be seen in the following answer given by one of our respondents: “Romglish is a **dialect** of the Romanian language spoken by Romanian speakers who are exposed to the English language because of their profession or the time they spend on social platforms, the Internet, etc. where English is used.” (Our emphasis)²⁶.

¹⁹ Folosirea în mod uzual a unor cuvinte de proveniență străină pentru a mai bine itera anumite sentimente, acțiuni etc, deoarece ni se pare ca nu găsim un echivalent în limba română

²⁰ Apelarea la cuvinte și expresii în engleza, fie pentru a fi 'cool', fie pentru a suplini o reala lacuna a limbii romane.

²¹ înlocuirea cuvintelor în vorbire cand avem un lapsus si în loc sa explicăm ceea ce înseamnă găsim un termen în engleza pentru acel cuvânt pentru ușurarea conversatiei.

²² Sa folosesc cuvinte sau expresii în limba engleza într-o conversație în limba română pentru a exprima mai bine, un lucru, o stare sau o situatie.

²³ Cuvinte/expresii preluate din limba engleza si adaptate limbii romane, cel mai des întâlnite în mediul de afaceri sau internet.

²⁴ O combinatie între română și engleza, folosită uzual de persoanele tinere, atat în discuțiile fata-n fata, cât și pe rețelele de socializare.

²⁵ Un fenomen lingvistic, o hibridizare între limbile română și engleză ca efect al globalizării în diverse domenii (IT, economie, finanțe, mass-media, publicitate etc.).

²⁶ Romgleza e un dialect al limbii române vorbită de vorbitori romani care sunt expusi limbii engleze din cauza profesiei sau a timpului petrecut pe platforme sociale, internet etc. unde se folosește limba engleza.

When asked how frequently they use English words/structures/sentences in Romanian, we notice that more than half of our respondents declare they do this often (25,8%), and very often (28,3%), 27,7% declare doing this sometimes. Only a small percentage declare doing this rarely (16,4%), while only 1,9% declare never doing this (see Figure 4 below).

159 responses

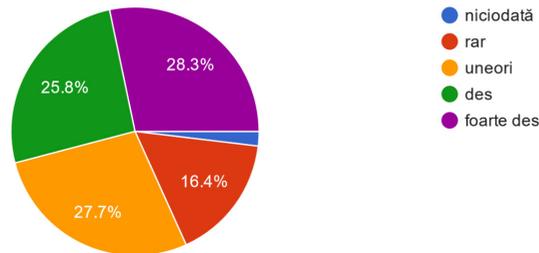


Figure 4 Frequency of Use

As shown in Figure 5 below, our respondents consider that the mix of English with Romanian is found in their discourse mainly at the level of words (90.6%), but high percentages are also found with more complex structures (52.2%), entire clauses or sentences (41.5%), and English suffixes (40.9%). Only 2.5% state that this linguistic production does not characterise their discourse.

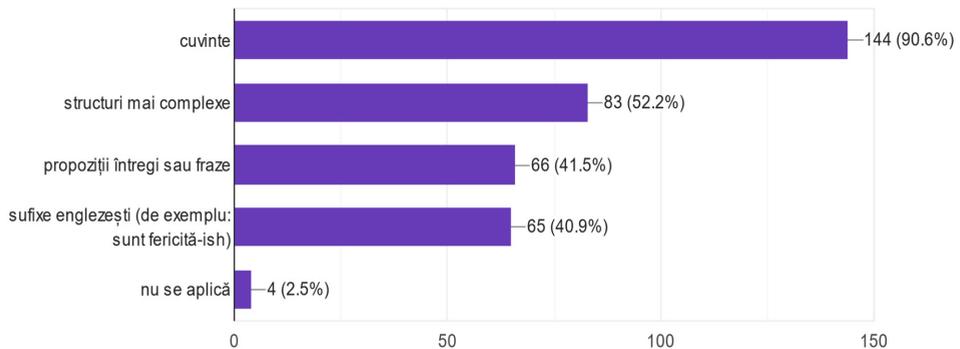


Figure 5 English Structures

When asked to mention the situations in which they mix English with Romanian, the vast majority of our respondents declare using this mix both online and face-to-face (91.2%), while only 5.7% limit this to face-to-face

interactions and only 3.1% declare not using this mix in any situation. Interestingly enough, no respondents affirmed to limit this mix to the online environment (see Figure 6 below).

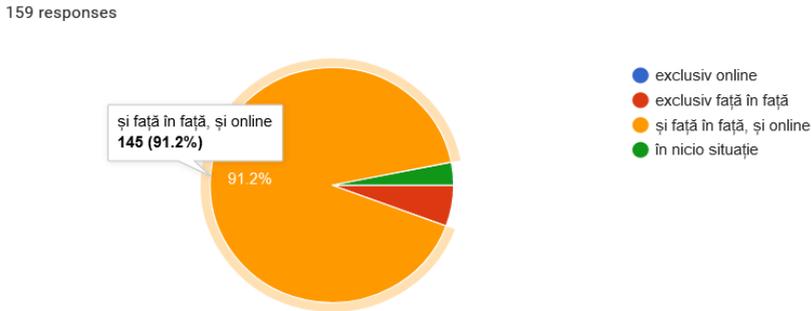


Figure 6 Online vs. Face to face

When asked to choose the reasons for mixing the two codes, our respondents' selection shows that the five representations of the Romanian collective imaginary are configured again in their answers: the highest percentage (76.1%) is registered for the precision of the English terms (fill-in-the-gap and prestige representation), 51.6% of the respondents opt for mixing the codes because it comes natural for them (force of habit and frame of mind representation), 45.9% select adaptation to the interlocutor(s) as a reason for their mix between English and Romanian (familiarity framework representation), the lack of a proper Romanian equivalent (representation connected to the digital medium) is chosen by 67.3% of our respondents (see Figure 7 below).

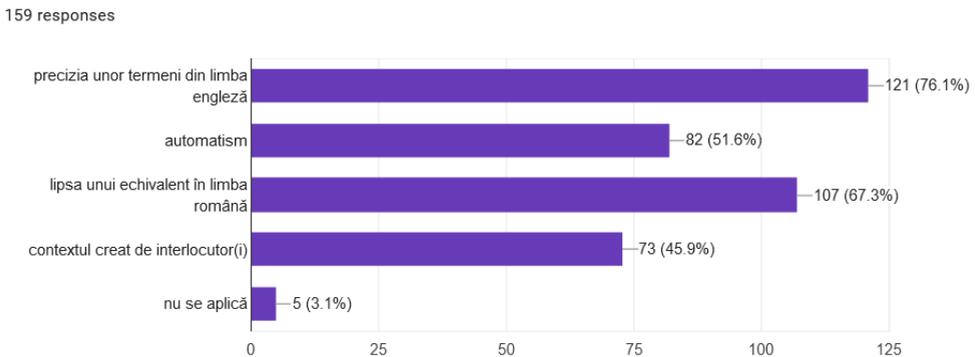


Figure 7 Reasons for Mixing the two codes

Regarding the use of swearing and curse words, the percentages obtained are quite similar (Figure 8): 28.3% of our respondents declare swearing both in Romanian and in English; 27% of our respondents declare that they do not swear in any of these two languages; 20.1% of our respondents state that they swear mostly in Romanian; 18.9% of our respondents affirm that they swear in English; a very small percentage declares swearing only in Romanian (5%) and only 0.6% claim that they swear only in English.

159 responses



Figure 8 Use of swearing and curse words

When motivating their choice to swear in English and/or in Romanian, we notice that the vast majority of the respondents consider that swearing in English offers a distance towards the gravity of a situation and constitutes a face-saving strategy, acting as a non-identification linguistic manoeuvre. In our respondents' answers, we identify recurrent ideas: swearing in English is less vulgar, it sounds lighter, it does not have the same weight as in Romanian, it does not sound as bad, in the mother tongue everything sounds more serious, swearing in English seems less aggressive, more interesting and appropriate to the context, swearing in Romanian sounds much too harsh, swearing in English gives you the chance that some people will not understand you, some insults in the English language have become more "socially acceptable", they do not have the same impact/level of vulgarity, kids do not understand the English swearing, using the English language seems softer, there is the tendency for some respondents to use Romanian when they are more upset and English when they are not so angry.

The second section of the survey, *Romglish: examples*, focuses on concrete examples in Romglish. We designed this section in a bi-partite manner: eliciting our respondents to select from a set of given examples that would function as incentives and to illustrate instances of Romglish that they use on a regular basis. In this way, we first activate the representations that are fixed in the linguistic data of the Romanian collective imaginary, and then we investigate linguistic facts, organised according to conceptual and cultural frameworks in

terms of space-time-technological configurations. In this sense, we established concrete linguistic representations at the level of discourse: verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs and discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts. In what follows we present the incentives offered and the percentages obtained, and then we include the examples produced by our respondents. These examples are reproduced word-for-word: some of them are isolated words, while others are integrated into the Romanian matrix and some are also presented in a sentence. Accordingly, we organise them into separate categories by arranging the isolated elements in alphabetical order and by making a selection of some of the recurrent examples integrated into Romanian and those presented in a sentence.

The incentives that we gave for verbs are illustrated in Figure 9 below.

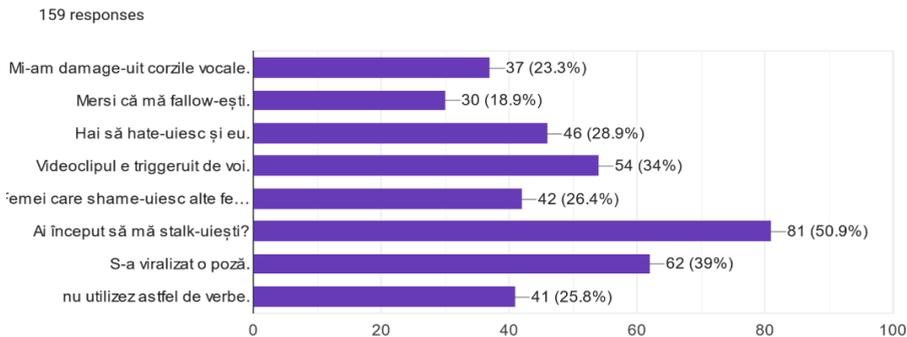


Figure 9 Verbs

The verb category inventory obtained from the respondents' answers indicates a heterogenous arena for this part of speech as there are examples in which there is no indication concerning the context of use or the form of the verb, whereas other examples illustrate different forms of the verb (indicative present, past tense, participle, etc.), sentences integrating English verbs, and various forms which are adapted to Romanian grammar. We write the examples exactly as they were written by our respondents as we came across different spellings for the same words/structures, and different graphical signs for some words/structures. We consider this to show the versatility of Romglish, its high level of flexibility, and the extent to which it is integrated into the Romanian matrix.

The verbs mentioned by our respondents include the categories below.

Long infinitives in English: *to book, to clear, to do, to research, to run, to stream, to study, to wake.*

Bare infinitives in English: *afford, block, bully, cancel, commit (used in IT context), damage, follow, give, guess, imagine, leave, love, match, manage, overthink, play, push, review, send, spend, slay, spread, stalk, start, think, try, unfriend, unsee, update, understand, upload, wish, work, write.*

Modal auxiliaries: *could, must, should, would.*

Ing forms: *loving, shaming, slaying, sourcing, stalking.*

Long infinitives containing the Romanian infinitive particle 'a' and an English verb with Romanian suffixes: *a blendui, a bullyingui, a challenge-ui, a doxui (to dox someone), a escala, a fake-ui, a te focusa, a hackui (to hack), a hate-ui, a matche-ui, a merge-ui, a posta, a share-ui, a sharui, a sherui* (different spellings are provided), *a se spauna (to spawn), a stolkări, a tăgui, a train-ui, a trigger-ui, a updata.*

Conjugated verbs with Romanian suffixes. In this case, we noticed the following subcategories:

Present tense 1st person: *bold-uiesc, cancellez, download-ez, downloadez, doxuiesc, drink-uiesc forwardez, manage-uiesc, rejectez, share-uiesc, shareuiesc, sheruiesc, stanez, switch-uiesc, updatez, upload-ez, zapez.*

Present tense 2nd and 3rd person: *forward-eaza, spam-uiesti, trigger-uieste,*

Past Participle with Romanian suffixes: *challengeuit, chase-uit, crush-uit, download-at, failuit, focusat, follow-uit, hate-uit, hug-uit, like-uit, randomizat, "share-uit", simmeruit, spawnat, stalkuit, strike-uit, tagg-uit, triggeruit, walk-uit.*

Past tense with Romanian auxiliary and suffixes: *ai downloadat; ai shareuit, ai scrolat.*

Romanian verbs that are easily combined with English nouns and form verb groups: *dau follow/like, dai pe browse in google si gasesti; a da follow, a da tweet, a face stream/live, a face research, si-a luat cancel, a te pune online.*

Examples presented in a sentence: *Îmi kill-uiesti timpul; Let's do it!; Go ahead!; M-am „trigăruit”.; Cine te-a „pissed-offuit”?; Are you kidding me?; I love când faci asta. Hai, let's sing!; Hai sa talk-uim.; Let's go!; Come on!; "s-a spawnat"; "l-a banat"; it is amazing (it is + adj.); f**k it; move it; f**k off.*

The incentives that we gave for nouns are illustrated in Figure 10 below.

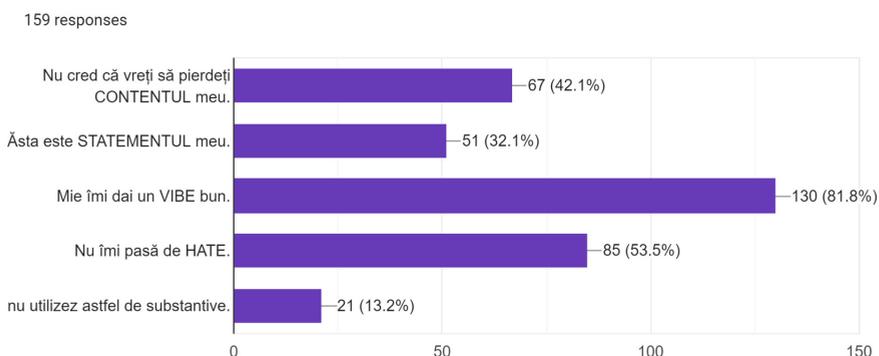


Figure 10 Nouns

The nouns mentioned by the respondents include:

Simple and compound singular nouns: *account, attachment, awareness, baby, banger, beauty, block, blush, bias, bird, boss, bot, brand, breakfast, bronzer, brother, boy, bully, business, call, cash, chat, coach, code, coffee, comment, company, computer, content, context, creep, date, death, delivery, design, desktop, digitization, dinner, discount, dog, dude, e-mail, engagement, expat, eyeshadow, fashion, fast-food, feedback, feeling, flag, flow, follow-up, follower, food, freak, friend, friendship, f***er, fun, gap, genius, glue, girl, gold-digger, grass, hate, hater, heads-up, highlight, highlighter, home, income, issue, job, judgement, knowledge, laptop, life, lifestyle, like, line-up, link, lip gloss, lipstick, look, looser, love, lunch, make-up, mall, man, manager, management, mate, match, master, milestone, mindset, moron, motherhood, mouse, movie, music, narrative, office, outfit, party, peeler, pen, photo/picture, pinkie, plot, polish, post, post-it, powerpoint, printer, my problem, quote, ramp-up, reach, relationship, reminder, review, room, sample, scam, selfie, sequel, shit, sister, skill, sleep, sleepover, smartphone, smile, song, spam, snitch, statement, stuff, story, style, sunshine, target, task, team, thing, throwback, time, toner, tracker, trainer, trigger, update, user, value, vibe, view, vlogger, voice pe WhatsApp (i.e. voice message), weekend, wireless, workshop.*

Verbal nouns: *brainstorming, learning, shaming, trending, writing.*

Plural nouns: *dislikes, facts, followers, fries, goosebumps, guys, hugs, insights, pancakes, subscribers, views.*

English nouns with the Romanian definite article: *challenge-ul, deploy-ul, makeup-ul, meetingul, release-ul, share-ul, supplier-ul, workout-ul.*

English nouns with Romanian suffixes: *chill-uială, hater-eală.*

English nouns spelled out in Romanian and phonetically adapted to the Romanian language: *folouârși, influensări.*

Collocations: *big brain, death stare, know-how, safe space, social media, working space.*

Idioms: *in the mood.*

Acronyms: *PC, PIE (public interest entities).*

False Friends: *atașament* (In Romanian, the noun *atașament* is synonym with love/affection, while the English noun *attachment* means a file that is attached to an email message).

Words originating in the English language but being integrated into the Romanian language: *postare, speakeri.*

Video games words: *blueprint, marauder, moon lord, parkour.*

The incentives that we gave for adjectives and adverbs are illustrated in Figure 11 below.

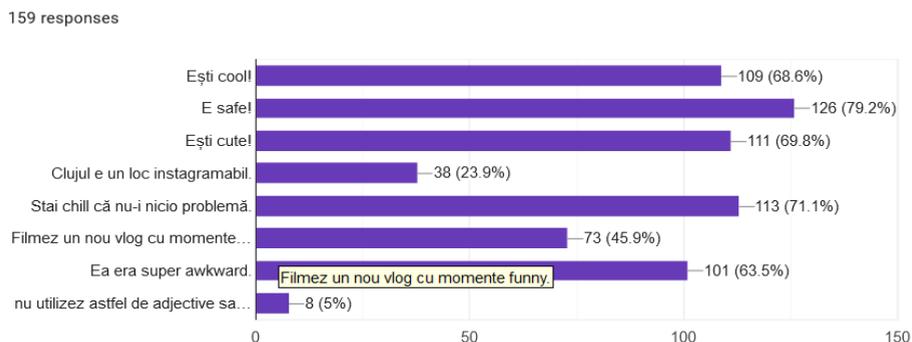


Figure 11 Adjectives and Adverbs

In the case of adjectives and adverbs, the input provided by our respondents can be divided into individual words (adjectives, adjective phrases, and adverbs), adjectives used in sentences and examples with metalinguistic comments.

Individual words: *actually, adorable, amazing, angry, average, awkward, awesome, bad, basic, basically, beautiful, best, bored, boring, brave, brilliant, busy, catchy, challenging, cheap, chill, cocky, comfy, confident, confusing, cool, crappy, crazy, creative, creepy, cringe, custom, cute, damaged, definitely, delicious, disappointing, disgusting, dizzy, dull, easy, embarrassed, excited, exhausted, expensive, fabulous, fair, fashionable, fast, flabbergasted, fortunate, frankly, freaky, free, friendly, fun, funny, full, good, gorgeous, great, happy, hardly ever, haunting, heavy weight, horror, horrible, hot, huge, icky, iconic, important, interesting, jealous, kind, lame, light weight, likely, literally, loud, lovely, loose, lousy, low, magical, maybe, meanwhile, moody, naive, nasty, next time, nice, nicely, no-fun, of course, old, open-minded, overwhelming, peachy, positive, precious, pretty, pushy, pussy, quick, quirky, random, randomly, tame, tasty, really, relaxed, sad, safe, satisfying, savage, scary, seldom, seriously, sexy, shaky, shitty, shook, silly, slay, sleepy, slow, smart, spooky, strange, strong, stupid, sure, sweet, thoughtful, tired, trending, trendy, true, ugly, uncanny, unhinged, unlikely, unusual, usually, vibey, viral, weird, wonderful, worthy, yucky.*

Adjectives used in sentences: *Stai interesting!; Proful de gramatica normativa e chill.; Ce fancy ești!; Ești fashion azi!; Ce aesthetic arată!; sunt foarte hungry; Ce beautiful ești!; Ce cool!; Este chiar reliable; , Nu mai fi fake!; Ai văzut ce messed-up lucru a făcut?.*

Examples with metalinguistic comments: *perfect (bine, asta ține de pronunție)* (here the respondent makes a comment drawing the reader's attention to the fact that the pronunciation is English), *'kinda + adj', E kinda... (kinda kind), (insta pin) worthy.*

The incentives that we offered our respondents for English discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts are mentioned in Figure 12 below.

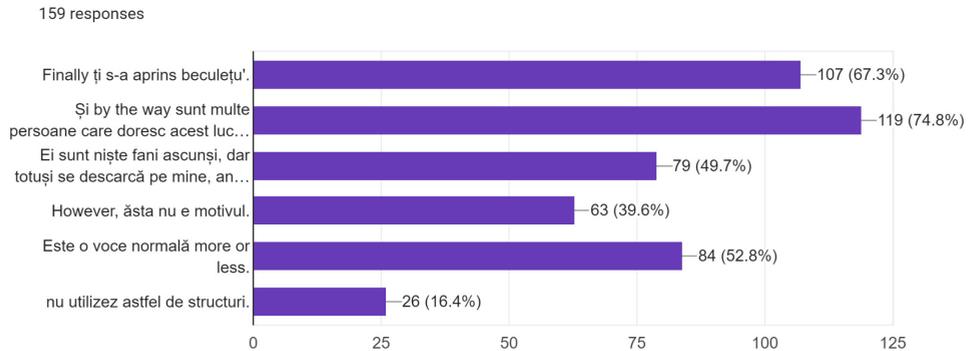


Figure 12 Discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts

The examples provided by our respondents constitute different grammatical structures (adverbs, connectives, idioms, collocations, interjections) and they are used to render different nuances of discourse that we highlight using the categories from the classification for discourse markers provided by the Cambridge dictionary. It's worth noting that there are terms and structures that, depending on the context, could fit into multiple categories.

Sounding less direct: *more or less, now and then, unlike, at least (not), whenever, usually, just in case, again.*

Linking words: *although, but, moreover, nonetheless.*

Ending a conversation: *all in all, anyway, anyways, at last, finally, in conclusion, in the end, after all, eventually, in any case.*

Organising/Ordering what we say: *firstly, first of all, on the other hand, at the same time, nevertheless, besides, anyhow, though, somehow, such as, even if, accordingly, also, therefore, even so far, as if.*

Changing the focus: *ohhh wait, out of nowhere, out of context, (but) also, meanwhile, be right back.*

Monitor what we say: *as I was saying, to be more specific, I mean, actually, so, well, still.*

Shared knowledge: *you know, obvious!, true!, For your information, by the way, like.*

Responses: *sure, for sure, and what do you think?, really, I think so, for real, come on, ok.*

Showing attitude: *apparently, basically, not gonna lie, honestly, to be honest, thank god, I'm afraid, no way, what the f**k, however, whatever, nevermind, (and I was) like + adjective/interjection/noun, etc.*

Interjections: *meh, ohhh wait, yuks.*

Informal spelling: *aaaaand, c'mon.*

CMC acronyms: *asap (as soon as possible), btw, ikr (i know right), omg.*

Examples presented in a sentence: *Era literally în sertar și tot nu l-a văzut.; Poți să iei școala de șoferi, no biggie.; obviously că nu am știut să-i răspund.; And so, noi am fost aleși.*

When asked what they think about discourses that contain Romglish elements, the vast majority of our respondents considered that these discourses are informal (61.6%), almost half of them considered these discourses to be up-to-date (45.3%) and playful (36.5%). Some of our respondents associated these discourses with attractiveness, familiarity, precision, clarity, prestige, up-to-dateness, playfulness, superiority, automatism, and habit, while others consider these discourses as being annoying, superficial, stupid, frivolous, sometimes exaggerated and embarrassing, showing indecision and bad taste, lack of respect for the Romanian language, lack of self-confidence.

Using Romglish is also a matter of how others perceive our respondents' discourses. Thus, when asked whether they had been criticised for using Romglish excessively, only 15.7% of our respondents declared that this was not the case, 45.3% declared that this had not happened to them, and 39% declared having been criticised (see Figure 13 below).

159 responses

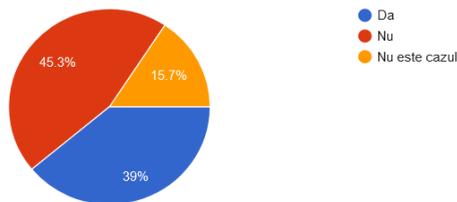


Figure 13 How others perceive our respondents' discourses

Investigating further, as can be seen in Figure 14, we notice that the people most likely to make comments regarding the excessive use of Romglish by our respondents are: someone in the family (17.6%), a friend (16.4%), an acquaintance (15.1%), a colleague (11.3%) and a superior (3.1%).

In contrast with how our respondents' discourse is perceived by other people, we also analysed the way in which our respondents perceive other people's use of Romglish elements. Our respondents' answers show that approximately half of them show impartiality towards the use of these elements (54.1%), 18.2% of the respondents do not like this mix, but they do not react verbally, and a similar percentage (26.4%) feel encouraged to use them as well when other people use them, 12.6% consider this mix to be a sign of creativity.

159 responses

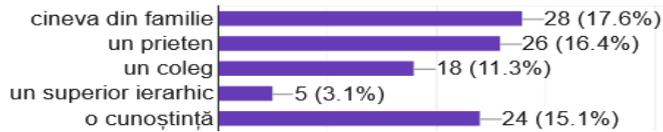


Figure 14 Who made comments regarding the excessive use of Romglish

There are also other considerations regarding our respondents' perception of Romglish elements in other people's discourse: "it depends on the situation, but I prefer to use Romanian among Romanians and English with foreigners"²⁷, "it bothers me, but I don't react verbally, it seems to me like a sign of degradation of the Romanian language"²⁸, "it seems perfectly normal to me, as long as it is not used excessively/it is not used to stand out and create a 'cool' image"²⁹, "I'd mind excessive use"³⁰, "It depends from case to case, on the correctness of the terms used and their purpose"³¹, "If there are a few words but not very frequent, I think it's ok, but if there are mixed expressions or the frequency is high, I don't like it"³², "It's something I'm trying to change in myself, but not in others"³³, "It depends on the context and on the amount of mixed terms"³⁴, "Although I still have 'slips', I believe that we should limit the use of Romglish, in order not to destroy the Romanian language"³⁵, "Sometimes I found it annoying, especially in situations in which the examples of Romglish were improper (or if I disliked the person using them)"³⁶, "I draw the interlocutor's attention in case she/he does not know English"³⁷, "It depends on the circumstances. If it is excessive and unjustified, I would draw the speaker's attention. If she/he does it sparingly and brings more meaning to the discourse by doing so, that's perfectly fine"³⁸.

²⁷ depinde de situație, dar prefer folosirea limbii române între români și a limbii engleze cu străinii

²⁸ mă deranjează, dar nu reacționez verbal, mi se pare un semn de degradare a limbii române

²⁹ mi se pare perfect normal, atata timp cat nu se folosește excesiv/nu se folosește pentru a ieși în evidența și a crea o imagine 'cool'

³⁰ M-ar deranja folosirea excesivă

³¹ Depinde de la caz la caz, de corectitudinea termenilor folosiți și de scopul lor.

³² Dacă sunt câteva cuvinte dar nu foarte frecvente mi se pare ok, dar dacă sunt expresii amestecate sau frecvența este mare nu îmi place

³³ E un lucru pe care încerc să îl schimb la mine, dar nu și la alții

³⁴ Depinde de context și de cantitatea folosirii termenilor amestecați

³⁵ Deși mai am și eu 'scăpări', consider că ar trebui să limităm folosirea romglezei, ca să nu stâlcim limba română.

³⁶ Câteodată mi s-a întâmplat să deranjeze, mai ales în situațiile în care exemplele de romgleză le-am considerat nereușite (sau dacă persoana ce le folosea îmi era antipatică).

³⁷ Îi atrag atenția în cazul în care interlocutorul lui/ei nu cunoaște limba engleză.

³⁸ Depinde de circumstanțe. Dacă este excesiv și nejustificat, i-aș atrage atenția vorbitorului. Dacă o face cu moderație și aduce un plus de sens discursului prin asta, este perfect în regulă.

Conclusions

The present study aimed at providing an overview of the current status of Romglish and its connection to the construction of a Romanian collective imaginary, while investigating the way in which the respondents of our study claim to use Romglish and how they view this code. This study is also part of a series of more complex research in which we engaged with the purpose of documenting the use of Romglish: Romglish as linguistic phenomena extracted from authentic contexts (Radu 2020), Romglish in authentic contexts as illustrated by YouTubers (Radu, Cotoc 2021). With this study, we add a new dimension to this code, by demonstrating that Romglish has become an essential part of the Romanian highly educated urban feminine group.

Our results show that Romglish is perceived by our respondents as becoming as popular in face-to-face interactions as it is in cyberspace. Moreover, this idiom has become a way of manifestation and, implicitly, of investigation and restoration of the global cultural and collective imaginary into the Romanian/local imaginary, as well as a way of (re)shaping and reconfiguring it according to the current linguistic and non-linguistic trends.

It is also the aim of this study to illustrate that Romglish is a representative facet of the collective imaginary encoded in linguistic facts and organised according to conceptual frameworks, exhibiting a high degree of universality. Correspondingly, when using this hybrid idiom, our respondents are motivated by features of Romglish such as: familiarity, precision, prestige and up-to-dateness.

The added value consists of bringing forward the internal mechanisms of linguistic creativity of Romanian native speakers who, on one hand, use Romglish in their discourse in order to mark the distance in relation to various situations, using English when including taboo words and ideas in their discourse, and, on the other hand, to mark prestige in communication and interaction and to construct complex layers of meaning in formal and informal contexts.

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