

# NEW TRENDS IN THE ASSIMILATION OF VERBAL ANGLICISMS IN ROMANIAN

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**Abstract.** In the context of the massive English influence on present-day Romanian, when Romanian native speakers have been flooded by English in all realms of their daily lives, it seems helpful, not only for theoretical, but also for standardization purposes, to analyse the current trends in the morphological assimilation of recent verbal Anglicisms. Although the suffix *-a* has been considered the most productive means of verb assimilation of neologisms in Romanian (see for example Avram 1997: 18), some of the verbs under analysis here display morphological variation, i.e. Romanian speakers oscillate between an infinitive ending in *-a* and one ending in *-(u)i*. In order to see whether the variation is only accidental or whether it may underlie a shift in the verbal assimilation patterns of Romanian verbal neologisms, we have created a questionnaire to ask subjects to rank several morphological variants of the same verb.

**Keywords:** verbal Anglicisms, morphologic assimilation, morphological variation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The effects of the considerable current English influence on other languages have been a major research topic in both international and Romanian linguistics over the last decades (e.g. Avram 1997, Croitor *et al.* 2008, Crystal 2003, Furiassi *et al.* 2012, Görlach, 2001, 2002). One of the main concerns for Romanian linguists (Andronache Cojocaru 2010; Bota 1978; Stoichițoiu-Ichim 2005, 2006; Ciobanu 2004; Corbeanu, Ilie 2007) has been the orthographic and morphologic assimilation of lexical Anglicisms. Mainly descriptive and normative in nature, such studies have primarily focused on listing Anglicisms, classifying them either based on their grammatical class or for semantic reasons, trying to standardize their pronunciation, orthography and morphology to fit the Romanian already-established patterns and observing variation only as attested in various types of texts, and essentially with the intention to show how such uses depart from the norm. We have taken a step further trying to see whether morphological variation is more than just a sign of the lack of standardization and norming. Embracing a socio-psycholinguistic approach, our analysis considers the Romanian native speakers' perception of verbal Anglicisms as it can shed some

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light not only on how they assimilate morphologically English-based Romanian verbs, but also whether there is any shift from what has been considered the predominant tendency.

In Section 2, we will briefly discuss the morphological assimilation patterns of Romanian verbal neologisms. Section 3 is dedicated to the experiment design, and the results and their interpretation are to be found in Section 4; we draw our conclusions in 5.

## 2. ASSIMILATION TENDENCIES OF ROMANIAN VERB NEOLOGISMS. A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

Out of the great number of English-based Romanian borrowings, only a few are verbs. For instance, DEX2-2016 reports 1711 words that have English either as their sole etymology or as one of several others, out of which only 56 are verbs. All these normed verbs fall under the traditionally-called 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, with the *-a* ending for the infinitive and *-ez* for 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, present tense, first person (2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation according to GALR), e.g. Ro. *a accesa* (En. *to access*), Ro. *a clica* (En. *to click*), Ro. *a clona* (En. *to clone*), Ro. *a printa* (En. *to print*), Ro. *a scana* (En. *to scan*). There are 439 words labelled as ‘angl.’ (i.e., Anglicism or Anglo-Americanism) in DOOM2–2005, but none of them is a verb. This does not imply that DOOM2–2005 does not record verbs of English origin, but that such words, e.g. Ro. *a accesa* (En. *to access*), Ro. *a printa* (En. *to print*), are not labelled as Anglicisms; perhaps the authors considered them fully integrated into Romanian. Although it is more difficult to trace verbs of English origin in DOOM2–2005 since it contains no etymological indications, we can state that all verb Anglicisms we were able to identify in this dictionary follow the same inflection pattern, namely the *-a* ending for the infinitive and *-ez* for the first person singular present tense.

The same assimilation tendency is observed in most of the studies dedicated to the morphological adaptation of Romanian verbal Anglicisms. Bota (1978), Stoichițoiu Ichim (2005: 101) discuss only English verbs that have been assimilated to the traditionally-called 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, like most verbal neologisms, regardless of their origin. Having as a starting point the dictionary of recent words she had compiled, Dimitrescu (1994) concluded that the majority of recent Romanian verbs, be they internally created or borrowed, embraced the same conjugation. Further on, she argues that, regardless of the conjugation such verbs belong to, all (but one, i.e. Ro. *a supraucide*, En. *to overkill*) recent verbs have weak present forms (Dimitrescu 1994: 196), that is verbs belonging to the traditionally-called 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> conjugations realising their present indicative and subjunctive, and also their positive imperative, by adding extra suffixes (such as *-ez* for the 1<sup>st</sup> and *-esc, -ăsc* for the 4<sup>th</sup>) to several persons, before the normal personal endings (Avram, 2001: 200). Comparing the verbs existing in DEX–1975 and those from DOOM2–2005, Dragomirescu (2009: 224) shows that the traditionally-called 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, weak present (i.e. that adds suffixes to form the present, before the personal endings) has been the most productive, whereas the traditionally-called 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, weak present (i.e. that adds suffixes to form the present before the personal endings) has been the least productive.

When discussing English-based Romanian verbs, Mioara Avram (1997) argues that Romanian speakers tend to attach the suffix *-ui* to English verb stems to create familiar, jocular verbs. She further shows that this phenomenon was to be found at that time mostly with Romanian immigrants in the USA (Avram 1997: 18), making this tendency less

productive and thus less widespread. Constantinescu *et al.* (2002: 6), Florea (2002: 94), Stoichițoiu Ichim (2006: 52), Zafiu (2010: 18-19) have also associated the assimilation of English-based verbs into the traditionally-called 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation with informal language and computer-mediated communication. Moreover, Stoichițoiu Ichim (2005: 8) claims that new verbs ending in *-ui* are ‘luxury derivatives’ since their function is mainly expressive – ironic, jocular, and so on, regardless of their origin. However, no such connotations are discussed by Ardeleanu-Cruceru (2003) when analysing the IT vocabulary.

Corbeanu and Ilie (2007) argue that, as a natural step towards the full integration into Romanian of the new English-based verbs, the two assimilation tendencies are not mutually exclusive as both may appear with the same verb. The variation has also been noted for individual verbal Anglicisms such as Ro. *a branda* / *a brandui* (En. *to brand*, Zafiu 2006), *a bloga* / *a blogui* (En. *to blog*, Zafiu 2007). Moreover, there are a number of verbs that tend to be assimilated to the traditional 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation in a more complex way, exhibiting an interesting variation: the same verb can appear either with a strong present (the present indicative and subjunctive is formed by directly adding the person endings to the verb root, e.g. Ro. *el bloguie*, En. *he blogs*) or with a weak present (adding to the verb root a verbal suffix and then the person endings, e.g. Ro. *el bloguiește*, En. *he blogs*). However, we could not attest this variation with the English verbs that embrace the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation.

The situation just described above and our empirical observations have made us believe the variation is more widespread than previously claimed, and that it is not specific only for some English-based Romanian verbs, or only for particular language registers. In this context, it seems that most recent verbal Anglicisms tend to be morphologically assimilated to the traditionally called 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> conjugations, with weak present forms, and not only to the 1<sup>st</sup> one as previously claimed.

### 3. EXPERIMENT DESIGN: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

To test our hypotheses, i.e. to see whether the assimilation of verbal Anglicisms to the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation is actually wider than previously claimed, and that such a tendency may suggest that the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation has become more productive than before, we tested Romanian native speakers’ preference for one or the other conjugation. The findings could also be used for norming purposes.

#### 3.1. The stimuli

We designed a ranking questionnaire that contained 36 English-based loan verbs, most of them still exhibiting oscillating patterns in present-day Romanian (e.g. Ro. *eu chatuiesc* – 4<sup>th</sup> conj, weak present / *eu chatez* – 1<sup>st</sup> conj, weak present / *eu chatui* – 4<sup>th</sup> conj., strong present, En. *I chat*). We searched all our 36 verbs online and in written texts to attest and record their morphological variation. Then, we came up with a sentence for each verb. The sentence was further changed to reflect all attested variants of the same verb, so there were 36 sentence groups (see **Table 1**). In **Table 1**, each sentence group is headed by the English word that could be the immediate or remote etymon of the Romanian verb.

Table 1

The stimuli: the 36 sentence groups, in red the verbal Anglicisms.

BLOG	BOOK	BRAND	CANCEL	CHAT
(1a) Liviu <b>bloguiește</b> de câteva luni.	(2a) Am <b>bookuit</b> hotelul pentru vacanță.	(3a) Samsung își <b>branduiește</b> un telefon nou.	(4a) Poți să <b>cancelezi</b> rezervarea până pe 20 lunie.	(5a) Adolescenții <b>chatauiesc</b> mult.
(1b) Liviu <b>bloghează</b> de câteva luni.	(2b) Am <b>bookat</b> hotelul pentru vacanță.	(3b) Samsung își <b>branduie</b> un telefon nou.	(4b) Poți să <b>canceluiești</b> rezervarea până pe 20 lunie.	(5b) Adolescenții <b>chatauie</b> mult.
(1c) Liviu <b>bloguie</b> de câteva luni.		(3c) Samsung își <b>brandează</b> un telefon nou.		(5c) Adolescenții <b>chatează</b> mult.
CLICK	CRACK	CROP	DELETE	DOWNLOAD
(6a) Trebuie să <b>cliclești</b> pe semnul ăla!	(7a) Cu aplicația asta se <b>crackulesc</b> multe programe.	(8a) Trebuie să mai <b>cropeze</b> poza puțin.	(9a) Dacă o superi, te <b>deletează</b> din lista de prieteni.	(10a) O să <b>downloadez</b> filmul diseară.
(6b) Trebuie să <b>clichezi</b> pe semnul ăla!	(7b) Cu aplicația asta se <b>crackează</b> multe programe.	(8b) Trebuie să mai <b>cropuiească</b> poza puțin.	(9b) Dacă o superi, te <b>deletuiește</b> din lista de prieteni.	(10b) O să <b>downloadesc</b> filmul diseară.
(6c) Trebuie să <b>clicâi</b> pe semnul ăla!	(7c) Cu aplicația asta se <b>crackule</b> multe programe.	(8c) Trebuie să mai <b>cropuie</b> poza puțin.	(9c) Dacă o superi, te <b>delește</b> din lista de prieteni.	(10c) O să <b>downloaduiesc</b> filmul diseară.
(6d) Trebuie să <b>clicăiești</b> pe semnul ăla!				
FRAME	GOOGLE	HACKER	HOMESCHOOL	LIKE
(11a) Nu pot să văd filmul pe telefon, îl <b>framează</b> urât.	(12a) Nu mai știu cum se numește programul, mai bine <b>googlești</b> după el.	(13a) Vezi să nu-ți <b>hackerească</b> cineva contul!	(14a) Diana își <b>homeschooluiește</b> copiii.	(15a) Avem un concurs pentru cei care ne <b>like-uiesc</b> .
(11b) Nu pot să văd filmul pe telefon, îl <b>frameuiește</b> urât.	(12b) Nu mai știu cum se numește programul, mai bine <b>googlezi</b> după el.	(13b) Vezi să nu-ți <b>hackereze</b> cineva contul!	(14b) Diana își <b>homeschoolizează</b> copiii.	(15b) Avem un concurs pentru cei care ne <b>like-ează</b> .
(11c) Nu pot să văd filmul pe telefon, îl <b>framule</b> urât.	(12c) Nu mai știu cum se numește programul, mai bine <b>googlești</b> după el.			
LINK	MANAGER	MARKET	MATCH	MESSAGE
(16a) Am vrut să <b>linkuiesc</b> articolul în noul blog.	(17a) Diana <b>manageriază</b> singură firma.	(18a) E o firmă mică, dar își <b>marketează</b> bine produsele.	(19a) Ideile voastre nu se <b>matchuiesc</b> .	(20a) Copiii se <b>mesagluiesc</b> în fiecare zi.
(16b) Am vrut să <b>linkez</b> articolul în noul blog.	(17b) Diana <b>managerizează</b> singură firma.	(18b) E o firmă mică, dar își <b>marketizează</b> bine produsele.	(19b) Ideile voastre nu se <b>matchează</b> .	(20b) Copiii se <b>mesagează</b> în fiecare zi.
(16c) Am vrut să <b>linkui</b> articolul în noul blog.	(17c) Diana <b>managerează</b> singură firma.	(18c) E o firmă mică, dar își <b>marketuiește</b> bine produsele.		
	(17d) Diana <b>manageruiește</b> singură firma.			
	(17e) Diana <b>managerește</b> singură firma.			
PHOTOSHOP	PRINT	REBRAND	SHARE	SHOP
(21a) Imaginea asta e <b>photoshopată</b> .	(22a) <b>Printez</b> eu documentul.	(23a) Vodafone se <b>rebranduiește</b> .	(24a) O să <b>sharuiesc</b> articolul.	(25a) N-am <b>shoppuit</b> mare lucru, deși erau reduceri.
(21b) Imaginea asta e <b>photoshopuită</b> .	(22b) <b>Printuiesc</b> eu documentul.	(23b) Vodafone se <b>rebrandează</b> .	(24b) O să <b>sharui</b> articolul.	(25b) N-am <b>shoppat</b> mare lucru, deși erau reduceri.
(21c) Imaginea asta e <b>photoshopizată</b> .		(23c) Vodafone se <b>rebranduie</b> .	(24c) O să <b>sharez</b> articolul.	
SPAM	SPOT	STALK	TARGET	TRACK
(26a) Adresa asta m-a <b>spamat</b> cu 100 de mailuri.	(27a) Am <b>spotuit</b> ultimul BMW aseară la Unirii.	(28a) Mihai mă <b>stalkuiește</b> pe Instagram.	(29a) Produsele lor <b>targetează</b> persoanele în vârstă.	(30a) Aplicația asta <b>trackuiește</b> IP-urile.
(26b) Adresa asta m-a <b>spamuit</b> cu 100 de mailuri.	(27b) Am <b>spotat</b> ultimul BMW aseară la Unirii.	(28b) Mihai mă <b>stalkează</b> pe Instagram.	(29b) Produsele lor <b>targetuiesc</b> persoanele în vârstă.	(30b) Aplicația asta <b>trackează</b> IP-urile.
(26c) Adresa asta m-a <b>spamărit</b> cu 100 de mailuri.		(28c) Mihai mă <b>stalkuie</b> pe Instagram.		(30c) Aplicația asta <b>trackuie</b> IP-urile.
TRAIN	TROLL	UNFRIEND	UPGRADE	UPLOAD
(31a) Orange își <b>trainuiește</b> angajații în fiecare an.	(32a) Tipul ăsta ne <b>trollează</b> .	(33a) Dan m-a <b>unfrienduit</b> .	(34a) Trebuie să îmi <b>upgradez</b> sistemul.	(35a) Promit să <b>uploadez</b> fișierul mâine.
(31b) Orange își <b>trainează</b> angajații în fiecare an.	(32b) Tipul ăsta ne <b>trolluiește</b> .	(33b) Dan m-a <b>unfriendat</b> .	(34b) Trebuie să îmi <b>upgradesc</b> sistemul.	(35b) Promit să <b>uploaduiesc</b> fișierul mâine.
(31c) Orange își <b>trainuie</b> angajații în fiecare an.	(32c) Tipul ăsta ne <b>trollește</b> .		(34c) Trebuie să îmi <b>upgraduiesc</b> sistemul.	(35c) Promit să <b>uploadesc</b> fișierul mâine.
	(32d) Tipul ăsta ne <b>trolluie</b> .			
ZAP				
(36a) Nu se uită la nimic anume, doar <b>zapulește</b> .				
(36b) Nu se uită la nimic anume, doar <b>zapează</b> .				

The 36 groups of stimuli sentences were each displayed online on a different page. After the 36 pages with sentences, there were some demographic questions (see below 3.2). Each sentence group was composed of 2-5 almost identical sentences, with the exception of the verbal Anglicism that had a different inflectional form in each sentence. Since we used only attested Romanian verbal forms, the 36 sentence groups contain an uneven number of sentences. We tried to keep the verbs as much as possible in the present indicative or subjunctive. In many cases, both weak and strong present forms were attested for the infinitives in *-i* and *-ui*, the traditionally-called 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation. For instance, the sentence group from the English verb *to crop* was:

- (8a) Trebuie să mai **cropeze** poza puțin.  
 (8b) Trebuie să mai **cropuie** poza puțin.  
 (8c) Trebuie să mai **cropuiască** poza puțin.  
 En. He needs to crop the picture a little bit.

However, we could not attest present forms for two verbs, so we used the attested past (see 25a-b, 27a-b in **Table 1**).

Out of the verbs used in our questionnaire, only 5 are recorded in DEX2-2016, thus being already normed and standardised, at least for Romanian linguists, if not for all Romanian native speakers. These verbs are: Ro. *a clica*, *a clicăi*<sup>1</sup> (En. *to click*), Ro. *a printa* (En. *to print*), Ro. *a upgrada* (En. *to upgrade*) and Ro. *a zapa*<sup>2</sup> (En. *to zap*). Nevertheless, we used all the attested forms of these verbs to see whether our subjects preferred the norm.

**Table 1** above shows that, at least for the time being, new English-based Romanian verbs tend to embrace at least two inflection patterns, if not all three: 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, with an *-a* infinitive and weak present forms, and the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation with the *-(u)i* infinitive and weak present forms, and sometimes even with strong present forms of the latter conjugation, e.g. Ro. *brandează* (1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, weak present) / Ro. *branduiește* (4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, weak present) / *branduie* (4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, strong present, En. *He/She/It brands*).

So, the most frequently used suffixes are: *-a* for the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation and *-i* and *-ui* for the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation: e.g. 10a-c, *a downloada*, *a downloadi* and *a downloadui*. Another suffix used in the assimilation of verbs is *-iza* for the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, and examples such as Ro. *a manageriza* (En. *to manage*), *a homeschooliza* (En. *to homeschool*), *a marketiza* (En. *to market*), *a photoshopiza* (En. *to photoshop*) indicate a loss of its causative meaning, previously observed by Cuniță 2003. Most verbs have an English verb as their etymon, but there are cases when the Romanian form is created from a Romanian noun Anglicism, such as *hacker* (see **13 a-b**, where *hacker* added *-a* and *-i*) or *manager* (see **17 a-e** where *manager* added several suffixes: *-a*, *-ia*, *-iza*, *-i*, *-ui*). In situations such as the latter, the

<sup>1</sup> DEX2-2016 considers Ro. *a clicăi* derived from Ro. *clica*, but DELR- II<sub>2</sub> considers that its etymon is Ro. *clie*<sup>3</sup>, the onomatopoeic interjection with an English origin; we tend to agree with the second, as the suffix *-ăi* is attached to onomatopoeic words to create verbs.

<sup>2</sup> In DEX2-2016, the verb Ro. *a zapa* is considered a loanword from French *zapper*. However, we tend to believe that its etymology is mainly English. According to TLF, Fr. *zapper* is attested only in 1986 and comes from the English verb *to zap*. According to DCR-2013 Ro. *a zapa* is first attested in 1993 when the English influence was already pretty manifest. Moreover, since the word is mainly used in mass media, which has been highly influenced by English since 1990, an English etymon is more likely than the French one proposed by DEX2-2016; see also Zafiu 2000.



competition is not only between different conjugations, but also between different lexical suffixes that belong to the same conjugation, thus making the discussion of the assimilation even more interesting.

But this phenomenon is not new for Romanian verbs. A brief perusing of DELR-II<sub>2</sub> shows that diachronically several Romanian verbal neologisms oscillated between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugations, or between one suffix and another, until one verb form became stronger and eliminated the other one(s): Ro. *a consuma* / Ro. *a consumi* (En. *to consume*), Ro. *a completa* / Ro. *a completui* (En. *to complete, to fill in*), Ro. *a condesa* (=> modern Ro. form *a condensa*) / Ro. *a condesi* (En. *to condense*). The list is by no means exhaustive. As it has been repeatedly shown in the literature (see above), the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, that is the *-a* infinitive, seems to have been the strongest. Nevertheless, our results suggest that the situation may be currently changing.

### 3.2. The participants

99 people, aged 19–40 (mean: 22.39), completed the questionnaire online. At the end of the questionnaire, participants also had to answer several demographic questions (age, gender, level of education, level of English knowledge). Most subjects were undergraduate students (60 people, 60.61%) and university graduates (31 people, 31.31%), whereas 7 subjects were MA graduates (7.07%), and only 1 (1.01%) held a PhD. The subjects were asked to self-assess their English knowledge: 71 considered themselves advanced English users (71.72%), 25 intermediate (25.25%) and 3 beginners (3.03%). This information was further correlated with the frequency of using English: 70 people (70.71%) said they used English on a daily basis, 24 people (24.24%) answered that they used English two or three times per week, and 5 subjects, every now and then (5.05%). Our subjects used English mostly in academic settings (at school/university, 88.89%) and on the Internet (72.73%).

All subjects were asked to rank the sentences in each group according to their preference. The respondents were instructed to rank all verb forms even if they had never used some of them before.

## 4. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Subjects preferred the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation verbs in 14 out of 36 cases (38.89%, **Table 2**). All subjects chose the verbs Ro. *a downloada* (En. *to download*) and Ro. *a printa* (En. *to print*). The former is not recorded in the DEX2-2106, the Romanian official explanatory dictionary, but the latter is. Ro. *a uploada* (En. *to upload*), Ro. *a upgrada* (En. *to upgrade* – also present in DEX2–2016), Ro. *a photoshopa* (En. *to photoshop*) and Ro. *a cancela* (En. *to cancel*) were also preferred by the majority of our respondents, with averages ranking from 97,98% (Ro. *a uploada*) to over 90,91% (Ro. *to cancela*). These verbs occur in everyday conversations due to the widespread use of modern technology, so they should probably all be introduced in explanatory dictionaries as their meaning is certain and also

their morphology. Fewer and fewer subjects chose the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation for the remaining 8 verbs, with Ro. *a marketa* (En. *to market*) preferred by 45 people (45,45%). With one exception, i.e. Ro. *a manageria* (En. *to manage*) which takes the suffix *-ia*, all other 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation verbs were formed by adding the suffix *-a*, and all have weak present forms.

Table 2

Preferred verbal forms from the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, weak present.

	Sentence	Infinitive	Votes no.	Votes %
1	<i>O să <b>downloadez</b> filmul diseară.</i>	<i>downloada</i>	99	100,00
2	<i><b>Printez</b> eu documentul.</i>	<i>printa</i>	99	100,00
3	<i>Promit <b>să uploadez</b> fișierul mâine.</i>	<i>uploada</i>	97	97,98
4	<i>Trebuie <b>să îmi upgradez</b> sistemul.</i>	<i>upgrada</i>	96	96,97
5	<i>Imaginea asta <b>e photoshopată</b>.</i>	<i>photoshopa</i>	94	94,95
6	<i>Poți <b>să cancelezi</b> rezervarea până pe 20 iunie.</i>	<i>cancela</i>	90	90,91
7	<i>Produsele lor <b>targetează</b> persoanele în vârstă.</i>	<i>targeta</i>	79	79,80
8	<i>Tipul ăsta ne <b>trollează</b>.</i>	<i>trolla</i>	74	74,75
9	<i>Diana <b>manageriază</b> singură firma.</i>	<i>manageria</i>	69	69,70
10	<i>Adresa asta m-a <b>spamat</b> cu 100 de mailuri.</i>	<i>spama</i>	68	68,69
11	<i>Trebuie <b>să mai cropeze</b> poza puțin.</i>	<i>cropa</i>	67	67,68
12	<i>Nu pot să văd filmul pe telefon, îl <b>framează</b> urât.</i>	<i>frama</i>	64	64,65
13	<i>Dacă o superi, te <b>deletează</b> din lista de prieteni.</i>	<i>deleta</i>	51	51,52
14	<i>E o firmă mică, dar își <b>marketează</b> bine produsele.</i>	<i>marketa</i>	45	45,45

Our subjects preferred the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation in 22 cases out of 36 (61.11%), with 2 verbs formed by adding the suffix *-i* (Ro. *a hackeri* 86,87% and Ro. *a googli* 43,43%, Table 3) and 20 verbs formed by adding the suffix *-ui*, all 22 with weak presents (Table 4).

Table 3

Preferred verbal forms from 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, suffix *-i*, weak present.

	Sentence	Infinitive	Votes no.	Votes %
1	<i>Vezi să nu-ți <b>hackerească</b> cineva contul!</i>	<i>hackeri</i>	86	86,87
2	<i>Nu mai știu cum se numește programul, mai bine <b>googleşti</b> după el.</i>	<i>googli</i>	43	43,43

Table 4

Preferred verbal forms from 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, suffix -ui, weak present.

	Sentence	Infinitive	Votes no.	Votes %
1	<i>Avem un concurs pentru cei care ne like-uiesc.</i>	<i>like-ui</i>	97	97,98
2	<i>O să sharuiesc articolul.</i>	<i>sharui</i>	90	90,91
3	<i>Adolescenții chatuiesc mult.</i>	<i>chatui</i>	89	89,90
4	<i>Dan m-a unfrienduit.</i>	<i>unfriendui</i>	89	89,90
5	<i>Am bookuit hotelul pentru vacanță.</i>	<i>bookui</i>	88	88,89
6	<i>Am spotuit ultimul BMW aseară la Unirii.</i>	<i>spotui</i>	82	82,83
7	<i>N-am shoppuit mare lucru, deși erau reduceri.</i>	<i>shopui</i>	79	79,80
8	<i>Liviu bloguiește de câteva luni.</i>	<i>blogui</i>	75	75,76
9	<i>Trebuie să clicuiești pe semnul ăla!</i>	<i>clicui</i>	75	75,76
10	<i>Ideile voastre nu se matchuiesc.</i>	<i>matchui</i>	75	75,76
11	<i>Vodafone se rebranduiește.</i>	<i>rebrandui</i>	75	75,76
12	<i>Mihai mă stalkuiește pe Instagram.</i>	<i>stalkui</i>	72	72,73
13	<i>Copiii se mesagiuesc în fiecare zi.</i>	<i>mesagiui</i>	69	69,70
14	<i>Am vrut să linkuiesc articolul în noul blog.</i>	<i>linkui</i>	66	66,67
15	<i>Nu se uită la nimic anume, doar zapuiește.</i>	<i>zapui</i>	62	62,63
16	<i>Samsung își branduiește un telefon nou.</i>	<i>brandui</i>	60	60,61
17	<i>Aplicația asta trackuiește IP-urile.</i>	<i>trackui</i>	60	60,61
18	<i>Orange își trainuiește angajații în fiecare an.</i>	<i>trainui</i>	58	58,59
19	<i>Cu aplicația asta se crackuiesc multe programe.</i>	<i>crackui</i>	57	57,58
20	<i>Diana își homeschooluiește copiii.</i>	<i>homeschoolui</i>	52	52,53

None of preferred verbal forms is recorded in academic dictionaries. Interestingly enough, Ro. *a clica*, Ro. *a clicăi* (En. *to click*) and *a zapa* (En. *to zap*), recorded in DEX2-2016 where not among these 22 preferred verbal forms, with Ro. *a clicui* and Ro. *a zapui* getting better scores. So Romanian native speakers' preference goes against the norm. Moreover, their preference goes against what has been considered so far the main Romanian verb assimilation behaviour.

So what could be the reasons that make Romanian native speakers choose the *-ui* or *-a* ending for verb Anglicisms? And more importantly, is there a shift in the morphological assimilation of verbal Anglicisms in Romanian?

Mioara Avram argued that verbs of English origin ending in *-ui* are somehow informal, more colloquial. Since these verbs are not yet recorded in dictionaries, the claim presumably seems correct. But, a closer look at the results shows that the *-ui* verbs do not



occur only in informal contexts, and when they do, the register is somewhat different from those described by Mioara Avram twenty years or so ago (e.g. now we talk about forum conversations, blogs, realities that did not exist then.). Most of the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation Anglicisms are very frequent in journals and newspapers. For instance, Ro *a brandui* (En. *to brand*) and Ro. *a rebrandui* (En. *to rebrand*) occur in economic journals and general media (see Appendix, 1–4)

The verbal Anglicism ending in *-ui* seem to be in use especially in social media (Ro. *a blogui*, Ro. *a linkui*, Ro. *a like-ui*<sup>1</sup>, Ro. *a (se) mesagiui*, Ro. *a sharui*), and in day-to-day conversations, whereas the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation verbs appears somewhat more technical (Ro. *a frama*, Ro. *a downloada*, Ro. *a uploada*, Ro. *a cropa*), but they are still related to the IT field, to which social media belongs to some extent. But there are other verbs, such as Ro. *a trolla* whose meaning is also social-medial related, but seems to have embraced the first conjugation and the IT-related verbs Ro. *trackui* and Ro. *a crackui* that went for the 4<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, the semantic field to which the verbs belong does not seem to make a difference for their morphological assimilation, i.e. their inflectional pattern and conjugation. Further research needs to be done in this area.

The shift towards the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation, and especially towards the suffix *-ui*, is also supported by results obtained by the Romanian verbs coming from En. *to click* and En. *to zap*; also the recommended, normed forms are Ro. *a clica* and Ro. *a zapa* that belong to the 1<sup>st</sup> conjugation, traditionally considered the most productive, the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation *-ui* forms (Ro. *a clicui* and Ro. *a zapui*) were the one preferred by the Romanian native speakers, who were University students.

The shift towards the *-ui* verb pattern seems so strong that it attracts not only extremely new verbs, but also those that have already been normed, thus becoming a more powerful than the norm model for analogy, unconsciously applied by Romanian native speakers.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The present experimental approach to the morphological assimilation of verb Anglicisms in Romanian has revealed some interesting aspects related to the productivity of the traditionally called 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> conjugations, with a seemingly predominant shift towards the latter. Our results that support our initial hypotheses that Romanian verbal Anglicism tend to embrace the 4<sup>th</sup> conjugation and that such a tendency suggests an increase in the productivity of this conjugation. Thus, also the suffix *-a* is still productive, *-ui* is currently on the rise, having a wider diffusion than previously claimed.

Further research is needed in order to uncover other possible explanations for the shift, such as possible underlying phonological reasons or spelling ones, considering the fact that some Anglicisms that used to be spelled according to Romanian rules are now back to their etymological spelling, making phonological assimilation even more difficult.

Last, but not least, our findings can be used as a starting point for the norming and standardisation of Romanian verbal Anglicism.

<sup>1</sup> We used a hyphen in the orthography of *like-ui* (pres.: *like-uiesc*) because this is how it was recorded in our corpus.

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## Appendix

### Selected examples

1. BNR își branduiește logoul. *Bursa*, [http://www.bursa.ro/bnr-isi-branduieste-logoul-180919&s=jurnal\\_de\\_criza&articol=180919.html](http://www.bursa.ro/bnr-isi-branduieste-logoul-180919&s=jurnal_de_criza&articol=180919.html).
2. Anul acesta estimăm că vom rebrandui 40 de magazine Domo, astfel încât la sfârșitul lui 2007 în întreaga rețea Domo să fie implementat noul concept de retail. *Ziarul financiar*, <http://www.zf.ro/companii/domo-va-rebrandui-40-de-magazine-3046836>.
3. Compania a deschis la mijlocul lunii octombrie primul hipermarket Real rebranduit, Auchan Pallady. Mediafax, <http://www.mediafax.ro/economic/auchan-deschide-al-doilea-hipermarket-real-rebranduit-la-brasov-11641540>.
4. Romtelecom – Clicknet branduiește întreg patinoarul din AFI Palace Cotroceni. *Hotnews*, <http://m.hotnews.ro/stire/8145604>.
5. Săptămâna trecută, compania Genco Shipping & Trading, din SUA, a cancelat contractul pentru șase nave drybulk – carrier. *Cuget liber*, <http://m.cugetliber.ro/stiri-economie-o-treime-din-comenzile-de-nave-bulk-carrier-au-fost-anulate-29741>.
6. Disperată, stăpâna și-a cancelat vacanța în Florida, s-a internat cu câinele în spital și, după operația delicată, zece mii de dolari mai târziu, a ieșit cu animalul ca nou. *Observator cultural*, <https://www.observatorcultural.ro/articol/cosmopolis-fete-bune-din-new-york-ii-cu-copiii-raminind-la-fel>.

