ANGLICISMS INPUT TO ROMANIAN PODCASTING: THE MINDARCHITECT CASE

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Tagged as one of the bestselling phenomena of contemporary humanities, web-based audio files — commonly downloadable to computers or mobile devices — empower individuals worldwide to generate meaning and network while capitalising on technological advancements and globalisation effects. The present paper approaches the podcast phenomenon within the ever-expanding scope of digital humanities to shed light on how this multimedia content reshapes culture, communication, and identity. Addressing the joint effects of Anglicisms in Romanian podcasts, we set out to develop an integrated corpus-based investigation of multimodal content. We use MAXQDA 42.10 to analyse how digital resources influence language and communication in specific contexts. Special attention was paid to the frequency of Anglicisms and false friends Anglicisms that may trigger message neutralisation, loss of nuances, and potential misunderstandings. To validate our hypotheses, we embarked on the development of a computer-assisted analysis model to look into the dynamics of Anglicisms and false friends Anglicisms in MindArchitect, the first self-development podcast in Romania.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mapping podcasting within the ever-expanding scope of digital humanities, contemporary scholars such as Pillar (2017), Spienlli and Dann (2019), Guertin (2021) advocate that this multimedia content has become central in digital humanities, shaping intercultural communication, national identity, and global discourse. Podcasts facilitate cultural exchanges by encouraging cross-cultural interactions and fostering global understanding. Such digital communication platforms bridge geographical gaps, enabling individuals from different socio-cultural landscapes to connect, share ideas, and learn from one another. At the same time, podcasts support national identity by allowing users to share experiences, traditions, and perspectives, nurturing a sense of collective identity.

Podcasts now play a key role in linguistic research, language learning, and cultural studies. Large podcast transcript datasets enable researchers to efficiently analyse discourse structures and improve research outcomes. In line with recent scholarship (Aijmer, 2002; Stenström, 2004; Cook, 2023), podcasts are increasingly recognised as valuable sources for examining language variation, discourse markers, and pragmatic features across digital contexts.

Our research focuses on the influence of English on Romanian communication trends, with special attention to the frequency and use of Anglicisms in *MindArchitect*, the first self-development podcast in Romania. We approach Anglicisms from a linguistic perspective, considering them as words or expressions borrowed from English and incorporated into Romanian, often reflecting changes in vocabulary, usage, or meaning (Stenström, 2004). Translation scholars highlight that Anglicisms, whether directly borrowed or adapted, can disrupt translation norms and affect communication (Gotlieb, 2005).

Alongside Anglicisms, current academic research underscores the increasing incidence of pseudo-Anglicisms – words or expressions that appear to be of English origin but are actually coined within another language community and may carry meanings not found in native English (Pulcini et al., 2012; Furiassi et al., 2015). Such terms are common in European languages and can indicate linguistic creativity or the impact of globalisation on local vocabulary. In Translation Studies, pseudo-Anglicisms can complicate translation processes, as their meanings are often opaque to both native English speakers and translators, resulting in possible misinterpretations or loss of nuance (Götzeler, 2016).

We also consider the concept of false friends, specifically false Anglicisms—English loanwords that appear similar to native terms but carry different meanings in other languages, often causing confusion (Stenström, 2004). In translation studies, false friends can undermine equivalence and introduce ambiguity or misinterpretation (Gotlieb, 2005).

Resorting to virtual environments, the MAXQDA 24.10 data analysis software, we set out to develop an advanced corpus-based analysis to investigate digital discourse content, guided by the following main research objectives:

- Determine the frequency and specific forms of Anglicisms and false friends in the *MindArchitect* podcast corpus.

- Evaluate their communicative impact, with particular emphasis on their contribution to message neutralisation, nuance loss, and misunderstandings.

- Identify and critically assess the most frequently applied translation procedures for these structures within Romanian podcast discourse.

- Consider contextual factors such as target audience, relevance, and internationalisation trends, and explore how these influence language use in the Romanian digital setting.

These objectives inform our integrated methodological framework, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse how multimedia content shapes communication and influences cultural norms.

Building on current research perspectives, we highlight the need for thorough analysis of digital platforms to drive progress in language processing, linguistics, and communication studies. As we look ahead, we aim to promote interdisciplinary collaboration by extending our investigations into related fields. These efforts could enhance language learning resources, support sociological analyses, and contribute to media studies. Thus, such collaborative initiatives would offer new insights into how digital media drives linguistic innovation and shapes communication in a globalised context.

2. PODCASTS: MULTIMODAL DATA IN LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Podcasts provide authentic spoken language data for linguistic research that can be used to study discourse, pragmatics, and phonetics. Recent corpus-based research on podcasts examines conversational structures like turn-taking, interruptions, and topic changes. Podcasts also offer insight into language variation, including dialects, sociolects, and language contact.

Contemporary scholars such as Aijmer (2002) and Stenström (2004) have examined discourse features such as intonation, pragmatic particles, and discourse markers in conversational routines using multimodal corpora.

Applying a corpus-driven approach, Reddy and Jones (2021) investigated over 100,000 English podcast episodes, examining how vocabulary diversity and syntax relate to positive emotions and speech rate. Their research expanded with the *Podcast Language and Engagement* project on Spotify Research.

Multimodal corpora include not just discourse but also contextual elements like images and audio, distinguished by their use of multiple channels for transmitting information (Oțăt 2019: 76). Against this background, Martikainen, Karlgren, and Truong (2022) conducted a comprehensive study examining stylistic variation in podcasts based on audio features.

Podcasts offer authentic language input that improves listening, speaking, and pronunciation by exposing learners to a range of accents and real-life topics. Guertin, Theveny, and Barber (2020) explore how nature-themed podcasts support informal learning and community building. Research studies carried out by Motamedynia and Shahri (2022), Shamburg et al. (2023), and McCarthy, Porada, and Treat (2023) investigate vocabulary acquisition from general podcasts and the impact of educational podcasts on study habits and exam performance.

Zooming in, Cook (2023) approached podcasting as a reflective medium in academia, while Turner (2024) focused on the *Producing and researching podcasts as a reflective medium in English language teaching*.

3. A COMPUTER-AIDED PODCAST ANALYSIS

Our methodological approach is structured around the four research objectives outlined above. Based on a corpus-based approach, we integrated both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a thorough examination of Anglicisms and false-friend Anglicisms within podcast discourse. The corpus, drawn from twelve seasons of the *MindArchitect* podcast (2019 – 2024), was compiled to form a balanced and representative dataset reflecting language usage by Romanian professionals in psychology, neuroscience, and personal development. The use of MAXQDA 24.10 software facilitated both rapid import and in-depth analysis of multimodal data, supporting the identification and examination of Anglicisms at the level of words, phrases, topics, and their interrelations.

- **Stage 1: Corpus Compilation and Design (2019–2024)**

Launched in 2019, *MindArchitect* complies with the criteria of size, representativeness, balance and reliability (see Baker 2014: 18). The corpus covers over 12 seasons of 30–40 minute episodes, providing a comprehensive six-year overview of Anglicism usage among Romanian professionals in psychology, neuroscience, and personal development through informal conversations. The sampled episodes cover a wide range of topics such as stress management, leadership, emotional intelligence, and mental health, and collectively account for over 20 million listeners across Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and YouTube.

All podcast episodes were imported as MP4 files into MAXQDA 24.10 software and systematically organised into document sets in chronological order. This procedure preserved the authenticity and diversity of the Romanian podcasting context, providing a robust empirical foundation for our research. The use of MAXQDA facilitated both rapid import and in-depth analysis of multimodal data, supporting the identification and examination of Anglicisms across words, phrases, topics, and their interrelations.

- **Stage 2: Quantitative Analysis of Anglicisms**

We next conducted a quantitative analysis of Anglicisms diachronically. We defined research parameters, encoded each episode, and used colour-coded waveforms to categorise segments by morpho-syntactic type.

To quantify the occurrence of Anglicisms by category, we selected MAXQDA's Visual Tools. This feature offers several visualisation methods for token frequency. Based on the results obtained, Figures 1 and 2 below illustrate the morpho-syntactic dynamics and frequency distribution of the most common Anglicisms within our corpus.
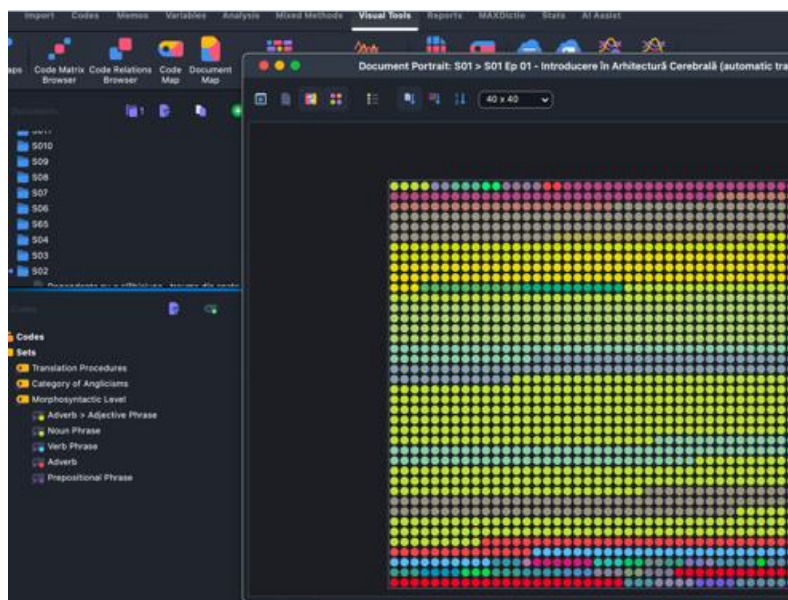
Figure 1. Document Portrait: Frequency of Anglicisms per Episode

This visualisation (Figure 1) presents the frequency of Anglicism across individual *MindArc*hitect podcast episodes, highlighting diachronic trends and variation in English-derived lexical items.

Figure 2. Word-cloud: Anglicisms' Frequency per Corpus

The word cloud in Figure 2 visually shows the most common Anglicisms in *MindArchitect*, with each term's font size reflecting its frequency. This approach facilitates the identification of the most prominent English-derived words across the episodes and enables us to systematically monitor lexical.

Our quantitative analysis shows that most Anglicisms in the *MindArchitect* podcast are noun phrases referring to inanimate objects, such as "attachment relationship predisposition" or "parenting perspective." Terms like "podcast," "relationship," and "mind" support the idea that these English terms, often trendier or specialised, are widely recognised and aid communication, especially for complex concepts like "toxic relationship" or "avoidant

attachment." Verb forms, including "know," "want," and "think," are also frequent, along with naturalised occurrences such as "a performa," "a seta," "a updata," and "a manageria."

Adjectives generally remain unchanged, with English predicative adjectives like "basic," "super," "shocking," "scary," "full," "casual," and "trendy" used in place of Romanian terms. While Anglicism adjectives appear less frequently than noun phrases but more often than verb phrases – particularly in host-guest discussions – their use has grown since 2019. In contrast, the frequency of Anglicism noun phrases has declined, with Romanian equivalents now preferred by both hosts and guests.

The use of Anglicism adverbs and prepositions was rare, mostly limited to time adverbs like "non-stop," "never," or "ever," and even fewer manner adverbs such as "online/offline," "hard," or "fast." Speakers occasionally used prepositions like "based on" or "versus," especially in scientific contexts. The phrase "în trend," modeled after the English "in trend," appeared frequently.

- **Stage 3: Translation Procedures and False Friends Identification**

At this stage, we re-examined morpho-syntactic data, developed a second coding scheme to identify translation procedures, and drew on key Translation Studies scholars like Bassnett (1980) and Lefevere (1990), to stress the importance of cultural factors in translation. In line with the previously established methodology, we proceeded to assign additional colour-coded labels to all twelve episodes in our corpus. This systematic approach enabled us to identify and document the predominant translation procedures applied to Anglicisms' and/or false friends' transfer.

To ensure a nuanced analysis and to highlight the specific features of Anglicisms within our dataset, we adopted Newmark's (1988) classificatory framework. Our analysis revealed that naturalisation, cultural adaptation, borrowing, calque, semantic translation, and modulation were the most frequently observed strategies. Such instances were consistently identified across multiple episodes, underscoring their significance in the transfer and adaptation of Anglicisms in the Romanian podcast context (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Coding Scheme Application: Visualisation of Translation Procedures and Anglicism Categories

Figure 3 shows a MAXQDA screenshot with colour-coded labels indicating both morpho-syntactic categories and translation procedures for Anglicisms in podcast episodes.

We used the Code Line in Visual Tools (see Figure 4) to measure how often each translation procedure was applied to Anglicisms by morpho-syntactic category.
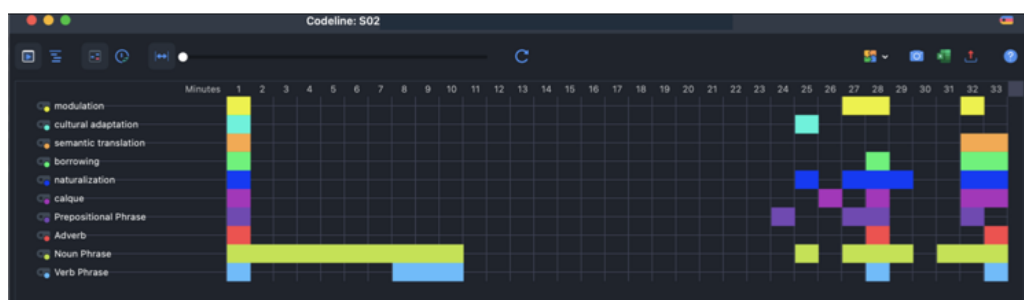

Figure 4. Distribution of translation procedures per grammatical category of Anglicisms

The diagramme in Figure 4 presents the quantitative distribution of translation procedures (e.g., borrowing, calque, naturalisation) mapped against the grammatical categories of Anglicisms in the *MindArchitect* corpus. Building on recent Anglicism classifications (Görlach, 2003; Onysko, 2007; Saugera, 2012; Spahiu and Nuredini, 2023), we annotated the corpus to include: loanwords ("manager", "fitness", "weekend", "feedback"), pseudo-loanwords ("relax" – "relaxare"), shortened words ("info", "intro", "app", "demo", "promo"), hybrid Anglicisms ("identity card"–"carte de identitate", "green light"–"undă verde", "digital marketing"–"marketing digital", "online news"–"noutăți online"), and foreign words ("fim", "test", "radar", "telefon", "manager", "detector"). Loanwords, foreign words, and shortened words were most frequent. Meanwhile, pseudo-loanwords and hybrid Anglicisms often led to false friends and communication errors due to calque and naturalisation.

According to the Code Relation diagramme in Figure 5, the highest frequencies of false friends are recorded in the category of noun phrases, which are transferred mainly via calques and borrowings.
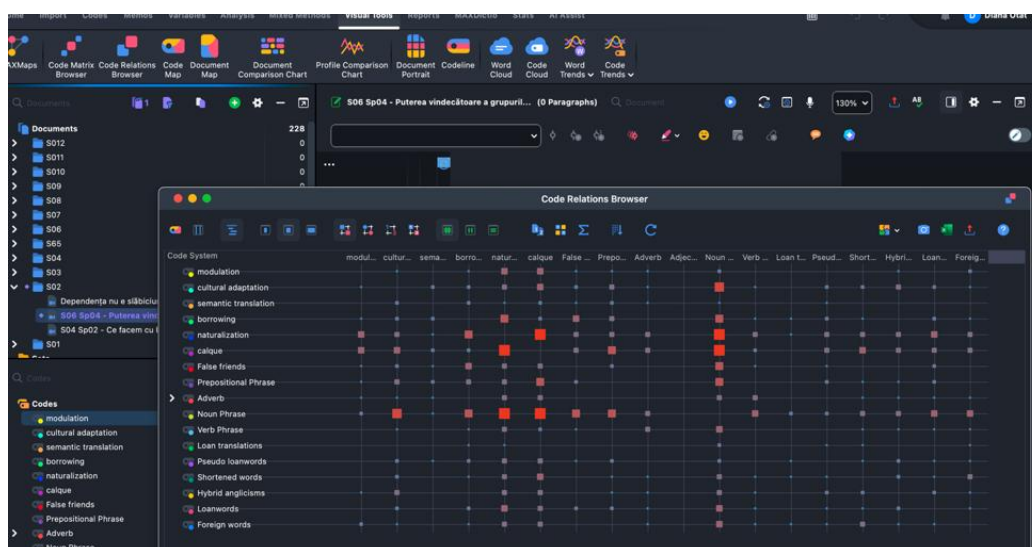

Figure 5. Distribution of translation procedures per grammatical category of false friend anglicisms

- **Stage 4: Qualitative Semantic and Pragmatic Considerations**

With a view to the increasing frequency of Anglicisms and false friends in the MindArchitect, we conducted a qualitative study of their semantic and pragmatic effects. Using Allwood's (2008: 217) annotation approach, we annotated our to capture gesture, sound, context, and nuanced meaning. In line with Avram's (1997) perspective on Anglicism integration and Greavu's (2017) observations on their evolving semantic impact, we documented potential miscommunication. To further structure our analysis, we adapted Duța's (2019) framework to systematically examine the semantic and pragmatic roles of Anglicisms and false friends in the *MindArchite*ct.

Semantically, some of the Anglicisms in the multimodal corpus tended to alter the meaning of words in Romanian, leading to confusion or misinterpretation, as they carry cultural references or connotations that Romanian listeners might not immediately understand. In terms of Pragmatics, the use of Anglicisms in Romanian podcasts is context-dependent, with meaning shifting according to topic, audience, or tone. Speakers may use them to engage listeners, signal expertise, or reflect modernity, while audiences can interpret Anglicisms as either fashionable or pretentious.

Discourse markers have steadily increased in frequency since 2019, likely due to more Anglicisms in daily speech that express speakers' attitudes or certainty. Commonly used examples in *MindArchitect* include "well," "anyway," and "so".

We share Hakobyan's approach (2023:11) that the use of such discourse markers may trigger some challenges in distinguishing specific politeness strategies. They often fail to clearly distinguish between positive and negative politeness, or between implicit polite directives and impolite ones. For example, in "So, ai putea încerca și varianta asta." ("So, you could try this option as well."), "so" does not clarify whether the suggestion is a gentle recommendation or a subtle directive. Also, in "Well, în psihologie, termenul acesta se folosește des…" ("Well, in psychology, this term is often used…"), the marker "well" here may be used to introduce expert knowledge, but its pragmatic force remains ambiguous. In "Anyway, să trecem la următorul subiect." ("Anyway, let's move to the next topic."), the use of "anyway" could be interpreted as dismissive or simply as a neutral transition.

4. RESULTS INTERPRETATION

Our analysis of the *MindArchitect* podcast shows that Anglicisms are widely integrated into the *MindArchitect* podcast, with most being noun phrases introducing modern or specialised ideas. Borrowing and calque are the primary ways these English terms enter Romanian, reflecting an openness to linguistic innovation.

Figure 6 summarises these trends, highlighting the dominance of noun phrases and the preference for borrowing and calque as translation strategies, while also showing that false friends mostly occur with noun phrases. Overall, the data in Figure 7 illustrates how Anglicisms shape Romanian digital discourse and the importance of context-sensitive translation.
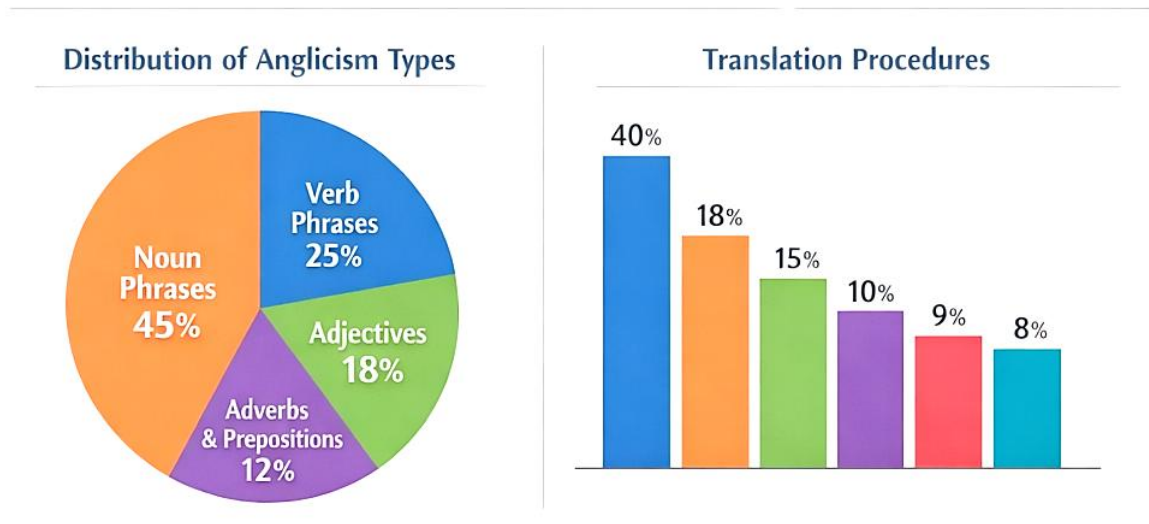
Figure 6. Anglicisms' dynamics in the *MindArchitect*

The use of false friend Anglicisms in Romanian podcasts may be challenging, implying mistranslation (e.g., "parenting"), cultural mismatches as terms often reflect English-speaking contexts (Bassnett, 1980; Lefevere, 1990), and inconsistent translation methods—borrowing or calque may lead to unnatural results, requiring context-sensitive approaches (Newmark, 1988; Görlach, 2003). Such occurrences can reduce communicative clarity and lead to listener misinterpretation (Baker, 2014; Spahiu and Nuredini, 2023).

Anglicisms in Romanian podcasts function as markers of expertise and global identity, facilitating alignment with international trends and enhancing in-group recognition (Seidlhofer, 2002; Jenkins, 2015). English discourse markers such as "well", "so", and "anyway" structure conversation and represent evolving pragmatic norms in digital contexts (Hakobyan, 2023). While Anglicisms can foster audience engagement by referencing shared cultural knowledge, they may also introduce misunderstandings, if listeners lack sufficient context (Allwood, 2008; Duța, 2019).

Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that our recordings on the rising frequency of Anglicism discourse markers from 2019 (17%) to the present (45%) reflect a broader shift in Romanian digital communication practices. Comparable patterns have previously been documented by Hakobyan (2023), who observed the ambiguous pragmatic functions of English discourse markers such as "well" and "so" in Armenian digital interactions, and by Tagg (2015), who analysed the use of English-derived expressions for managing conversational structure and signalling speaker stance in UK-based social media exchanges. These studies illustrate how the integration of Anglicisms in various linguistic contexts can affect politeness strategies, directive intent, and audience engagement, underscoring the broader applicability of these pragmatic phenomena across languages.

These observations connect closely with our wider analysis of the *MindArchitect* podcast, which revealed that over 60% of Anglicisms are noun phrases, often introducing modern or specialised concepts and reflecting widespread acceptance of English terms. The increasing use of verb phrases, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions further highlights the dynamic nature of language change in Romanian digital media. Our corpus analysis indicates that borrowing, calque, and naturalisation are the main translation procedures, while the rise in

false friend Anglicisms demonstrates both communicative challenges and the need for context-sensitive translation strategies. This trend underscores the importance of effective mediation to ensure clarity and maintain intercultural understanding within Romanian digital discourse.

In line with our corpus-based finding, we feature Anglicisms in Romanian podcasts as markers of expertise and global identity, shaping pragmatic norms and in-group recognition (see Seidlhofer, 2002; Jenkins, 2015; Hakobyan, 2023). Their escalating frequency, particularly discourse markers like "well", "so", and "anyway", reflects broader shifts in digital communication that can enhance engagement, while risking misunderstandings if context is lacking (Allwood, 2008; Duța, 2019). Our data show an increase in Anglicism discourse markers from 17% in 2019 to 45% currently, paralleling trends in other linguistic contexts (Hakobyan, 2023; Tagg, 2015). Most Anglicisms are noun phrases that introduce modern ideas, with borrowing, calque, and naturalisation as the main translation strategies.

Although our research provides valuable insights into contemporary trends surrounding Anglicisms within the *MindArchitect* podcast, certain limitations remain. The representativeness of our corpus, potential transcription and coding bias, and the limited generalisability of our findings suggest that further interdisciplinary studies are necessary. Expanding research across different genres, platforms, and demographic groups will enable a more comprehensive understanding of how digital media continues to shape linguistic practices and identities in Romania and beyond.

5. CONCLUSION

Approaching podcasts as dynamic multimodal corpora, this study set out to identify the frequency and communicative functions of Anglicisms and, especially, false friend Anglicisms in Romanian digital media, focusing on *MindArchitect*, the first self-development podcast in Romania. Guided by a streamlined set of research objectives and supported by both quantitative and qualitative analysis, we have documented the impact of these structures on message neutralisation, nuance reduction, and misunderstandings in Romanian podcast discourse.

Our findings emphasise the need for context-sensitive translation and cultural mediation in digital discourse, and demonstrate that corpus-based and digital approaches address real language use, providing valuable insights for language education, translation, and intercultural communication. The increasing prevalence of Anglicisms and false friends reflects broader shifts in Romanian digital communication, comparable to trends observed in other linguistic contexts (Hakobyan, 2023; Tagg, 2015), and highlights the importance of effective mediation to ensure clarity and maintain intercultural understanding.

Drawing on our analysis, we propose the following recommendations for key stakeholders:

- Language educators should incorporate authentic podcast materials into curricula to expose learners to real-world usage of Anglicisms and discourse markers, fostering critical awareness of their semantic and pragmatic roles. Educators can also design activities that encourage students to identify and discuss the potential for misunderstandings arising from false friends.

- Translators and translation trainers are advised to develop targeted strategies for recognising and handling both Anglicisms and pseudo-Anglicisms, drawing on context-sensitive translation procedures such as borrowing, calque, and naturalisation. Emphasis should be placed on the risks of false friends and the necessity of cultural adaptation to preserve meaning and avoid ambiguity.

- Content creators and digital media policymakers should be mindful of their audience's linguistic background and consider providing glossaries, explanations, or alternative phrasing for English-derived terms likely to cause confusion. Policymakers might consider supporting research and guidelines that promote transparent and inclusive language practices in digital media.

Looking ahead, further interdisciplinary research is needed to expand the scope beyond a single podcast or linguistic community. Comparative analyses across genres, platforms, or demographic groups, as well as longitudinal studies into the shifting dynamics of digital language contact, will enable a more comprehensive understanding of how digital media continues to shape linguistic practices and identities in Romania and beyond.

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