

Exploring New Linguistic Communities in Egypt through TikTok Videos

An Anthropological Linguistic Approach

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• Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between language, society, and the emergence of distinctive linguistic communities in Egypt, facilitated by the digital platform TikTok, with a specific focus on the elite residential compounds that have emerged due to urbanization. This distinctiveness is reflected in their linguistic practices, which deliberately incorporate loanwords instead of traditional Arabic and Egyptian vocabulary. Based on this premise, the study examines the linguistic practices observed within Egypt's elite compounds. The study also explores how these behaviors may support an exclusive cultural identity, alongside the social dynamics and motivations that influence the adoption of these novel linguistic forms. The study gathers a corpus of data in the form of movies videos from the TikTok platform to accomplish these goals. These videos are specifically selected to reflect life within the elite compounds situated along the Northern Coast. Employing an anthropological linguistic analysis, the research examines the socio-cultural context that envelops the collected data. The results indicate that the selected TikTok videos are used as a tool to assess and make sense of their complicated and ever-evolving culture. Speakers in these videos use a unique pattern of language to assert their distinctiveness. One major feature of this pattern is the frequent use of code-switching between Arabic and English. In conclusion, TikTok videos provide a platform for young people to express themselves by both ridiculing and embracing changing social standards, particularly those that pertain to income, status, and physical appearance.

Keywords: anthropological linguistics, Egypt, identity, linguistic communities, TikTok, urbanization.

تستكشف هذه الورقة البحثية العلاقة بين اللغة والمجتمع وظهور مجتمعات لغوية مميزة في مصر، وذلك من خلال المنصة الرقمية "تيك توك"، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على المجمعات السكنية الراقية التي نشأت نتيجة التحضر. وتنعكس هذه الخصوصية في ممارساتهم اللغوية، والتي تعتمد استخدام الكلمات الدخيلة بدلاً من المفردات التقليدية في اللغة العربية والمصرية. واستناداً إلى هذا الافتراض، يفحص البحث الممارسات اللغوية الملحوظة داخل مجتمعات النخبة في مصر، كما يستكشف كيف يمكن أن تدعم هذه السلوكيات هوية ثقافية حضرية، إلى جانب الديناميكيات الاجتماعية والدوافع التي تؤثر على تبني هذه الأشكال اللغوية الجديدة.

لتحقيق هذه الأهداف، جمعت الباحثة مجموعة من البيانات على شكل مقاطع فيديو من منصة تيك توك، وتم اختيار هذه المقاطع تحديداً لتعكس الحياة داخل المجمعات السكنية الراقية الواقعة على الساحل الشمالي. ومن خلال تحليل لغوي أنثروبولوجي، يفحص البحث السياق الاجتماعي والثقافي المحيط بهذه البيانات. وتشير النتائج إلى أن مقاطع تيك توك المختارة تُستخدم كأداة لتقييم وفهم الثقافة المعقدة والمتطورة باستمرار. ويستخدم المتحدثون في هذه الفيديوهات نمطاً لغوياً فريداً لإبراز تميزهم، وتتمثل إحدى السمات الرئيسية لهذا النمط في الاستخدام المتكرر للتناوب اللغوي (code-switching) بين اللغة العربية والإنجليزية.

في الختام، توفّر مقاطع تيك توك منصة للشباب للتعبير عن أنفسهم من خلال السخرية من المعايير الاجتماعية المتغيرة واحتضانها في آنٍ واحد، خصوصاً تلك المتعلقة بالدخل والمكانة والمظهر الخارجي.

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• 1. Introduction

Anthropological linguistics is one of the branches of language study that has long been employed in different disciplines of knowledge including linguistics and anthropology to understand the interplay between language, culture, and society (Foley, 2012). The main premise of Anthropological linguistics is that beyond its role as a means of communication, language has far-reaching effects on the formation and preservation of social identities, power dynamics, and cultural values (Thomas & Wareing, 2004). The significance of this interaction as a venue for social interaction and linguistic innovation has been magnified and enhanced by the widespread use of different social media platforms and networks including TikTok and comparable online platforms in contemporary Egypt. Focusing on the urban elite residing in exclusive residential complexes or compounds as normally known in Egypt, this study examines the rise of new linguistic groups or what can be referred to as speech communities in Egypt through a selection of TikTok videos.

To put it into context, the language used by these exclusive groups provides insights into the development of social identities in the context of the world's interconnectedness, globalization, and Westernization. Although there are many different Arabic dialects spoken in Egypt, there is still an emerging language variant that is connected to certain linguistic groups and particular geographic areas, where language is used as a distinctiveness feature or strategy. The role of language as a means of class differentiation has changed significantly due to the increasing influence of English, particularly through loanwords. To differentiate themselves from the ordinary population, the affluent Egyptians residing in these buildings utilize English as a status symbol.

This linguistic shift reflects the broader societal change that has taken place in recent years, especially with the rise of the internet, the development of social media platforms, and the rapid urbanization

movement the country has witnessed over the recent years (Bassiouny, 2014). These days, social divisions and stratification are both reflected in and created by people's language. The algorithm-driven content distribution on TikTok creates a feedback loop whereby new language habits become popular within particular social groups. By demonstrating to the world that they belong to an exclusive group, wealthy Egyptians utilize TikTok to further solidify their social standing. Beyond merely adjusting to modernity, the linguistic patterns shown on TikTok—which are impacted by English loanwords and hybridized forms—assert class distinction and cultural capital (Sodah, 2019).

Because they mirror and reflect larger social, cultural, and economic shifts in Egypt brought about by urbanization, globalization, and economic liberalization, these linguistic practices have an impact on domains outside digital realms. These developments have widened the gap between society's elite and the rest of us by promoting the development of private, exclusive areas where language is employed as a means of exclusion (Warschauer et al; 2002).

In this context, TikTok offers a unique opportunity to explore and have a deeper understanding of Egypt's linguistic evolution, highlighting how digital social media platforms contribute to the formation and construction of linguistic identities, the localization and globalization of language, and the ongoing tension or conflict between modernity and tradition.

Considering this argument, this study asks the following research questions:

1. What are the key linguistic features that define the emergent speech variant within Egypt's elite compounds and how does TikTok facilitate the emergence of such variant?
2. In what ways do the linguistic practices observed on TikTok reinforce cultural identity and distinctiveness among the urban elite speakers?
3. How do these evolving linguistic trends reflect broader socio-political and urban developments, and what potential impact might they have on Egypt's social fabric?

• **2. Literature Review**

The connection between language, culture, and technology in contemporary countries has been the subject of more recent linguistic research. Digital linguistic anthropology, which focuses on how language changes in online communities, has become a separate field of study due to the quick emergence of digital platforms and their impact on linguistic

practices (Tagg, 2015). This study reviews TikTok as a platform for identity formation, language development, and social distinction and distinctiveness.

Social media sites, especially TikTok, are venues for identity building through language use, according to an expanding corpus of study. One important discovery is that TikTok promotes a feeling of community and cultural pride in addition to amplifying local dialects and idioms (Thathiah, 2024). Users increase the exposure of regional dialects and expand their audience by producing and disseminating content that represents their linguistic identity. In digital spaces, this phenomenon strengthens dialectal variation and promotes active language use (Al Madani, 2022).

According to Pennycook and Otsuji (2014), TikTok promotes linguistic hybridity by allowing Arabic dialects to be mixed with English and other languages. Larger socioeconomic variables, such as how globalization and the dominance of Western media have influenced young Egyptians' linguistic preferences, are reflected in this code-switching. The platform allows users to renegotiate their identities in a global context by providing a digital environment where language is not only performed but also altered and reinterpreted. Additionally, TikTok introduces idioms, puns, and cultural references through viral content—which can include everything from funny sketches to well-known songs—helping to create new language forms. These components progressively make their way into everyday speech. In this regard, TikTok is best viewed as an effective forum or venue for linguistic change and cultural expression while being at the same time an important factor for influencing the linguistic trends of its users.

Similar patterns have been observed in other digital contexts, as Al Hameli and Arnuco (2023) examine how hybrid Emiratis in the United Arab Emirates navigate their linguistic and cultural identities within an increasingly globalized society. Despite the fact that Emiratis are frequently thought of as a culturally homogeneous group, their research sheds light on the real-life experiences of people of mixed heritage who are socially classified as "others." They illustrate how hybrid Emiratis use a variety of language techniques—like exposing or hiding aspects of their identities—to achieve social acceptance through semi-structured interviews. Their results highlight how difficult it is to negotiate one's identity in digital environments where language serves as a distinguishing tool as well as a sign of belonging. This research is pertinent to the current study because it reflects the way Egypt's urban elite constructs and asserts its exclusivity through language on TikTok.

In the same vein, Uyuni and Amalia (2024) argue that social media language especially TikTok, has an obvious impact on the semantics of Arabic. The authors stressed that the vocabulary and lexicon used by TikTok and other social media influencers and users in general have changed the meaning of several Arabic phrases. That is, many Arabic words or vocabulary have acquired new meanings due to their use on Twitter and social media platforms and networks.

Like this, Alajmi (2023) argues that social media influencers have an influential impact on language use in Saudi Arabic and particularly on the dialects of the Najd region. He explains that speech patterns of the Najd region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been significantly influenced by social media influencers, especially those on TikTok and Snapchat. He stresses that the power and influence of digital spaces on language use and change cannot be denied in any way.

Since the platform favors commonly used linguistic practices that follow international trends, less prominent dialects and minority languages may be suppressed (Boyd, 2014). Additionally, concerns have been raised about the potential impact of TikTok on traditional language practices, as younger generations increasingly favor digital vernaculars over conventional modes of expression.

TikTok's impact on communication norms and language politeness is a significant topic of linguistic study. Karmila et al. (2021) investigate the impact of TikTok on the usage of polite language, pointing out that the platform's casual atmosphere frequently results in a decrease in civility. According to their research, users usually put comedy and viral appeal ahead of following accepted communication standards, especially in comment sections.

Likewise, Zhao (2022) examines the impact of TikTok on the language use and linguistic development in Chinese. He applied the study to selected Chinese youngsters aged between 9 to 12 years. According to the findings of the study, the exposure to TikTok and other social media platforms and networks has led to the fact that youngsters have come to use slang words more frequently. Exposure to TikTok also was linked to internet acronyms, emoticons, and colloquial words in both online and offline conversations. These findings highlight the adaptability and dynamic nature of the language of digital platforms. Nevertheless, the widespread of these language patterns through social media platforms raises questions and concerns regarding possible impacts of these digital platforms on linguistic structure and formal writing skills.

When taken as a whole, these studies show how social media platforms like TikTok are evolving and drastically changing their linguistic environments. Whether through the negotiation of social identity, the production of hybrid language forms, or the reinforcement of dialectal variation, digital spaces have become crucial sites for linguistic experimentation and evolution. Despite the significant impacts of the language of digital platforms on language use and change in Arabic dialects, especially in Egypt and the crucial instrument of TikTok for Egypt's urban elite, there is a lack of anthropological linguistic studies in this area. This paper is concerned with addressing this limitation through providing a thorough anthropological linguistic analysis of the impact of the TikTok language on identity and class distinction of Egypt's urban elite speakers. In other words, this anthropological linguistic analysis takes a broader investigation into linguistic shifts brought about by globalization and digital culture. It spots light on these dynamics to see and explore how language functions as a tool for social grouping, cultural positioning, and identity creation in the digital age.

- **3. Methodology**

The current study puts forth an anthropological linguistic approach toward explaining how residents in elite Egyptian compounds use TikTok as an outlet for articulating and creating their linguistic identities. In taking a close look at this demographic, research is led to the discovery of ways in which loanwords and other significant linguistic features are used innovatively within these communities. The methodology was designed to ensure systematic data collection, processing, and organization.

TikTok, being a digital platform, poses some unique opportunities or linguistic research due to its high sharing rates, particularly among young generations, and also due to the possibility of putting rich language practices in context. The present methodology is based on digital ethnography, an area of research that is gaining momentum lately, with the ever-increasing appeal of social media forums to researchers for the examination of culture and language-related phenomena. This section, therefore, provides a detailed explanation of data selection, data collection, and the processing procedures. It also outlines the analytical framework adopted for this study.

- **3.1 Data Collection & Processing**

- **3.1.1 Data Selection**

28 TikTok videos were selected and downloaded over a period of two months using a purposive sampling strategy. In this case, the purposive sampling strategy involved selecting videos that met the criteria established during the refinement of the data collection strategy. This

included focusing on videos produced by residents of expensive and elite Egyptian compounds and on videos possessing a high level of linguistic density concerning the issues of inquiry.

Furthermore, the videos had to be created by individuals residing in or closely associated with elite Egyptian compounds, ensuring that the linguistic practices being analyzed were representative of the target community. This process thus involved employing digital ethnographic techniques, such as following location tags and hashtags, which served as filters on TikTok to find relevant content. These strategies were supported by previous studies that hashtags can be used to identify and categorize content on digital platforms (Omena et al, 2020).

In addition to geotagging and hashtags, the profiles of residents or influencers who frequently post content associated with living within elite Egyptian compounds were tracked. This allowed for the extraction of linguistic data from videos, which is crucial in understanding the role of influencers in shaping digital culture and language practices. Lifestyle content was selected as a critical issue, as it could serve as a significant source of linguistic innovation.

All videos were then checked for relevance and authenticity before being added to this total dataset. Those not meeting the criteria set for elements of interest were removed. This ensures that the sample is comprehensive but representative with respect to the linguistic practices under investigation. Therefore, the process of verification was fundamental to ensure that this database maintains its integrity in providing reliable and valid results for this study.

• **3.1.2 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations were at the heart of each phase in the process of data collection. Since it involved digital research, the privacy and consent of users on TikTok needed to be respected, specifically for those whose videos were being included in the study. The aim was to get linguistic data while, at the same time, maintaining a balance to protect the subjects from being exposed to privacy for Tik-Tok users.

This study took several ethical safeguards to meet this challenge. First, personal information of the TikTok users whose videos were considered in the study was anonymized to protect their privacy. This involved removing any kind of identifiable information from the dataset, including usernames, location data, and profile pictures.

The potential impacts of this study on TikTok users whose videos were also considered within the analysis, As TikTok users did not upload content for research purposes, measures were taken to prevent the harm

of discomfort in including them in the analysis of the study. For example, ensuring that the way the findings of this study are presented respects the privacy of these people.

- **3.1.3 Corpus Development**

One aim at this stage with the corpus building and development is to have the data prepared for further analysis, so that all relevant linguistic features were structured and duly organized in such a way that would allow for systematic analysis. Corpus development included the processes of transcription, translation, segmentation, and video content categorization. These are outlined as follows.

- **3.1.3.1 Transcription and Translation**

First, the transcripts for this research are obtained by transcribing the audio content of videos on TikTok. Transcription is a core component in linguistic research because it allows a fine-grained analysis of spoken language. In the current study, the process of transcription is performed both through automated transcription software and manual verification. The records are first transcribed into an initial transcript using automated tools, then are reviewed and corrected. In view of this, manual verification is important in picking up subtle linguistic features like code-switching, intonation, or emphasis—elements that automated tools normally are not very successful in capturing.

Since these videos on TikTok are multilingual in nature, translation is considered also a part of the data processing phase. Many of these videos are a mix between Arabic, English, and sometimes other languages, mirroring precisely their multilingual reality: residents of Elite Egyptian compounds. The translation process is based on the retention of the original message and context of the spoken words, with special attention to linguistic items of interest which include loanwords and innovative language forms. Afterwards, the translated texts are compared to make sure that they have retained the meaning of the videos. This approach is supported by best practice in linguistic research, which makes it clear that in works using more than one language, translation has to be accurate and sensitive to context (Heller, 2007).

- **3.1.3.2 Segmenting and Categorizing Data**

Segmentation and categorization of the data are carried out following transcription and translation. This entails breaking the videos down into individual sentences, phrases, or speech segments characterized by certain linguistic features. It is important to enable the analysis of certain linguistic phenomena to be possible at a higher level of focus: for example, the use of loanwords or switching between codes. Segmentation is guided by research questions and a theoretical

framework to assure that data is organized in such a way to allow for the analysis of the linguistic practices within elite Egyptian compounds. Once the data is segmented, it is categorized according to linguistic features, themes, and other similar criteria.

- **3.2 Analytical Framework**

This study employs an anthropological linguistic approach (Danesi, 2008; Duranti, 2009) to examine how Egyptian youth on TikTok use language as a tool for identity construction, social distinction, and cultural negotiation. Grounded in the premise that language is inseparable from its socio-cultural context (Woolard, 2008), the framework integrates three interconnected dimensions: Language as Social Practice, Code-Switching as Strategic Performance, and Digital Affordances and Linguistic Hybridity. Each dimension is contextualized within TikTok's unique ecosystem, where algorithmic virality, multimodal communication, and globalized youth culture converge.

Anthropological linguistics views language as a social activity that is intricately woven within historical, cultural, and digital settings rather than as a discrete system of grammar and lexicon (Duranti, 2009). By focusing on who speaks, where they speak, and why, anthropological linguistics investigates how language is used in everyday interactions (Ahearn, 2021).

Danesi's anthropological linguistic approach (2009), adopted in this study, is an experimental framework that integrates multiple layers, including language, cognition, culture, society, variation, and human behavior. As an integrated approach, it is particularly well-suited to the present investigation since the study goes beyond a purely sociolinguistic analysis, adopting a broader perspective to explore how language is used by young people in specific geographic areas of Egypt.

According to Danesi (2008), anthropological linguistic approaches should account for all linguistic choices made by speakers, as these choices reveal patterns that link language use to broader societal issues, including economic and political contexts. Analysts utilizing this approach should focus on conversational devices, speech acts, code-switching, and even writing systems and abbreviations, if present. Each of these elements serves a function that can help document, examine, and explain how language reflects social structures and culturally specific patterns of thought. By applying anthropological linguistic approaches, researchers can move beyond purely linguistic descriptions to explore the deeper social, cultural, and digital forces that shape bilingual or multilingual communication.

Within this framework, speakers' language choices are examined and analyzed. Anthropological linguistics emphasizes the connection between linguistic decisions and more general socio-cultural dynamics, seeing language use as intricately woven into social activity (Woolard, 2008). In particular, the strategic use of loanwords and code-switching to substitute traditional Egyptian vocabulary and concepts are examined. The purpose of this analysis is to comprehend how a new socioeconomic class uses these linguistic choices to express who they are online. The reason behind this is that language use in digital contexts is a reflection of how people navigate their identities within peer groups, educational backgrounds, and financial status. In a hybrid digital sociolect, this paradigm looks at how Egyptian youth strategically combine Arabic and English to convey a sense of aspiration, distinctiveness, or social belonging.

3.2.1 Language as Social Practice

Language choice is examined as a discursive technique for asserting identity and maintaining distinctiveness of the speakers as well as expressing humor, satire, and critique. The proposed framework employs linguistic analysis and language choices of the speakers to examine and explore how linguistic choices reveal changes between generations, class divisions, and societal tensions and conflicts. This paper reveals and explores how language serves and acts as a social filter as well as a means of resistance or alignment with prevailing cultural narratives by examining the ways in which multilingual speech is used for sarcasm, exaggeration, and in-group signaling.

3.2.2 Code-Switching as Strategic Performance

The framework situates code-switching within broader globalization processes, examining how Egyptian youth balance local linguistic norms with global linguistic trends. The analysis pays a particular attention to the way English words and loanwords are embedded within Arabic speeches to signal difference, distinctiveness, and belonging to a specific social class or grouping. To put it into context, the selected anthropological linguistic approach considers the tension and conflict between genuineness and performativity, as speakers navigate between the use of Arabic or traditional linguistic norms and digital linguistic innovations, as reflected on the language choices of loanwords and transliteration.

One of the most important ways to comprehend how people navigate their identities, social places, and cultural affiliations in daily interactions is through code switching, which happens when numerous languages are utilized in a single conversation. In fact, frequent code-

switching encourages the development of varied language variants and new mixed language communities that creatively blend elements of several languages, especially in digital contexts. Accordingly, code-switching is analyzed as a performative act that conveys identity, group membership, and participation in both local and global discourses, in addition to being a language change.

Code-switching, in this sense, is not just a random or unconscious process but a strategic communicative act influenced by social structures, power dynamics, and cultural affiliations. For example, speakers may switch languages to signal group membership, differentiate social status, or align themselves with a particular cultural or ideological stance. Code-switching on social media often reflects trending discourses, online humor, and shifting cultural norms, making it a crucial element of digital anthropological linguistics. So, it is through documenting patterns of language use across different settings, anthropological linguistics provides a contextually rich understanding of why speakers switch codes and how this practice evolves over time.

Therefore, code-switching is not merely a language occurrence or habit that is used by the speakers; it is a dynamic instrument for social positioning, self-expression, and cultural negotiation and identity, particularly in rapidly changing digital venues and contexts. Furthermore, code-switching is extensively employed and used in digital platforms, which supports the development and emergence of new speech communities where hybrid linguistic forms and patterns are essential components and elements of communication. This further contributes to the continuous evolution of language in the digital era.

3.2.3 Digital Affordances and Linguistic Hybridity

By examining how new hybrid forms of language acquire legitimacy, proliferate across networks, and influence modern linguistic identities, the study of developing digital speech communities broadens the scope of anthropological linguistics. In contrast to conventional face-to-face conversations, social media platforms such as TikTok enable novel linguistic practices. This study examines how code-switching is employed for comedy, trend participation, and the development of subcultural speech patterns, as influenced by platform affordances such as algorithm-driven visibility, performativity, and virality. The theory also incorporates how digital borrowing and phonetic transliteration have shaped modern linguistic hybridity.

To understand how code-switching functions as a dynamic, socially embedded practice in Egyptian digital discourse and its implications for

identity formation, social interaction, and cultural hybridity in an era of digital globalization, the study utilizes this multi-dimensional framework.

• 4. Analysis

The selected TikTok videos are examined and analyzed in this section to explore and investigate the ways in which language is used as a social construction. Through an investigation of code-switching patterns, loanwords, transliterations, lexical innovation, and digital discourse tactics, the study seeks to illustrate how language choices serve as a tool for cultural expression, differentiation, distinction, and identity construction.

• 4.1 Code-Switching and Linguistic Hybridization

Code-switching between Arabic and English is a main linguistic feature found throughout the 28 TikTok transcripts. This feature is foregrounded in discussions on consumerism, technology, education, and lifestyle. Such a switch normally occurs to highlight familiarity with global trends or for enlightening certain topics associated with prestige and modernity.

Example from Transcript 1:

- بص انا قتلته عايز اكل حاجة شوجاري ... قالي تعالى اخذك عند ديسبلاي بتاع "الديزيرت"

(I told him I wanted something sweet to eat, and he said, come, I'll take you to the dessert display).

In this passage, the speaker switches to English for the words "ديسبلاي" (display) and "ديزيرت" (dessert), although there is an equivalent in Arabic. He does so for a reason, not by coincidence. She talks about an upscale dessert setting, so his use of English simply ennobles the description and aligns it with the notions of luxury and sophistication. The speaker's proficiency in English, especially on something as frivolous as dessert, speaks to a desire to belong to globalized, cosmopolitan culture.

Example from Transcript 2:

"يوجارت ولا آيس كريم بسكتز ولا كب بسكتز تاب وافل" (Yogurt or ice cream with biscuits, or a cup of biscuits topped with waffle).

Here, the speaker uses a mixture of Arabic and English terms to identify different varieties of ice cream, which is a common way most people nowadays talk and describe things in Egyptian Arabic, especially among young members of this population. The frequent use of such English terms as "آيس كريم" for ice cream, "بسكتز" for biscuits, or "وافل" for waffle attests to the dominance of the Western consumer culture in shaping everyday language. They sound not only trendier but more appropriate when referring to several kinds of foods, especially those relating to international brands and modern lifestyles.

Table 1: Code-Switching in Descriptions of Consumer Goods

Transcript Number	English Word(s) Used	Context in Arabic Sentence	Possible Reason for Code-Switching
1	Display, Dessert	"الديسبلاي بتاع" "الديزيرت"	Elevation of dessert through association with global culture
2	Yogurt, Ice Cream, Biscuits	"يوجرد ولا آيس كريم" "بسكتر ولا كب بسكتر" "تاب وافل"	Trendy, international food items associated with modernity
5	Summer Dress, Swimsuit	"Summer Dress 9-K وSwimsuit 5-K"	Reference to global fashion trends and materialism
10	Caramel	"انا عايزة سلطة كراميل" "من دار ايس كريم"	Emphasis on a Westernized flavor in a local context

As shown in Table 1, the use of English words in this video is related to products or concepts that are categorized as modern or international. This type of code-switching indicates that the speaker intends to associate with a globalized culture, at least when discussing lifestyle, fashion, and food. The use of English in such discussions is not only a matter of language preference but also one of projecting identity, arguably sophisticated, educated, and globally aware.

• 4.2 Code-Switching as a Marker of Social Status and Education

This code-switching in most TikTok videos is a reflection not only of cultural globalization but also of social status and education. This can be represented, for example, by how speakers often refer to academic achievements or professional experiences in English, such as the case above evidencing that proficiency in English is the representation of the speaker's higher social status or education.

Example from Transcript 7:

"وانت عايش في مصر مش كده هو انا اه بيسكلي بعد ما خلصت الماستر بتاعتي"
 (You live in Egypt, right? Yeah, basically, after I finished my master's degree).

Here, is where the speaker easily slid into English for the, "بيسكلي" basically, in translating, but she otherwise talks about her living in Egypt. The preference for the English term 'master's' over its Arabic equivalent reinforces the symbolic link between English and academic prestige.

Egyptian discourse often employs English to denote prestige, especially regarding higher education, since it follows Western education systems and standards of achievement worldwide.

Example from Transcript 8:

بروحو بالسلينشوت وبعدين بنخلص بروح اغير وبعدين انزل مع صحابي

(I go to the beach with the slingshot, then I change and head out with my friends).

Here, the speaker uses an English word in an otherwise Arabic sentence to describe an activity on the beach. In such a situation, this use may indeed be less closely related to social status or education than to the speaker's effort at making his everyday speech trendy or just 'modern'. A code-switch of this nature would be bound to raise the speaker's social standing by indicating a familiarity with foreign things, with activities associated with wealth or privilege.

Table 2: Code-Switching in Reference to Education and Status

Transcript Number	English Word(s) Used	Context in Arabic Sentence	Social or Educational Implication
7	Basically, Master's Degree	وانت عايش في مصر مش كده " هو انا اه بيسكلي بعد ما خلصت "الماستر بتاعتي	English used to denote academic achievement and education
8	Slingshot	بروحو بالسلينشوت وبعدين بنخلص بروح اغير وبعدين انزل مع صحابي	English inserted to describe a leisure activity associated with wealth or privilege
5	Summer Dress, Swimsuit	"Summer Dress 9-K وSwimsuit 5-K"	English terms used to discuss high-end fashion

This is evident from Table 2, where code-switching in these TikTok videos generally occurs when speakers talk about aspects connected to their education, leisure activities, or fashion choices, which are associated with the language of the elite. In using English in such discourses, speakers signal not only their educational background or status but also align themselves with global trends and values.

• **4.3 Cultural Identity and the Tension between Local and Global Influences**

The habit of code-switching in these videos only attests to the challenge between local and global influences about the cultural positioning of young Egyptians. To put it this way, the use of Arabic remains central to the expressions pertaining to everyday life, humor, and relationships of the speakers. There is, however, frequent incorporation of English into their speech to indicate the pervasive impact of globalization and a want to be thought of as part of a modern, cosmo-politan world.

Example from Transcript 17:

• "عايزة لبن عادي لبن عادي كده ولا كوكونت ميلك"
 (I want regular milk—just regular milk—or coconut milk).

Within this sentence, the speaker contrasts the local meaning attributed to "لبن عادي" with the global trend that is "كوكونت ميلك". This phenomenon of switching into English in referring to coconut milk reflects how certain global dietary trends have been internalized in the local culture. The speaker's tone also reveals that one is socially judged for the choice of regular milk against one seen to be more fashionable and health-sensitive like coconut milk.

Example from Transcript 26:

• "دي كانت القنبلة داخلة عليهم بتقول لهم هاي جايز هوريو اول بليسيس فيري نايس بفكر اجيب كوفي"
 (She came in like a bomb, saying, 'Hi guys, how are you all? The place is very nice, I'm thinking of getting a coffee').

The following expressions are humorous rendition of a conversation in which the speaker mocks the near compulsion of English in social interactions, particularly among higher echelons. The excessive use of terms such as "هاي جايز" and "فيري نايس" critiques an overuse of English to appear more urbane or worldly than perhaps context would warrant.

Table 3: Tension between Local and Global Identity in Code-Switching

Transcript Number	English Word(s) Used	Context in Arabic Sentence	Reflection on Local vs. Global Identity
17	Coconut Milk	"عايزة لبن عادي كده ولا كوكونت ميلك"	Juxtaposition of local (regular milk) vs. global (coconut milk) dietary trends
26	Hi Guys, Very Nice, Coffee	"هاي جايز هوريو اول بليسيس فيري نايس بفكر اجيب كوفي"	Critique of the overuse of English to project global sophistication

These speakers are literally torn between their local cultural roots and global influences shaping both their languages and their identities, as one can notice throughout Table 3. Such frequent code-switching reflects a broader cultural negotiation in which speakers balance their urge to continue being attached to their Egyptian heritage while seeking to participate in globalized culture.

• 4.4 The use of loanwords for Humor and Social Commentary

Humor is an important tool for Egyptian youth to deal with and face their everyday dynamics of social relations, cultural expectations, and globalization influences. Often more serious forms of social commentary underlie humor, as demonstrated in the transcripts of TikTok videos analyzed here. Joking on the surface may indeed reflect more profound insights into what a speaker feels about societal norms, materialism, and relationships, generationally speaking. It is within the playful nature of these interactions that criticizing their immediate social environment can take place without confrontation. Through humor, they reflect on the experiences of everyday living in a rapidly changing world.

This section examines how the humor in the selected TikTok videos comments on a range of social issues that include class distinctions, gender dynamics, generational conflict, and the tension between modernity and tradition. The analyses focus on how humor serves as a coping mechanism and as a subtle means of resistance against societal pressures.

• 4.5 Loanwords as a Reflection of Class Distinctions

Class distinctions form a running theme throughout the transcripts, as a staggering amount of the humorous exchanges revolve around material aspirations and consumer habits of the speakers. Through the aid of humor, the speakers create both an emphasis and a subversion of the class-based expectations defining their lives. Such interactions involve exaggerations to revamped wealth, fashion, and social status, created in a mocking commentary that defines materialistic class identity.

Example from Transcript 14:

- "تخيل يا كاظم الاقي جاري ما عندوش ساكند كار ولا جولف كار ولا حتى جلايدر واسمه اشرف"

(Imagine, Kazem, I found out my neighbor doesn't even have a second car, or a golf cart, or even a glider, and his name is Ashraf).

Here, the speaker humorously exaggerates the importance of a second car, golf cart, or glider—all symbols of luxury in wealthy Egyptian enclaves. The humor comes through explained denials about his neighbor's lack thereof, to render a person incapable of being the neighbor in question. By focusing on such pithy hallmarks of affluence,

the implicitly commenting speaker himself focuses on materialism, which is obviously circumscribing social standing.

Another theme which regularly emerges in the videos is that of generational conflict, whereby younger speakers use loanwords to remark on perceived differences between themselves and older generations. This is often accomplished through humorous criticism of the latter's values, behaviors, and attitudes, with the younger speakers positioning themselves as more progressive or in tune with modern trends.

Example from Transcript 9:

• "الساحل كله بقى جين Z"

(The entire North Coast is Generation Z now).

The speaker voices humorously, but it seems that Generation Z dominates one of Egypt's most sought-after vacation spots: the North Coast. By making this shift in generational dominance such a humorous observation, the speaker might indirectly comment on the shifting social landscape where younger people are increasingly commanding spaces normally associated with older generations. The speaker realizes this generational shift has occurred with feigned surprise and mild dismay, as if it is some inevitable force of nature.

Example from Transcript 23:

• "الشتايم اتغيرت عن زمان... دلوقتي لو قلت لها بقول لك ايه هو انت لابسة ليه كده بتعترضني تقوم مدياك حتة واحدة: انت جادجمنتال"

(Insults have changed over time... Now, if you ask her why she's dressed like that, she'll hit you with: 'You're judgmental').

Insults through the ages: "Progressive" development, as it would seem, extends to romantic scuffles as well. A philosopher-king reacts by saying, "Perhaps it was easier when our ancestors simply called each other clumsy oaf or wanton strumpet. Now we tell each other that we are judgmental". It's humorous because he seems playfully frustrated with this shift, as if the more sophisticated language, the harder to engage in traditional arguments. This is a generational comment on how even language itself has grown more nuanced in reflection of modern social issues.

Table 5: Humor and Generational Conflict in Selected Transcripts

Transcript Number	Example of Humor	Generational Issue Addressed	Form of Humor
9	"Z الساحل كله بقى جين"	Younger generation taking over social spaces	Mock surprise
23	"دلوقتي لو قلت لها بقول لك ايه هو انت لابسة ليه كده... انت جادجمنتال"	Evolution of language in relationships	Satire of modern behavior

Table 5 displays making fun of generational differences about language use, social behavior, and in terms of the control of social space. Such a humorous discussion allows the speakers to criticize the characteristics that distinguish their generation from the previous ones and at the same time to point to the inevitability of such changes in generational shifts within social life.

Example from Transcript 19:

• "رايح بالجولد كارد اجيب كوفي من على البحر مزاجي متعكر خالص"

(I'm going with my gold card to get coffee by the beach, cause my mood is completely off).

Here, the speaker jokes that his privilege of having a gold card is a symbol of wealth, while the trivial frustration of being in a bad mood is juxtaposed. The humor here is in contrast between the speaker's material wealth and emotional dissatisfaction; material goods are not always the source of happiness. This serves as a humorous reflection on the disconnection between wealth and emotional health and, by extension, a subtle critique of materialism.

• 4.6 Loanwords as a Marker of Social Identity

Materialism and consumerism have penetrated different levels of social life in contemporary Egypt, including those most thoroughly influenced by the youngest segments of the population. Social media platforms, such as TikTok, have become an outlet whereby users share and talk about their lifestyles, material possessions, and consumer choices, often framed humorously or sarcastically. This section explores how consumerism and materialism emerge as central themes in the 28 TikTok videos-witnessing how speakers relate to wealth, status symbols, and social imperatives of consumption.

By analyzing these videos, it becomes clear that material wealth and the display of luxurious goods play major roles in shaping social identity. These discussions of expensive clothes, cars, vacations, and

gadgets serve poignantly as markers of status while underlining the growing dominance of a global consumer culture. This section examines how speakers use allusions to material goods and consumerism, either to act in conformance with societal expectations or to protest the exact value system which lifts wealth and material possessions up.

Material goods in general and luxurious commodities in particular surface in the TikTok transcripts as signs of social standing. Most speakers emphasize the need to prove they possess expensive items in order to belong to a class through humor, to comment on the irrationality of materialism. This comes as part of the rising consumer culture in Egypt, where the propensity for high-end purchases is pinpointed as increasingly becoming one of those factors pertaining to personal wealth and status.

Example from Transcript 5:

- "Swimsuit 5K و Summer Dress 9K اي اغلى حاجة اشتريتها للساحل" (What's the most expensive thing you bought for the coast? A summer dress for 9K and a swimsuit for 5K).

It comes as a line when the speaker names the prices of expensive summer clothes, as if he must buy them in preparation for traveling to the North Coast. This talks volumes about the pressure related to image and public appearance when people travel to vacation towns and cities using a plethora of high-end fashion brands and their respective prices. The casual tone in which the speaker relates these purchases would suggest perhaps they are not extraordinary, further reinforcing through normalization the use of luxury goods as status symbols.

Example from Transcript 21:

- "بتصرفي كم اما تروحي لوكالي تجيبي لبس"
- "الفين جنيه"

Speaker A: (How much do you spend when you go to Locally to buy clothes?)

Speaker B: (Two thousand pounds).

Here, the speaker talks about shopping at "Locally," which is a very trendy brand-very stylish and expensive. He says, "I spent two thousand pounds on clothes." It goes to show how consumerism shapes relations in society; the status of a person in society is attained by his or her fashion appeal. The use of humor and sarcasm in the above exchange shows that, although she takes these materialistic expectations upon herself, there is also somewhat of a realization in her regarding the superficiality of such concerns.

Table 6: Materialism in Fashion and Consumer Goods

Transcript Number	Item(s) Mentioned	Context in Arabic Sentence	Social Implication
5	Summer Dress, Swimsuit	"Summer Dress 9-ك وSwimsuit 5-ك"	Discussion of expensive fashion as a marker of status
21	Clothes from Locally	"بتصرفي كم اما تروحي " لوكالي تجيبي لبس الفين جنيه"	Reference to brand loyalty and material wealth

Example from Transcript 5:

• "اشتريت سويسوت بـ 8000 كان سويسوت بـ 7 واجبت الكاب ده من Levain Loris بـ 1000"

(I bought a swimsuit for 8,000 pounds, it was originally 7,000, and I got this cap from Levain Loris for 1,000).

In the following extract, the speaker casually announces that he has bought an expensive swimsuit and cap from a high-end brand "Levain Loris," which is synonymous with international fashion. Naming such high-end brands suggests that the speaker identifies himself with global consumer culture, in which the use of high-status goods from internationally recognized high-end brands is one of the status markers. They discuss such purchases so casually that it suggests, as a matter of fact, those transactions are unremarkable features of the speaker's social circles and directly emphasize the normalizing power of global consumerism.

Example from Transcript 17:

• "لبن عادي كده ولا كوكونت ميلك"

(Regular milk or coconut milk).

Herein, the speaker presents the options of regular milk and coconut milk-a globally hyped health trend-as if the latter is a more urban or modern choice. In this innocuous allusion to global dietary preferences, one finds an increasing influence of international health and wellbeing trends on local consumer behavior. The speaker makes mention of coconut milk instead of sticking to traditional products made of dairy to show how globalization even shapes the ordinary choices of consumers.

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Table 7: Globalization in Consumer Choices

Transcript Number	Global Brand or Trend Mentioned	Context in Arabic Sentence	Reflection of Global Influence
5	Swimsuit- Levain Loris	"واجبت الكاب ده من Levain Loris 1000"	High-end fashion brands as markers of global consumerism
17	Coconut Milk	"لين عادي كده ولا كوكونت "مليك"	Influence of global health and wellness trends
26	Coffee	"هاي جايز هوريو اول بليسيس فيري نايس بفكر "اجيب كوفي"	The trend of consuming coffee as a symbol of global lifestyle

In fact, as shown in Table 7, international consumerist trends and brands are interwoven into the daily life of speakers because of everyday choices deriving from such trends, which make no less than some impact on their social contact. Such casual integration reveals, therefore, the broader ramification of globalization with respect to Egyptian consumer culture, where adherence to international tastes has always been perceived as a hallmark of modernity and prestige.

• 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study employs an anthropological linguistic approach to analyze how Egyptian elites on TikTok use code-switching, loanwords, and transliterations as tools of social distinction and identity construction. The findings reveal that these linguistic practices are not merely about language alternation but serve as performative acts signaling class, education, and global affiliation. Speakers strategically blend Arabic and English to assert belonging to an elite, Western-aligned social group while humorously critiquing local norms. The research highlights how TikTok's digital environment accelerates the emergence of a hybrid sociolect, where linguistic choices reflect broader societal tensions between tradition and modernity, generational divides, and Egypt's evolving class dynamics. Code-switching functions as both a marker of privilege and a medium for social commentary, illustrating how language mediates cultural negotiation in digital spaces.

The study underscores TikTok's role in shaping Egypt's sociolinguistic landscape, where elite youth craft identities through multilingual practices that privilege English as a symbol of status and modernity. These trends raise questions about cultural preservation and linguistic inequality, as the platform reinforces hierarchies tied to language proficiency. Future research should explore how similar

dynamics manifest across other demographics and Arab contexts, as well as the long-term implications of digital communication on semantic shifts and language education. By framing code-switching as a socially embedded practice, this analysis contributes to broader discussions about globalization, youth culture, and the intersection of language and power in the digital age.

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