

Lexical Borrowing and Cultural Identity in Contemporary Urban Vernaculars

Sarimsokov Xurshid Abdimalikovich^{1*}, Juraeva Iroda Akhmedovna²,
Abdullayeva Parvina Tolibjonovna³, Boriboyev Bosim Kazakboyevich⁴,
Khalmuratova Dilbar Yakibayevna⁵ and Sodiqova Shahriniso Abror qizi⁶

^{1*} Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Language and Literature, The National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

² Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Language and Literature, National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirza Ulugbek, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

³ Senior Lecturer, Department of Spanish and Italian Philology, Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Samarqand, Uzbekistan

⁴ Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Department of Sports and Methods of Teaching, Jizzakh State Pedagogical University named after Abdulla Kadiri, Jizzakh, Uzbekistan

⁵ Department of Karakalpak Language, Nukus State Pedagogical Institute named after Ajiniyaz, Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan

⁶ Independent Researcher, National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

E-mail: ¹hurshidsarimsokov7@gmail.com, ²irodajuraeva@gmail.com; i_jorayeva@nuu.uz,

³ptolibjonovna@gmail.com, ⁴buriboyivbosim@gmail.com, ⁵dilbarxalmuratova242@mail.com;
dilbar.xalmuratova@ndpi.uz, ⁶shahrinisosodikova@gmail.com

ORCID: ¹<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5258-7719>, ²<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2480-7979>,

³<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-4856-8987>, ⁴<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-0563-3296>,

⁵<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-4738-5446>, ⁶<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5804-0016>

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Abstract - In this study, the role of lexical borrowing in contemporary urban vernaculars and its influence on cultural identity were addressed. The study will identify the language reflection between native and alien words, which will unify the social relations and cultural identity of urban settings. The main objectives of the study are to prove the existence of the lexical borrowing words, to study the motive of the borrowing patterns, and to estimate the process of the cultural identity change in the urban environment with the help of the patterns. The methodology uses two main approaches, quantitative and qualitative surveys. The usage of languages in several urban environments was analyzed in a quantitative survey, whereas in a qualitative method, samples of languages in urban areas were analyzed. Results indicate that 45% of words used in everyday urban discourse are borrowed, with English being the most common source (65%). In personality development, lexical borrowing plays a major role, showing that the most used borrowed patterns are addressed especially in informal communication, with 70% of urban youth aged 18–25 using borrowed terms in everyday speech to convey a combination of local and global identities. Some borrowed phrases represent indicators of social status and advancement due to the fact that they also serve as a reflection of social hierarchies. Social identification variables, including socio-economic position, ethnicity, and social mobility, were discovered to be significantly correlated with the frequency of borrowed phrases ($r = 0.72$). According to the study, the interaction between global influences and local identities mediates the cultural practices, most importantly in lexical borrowing. These borrowed terms in

this study not only enhance the language, but they also help people to negotiate their cultural identity in the fast-growing urban environment.

Keywords: Lexical Borrowing, Urban Vernaculars, Cultural Identity, Sociolinguistics, Code Mixing, Language Contact, Globalization

I. INTRODUCTION

The most common feature in modern urban vernaculars is lexical borrowing, which means the process of words adopted from one language to another. Language and cultural barriers dissolve in fast-paced metropolitan environments due to the high concentration of varied communities and the pervasiveness of global influences (Blommaert, 2010). The communicative demands of urban communities are met by integrating borrowed terms into urban vernaculars, which are frequently influenced by several linguistic traditions. This process also shows the combination of global and cultural identities, and also reveals the process of language changes. Research on lexical borrowing, especially in urban settings, offers a useful perspective through which languages change in reaction to political shifts, cultural, and socio-cultural (Flores & Lewis, 2016; Vicente, 2019). Even though it's the same research studies on lexical borrowing within urban vernaculars that are still disjointed, with slim research on how

it leads to the formation of cultural identities. Most studies are concerned with rural or remote language communities without paying attention to the impact of urban language practices in the process of identity formation in cosmopolitan settings (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010). To address this gap, the

study ought to be centered on exploring the role of lexical borrowing in assisting individuals in the urban setting to cope with the meeting point of global and local forces in the shaping of their cultural identities.

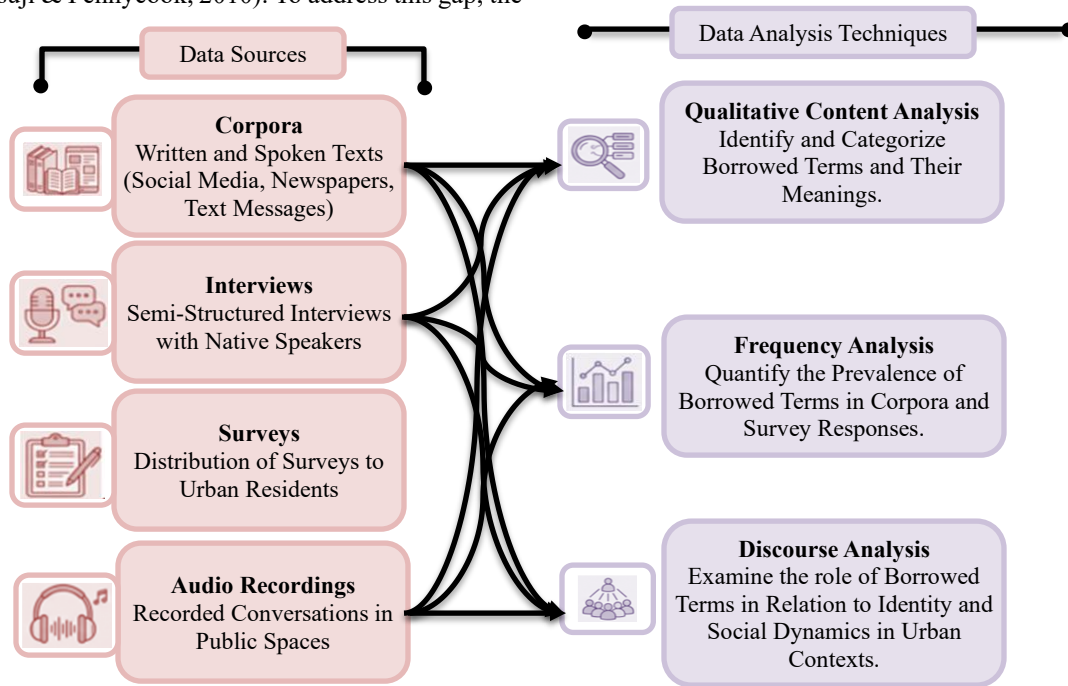


Fig. 1 Data Collection and Analytical Framework

The study's data collection and analysis process is depicted in this diagram. It highlights four primary types of data: surveys, interviews, corpora, and audio recordings. Fig. 1 shows the relationship between the various sources that help in explaining the lexical borrowing in urban vernaculars. To explore further the social implications, meanings, and frequency of borrowed terms that link these data sources. These apply to the analytical methods, which comprise discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis, and frequency analysis. In every respect of the study, process structures of data collection and analysis are well aligned with the study objectives.

Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the phenomenon and differences of borrowed words in the contemporary urban dialects in different urban metropolitan areas, with a focus on the examination of common sources and borrowing localities.
- To explore the socio-cultural, economic, and technological pressures and processes that contribute to the use of borrowed languages, especially in the globalization environment, the effects of media contact, and demographic factors.
- To test out the role of lexical borrowing in the ways to create and negotiate cultural identity by urban

populations, as influenced by the local traditions and world trends.

The proposed research will assist in closing the gap by answering how lexical borrowing of modern urban vernaculars can be considered an expression of culture. Specifically, it tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the impacts of lexical borrowing of urban dialects on cultural identity?
2. How much are the determinants of the adoption of borrowed terms in urban societies social, cultural, and linguistic in nature?
3. In what way do these borrowed words relate to the complicated negotiation of the global trends or the local traditions in the urban environment?

With this exploration, the study will have a generalized idea of the intersection of language and identity in modern cities.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the existing literature on the topic of cultural identity and lexical borrowings in urban spoken languages that dwell on the historical-linguistics and language convergence-oriented studies. In section 3, it talks about the methodology, data collected during the survey, and how it was analyzed to

interpret the research, how terms that were borrowed were labeled and categorized using research methods. Section 4 provides the findings and provides meaningful information on the use of borrowed terms, their origin, and effects on cultural identity among the urban communities. Section 5 discusses the implications of the findings, compares them to previous research, and examines the role of lexical borrowing in the construction of identity. In lexical borrowing, section 6 concludes the major findings of the paper and provides suggestions on the direction that future research should take on the impact of lexical borrowing in the various cultural contexts.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The process of incorporating words from one language into another, especially in the interaction between various language groups, is known as lexical borrowing (Darvin & Norton, 2017). Social, political, and cultural factors are major elements of lexical borrowing in metropolitan areas, particularly those with diverse populations. There are a number of motivations for borrowing words or phrases from another language. These include the status of the source language, the desire to indicate social position or modernity, or the necessity to cover lexical gaps in the native language (Wang & King, 2024). Mostly borrowing happens from prevalent or superior languages, according to research that identifies (Simpson, 2017; Gogolin et al., 2013). The use of language that reflects and influences the structures of general trends in English. As an example, the use of borrowed words referring to technology, media, and fashion can be viewed as a sign of global coherence, and they are applied to follow the trends of other countries.

The interconnection of several languages, sociocultural, and regionalism in cities results in urban vernaculars. As a result of daily conversation, these vernaculars are developed in fast-growing urban environments with the existence of various language communities (Muysken, 2013). The language practices in cities are more vital and fluent as a result of social network effects and cultural interactions. The intersection of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groupings in urban vernaculars is the expression of social constructions of cities (Piccardo et al., 2021; Wei, 2020). The lexical borrowing is one of the most important means of social positioning and the process of language construction, which combines the fusion of regional, local, and foreign linguistic factors (Constantin-Dureci, 2022). The borrowed words enable the speakers to show prestige, group affiliation, and social mobility, which displays the stable negotiation between global influences and local identities.

In the formation of cultural identity, language performs a significant role. For allowing people to express their social identity, language acts as a tool for communication. Language plays a major role in multicultural urban settings as people negotiate their identities in the relationship between local and global surroundings (Sippola, 2020; Coleman et al., 2019). The balance between local cultures and global cultures makes the speakers use borrowed patterns in urban vernaculars. The symbolic meanings attached to these borrowed names are a reflection of the diverse social, cultural, and geographical groups of the speakers. Regarding this, lexical borrowing allows one to show their individuality while staying in step with current trends on a global scale. Due to the process of urbanization becoming global, these words enable speakers to claim their locations in the hybrid cultural landscapes, which are fluid and multiplexed, given the changeability of cultural identity (Wiese, 2009).

2.1 Research Gaps

Although comprehensive studies were conducted on lexical borrowing and its impact on the creation of identity, most of the existing literature focuses on rural or individual communities in which the process of language interaction is not as dynamic and is influenced by the forces of globalization. The lexical borrowing has been mainly concentrated on smaller and more homogeneous groups in most of the studies. There is a significant gap in research on how borrowed phrases contribute to the construction of cultural identity in urban vernaculars. In order to fill this gap in knowledge, this paper examines the role of lexical borrowing in negotiating and defining identities of urban vernaculars that are subject to many languages and cultures. This research is aimed at offering information about the role of language in cross-cultural communication and adaptation in current metropolitan environments that have become more and more globalized by focusing on them.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The mixed-methodology approach based on the qualitative and quantitative methodologies will be used in this study. This is used to understand the impact of cultural identity in urban areas with the use of lexical borrowing. In order to understand how borrowed terms are used in the context and how they are integrated in the discussions, and how they depict the cultural identity, the qualitative part uses the interpretive textual study. The qualitative aspect, on the other hand, will involve an analysis to determine the consistency and lexical borrowing terms of different urban residents. gives a wider outlook on how frequently various borrowed terms are utilized by different groups of people.

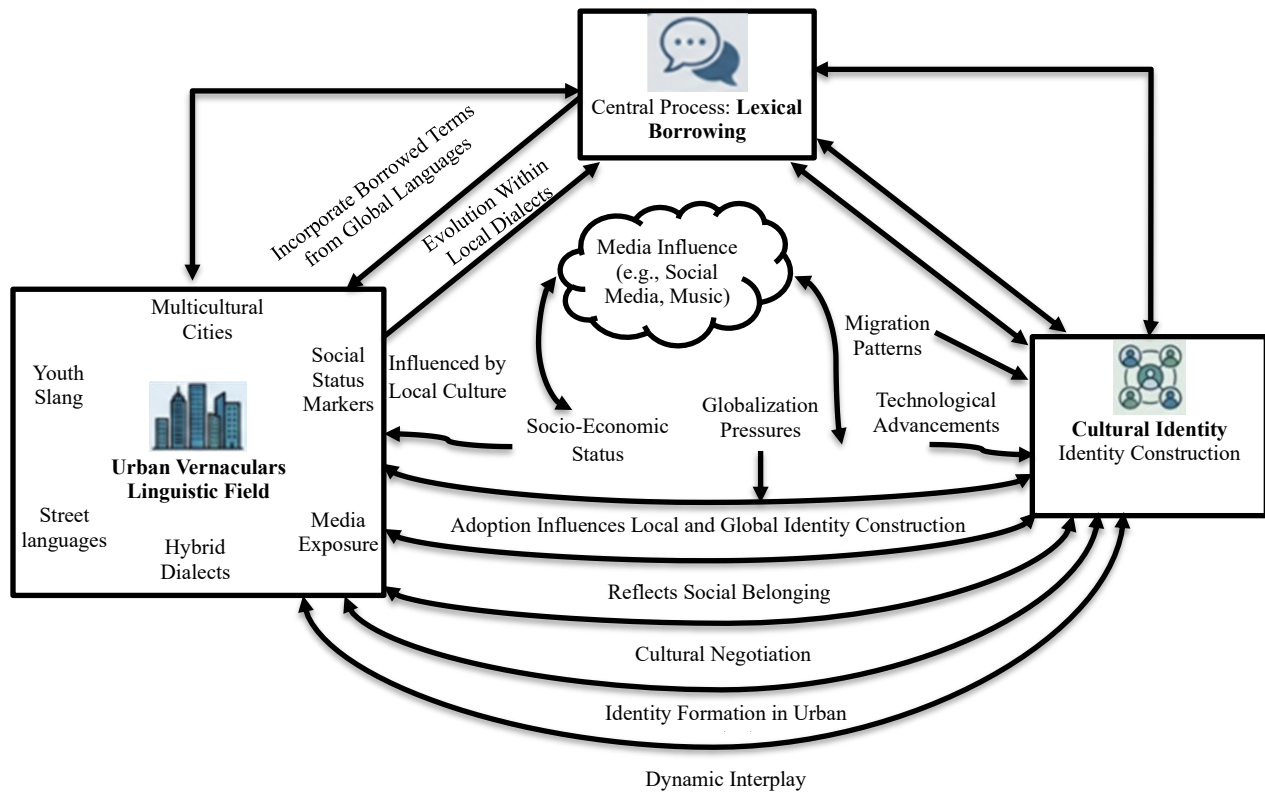


Fig. 2 Lexical Borrowing and Cultural Identity in Urban Vernaculars

Fig. 2 is the conceptual framework that establishes the relationship between cultural identification, urban vernaculars, and lexical borrowing. It focuses on the identity of urban communities by using borrowed names that are affected by various factors such as social status, media attention, and globalization. It is shown by the diagram that the process of borrowing words and its role in creating local and global identities among people inhabiting the multicultural urban spaces takes place. The arrows connecting the concepts of the dynamic and changing cultural identity due to linguistic and social shifts.

The study's data is diverse and extensive because it was gathered from various platforms. The informal interactions, social media posts, and local newspapers, like text messages, are all part of the spoken and written text sources found in metropolitan contexts from the corpora. To further analyze the native speakers of urban vernaculars, recognize borrowed terms, and the cultural importance of these phrases, semi-structured interviews are conducted. In order to collect the quantitative data, the surveys are conducted among urban residents to understand how they use borrowed terms and the role these borrowed terms play in their identity. It also includes the audio recordings of people speaking in public places to note how they utilize borrowed words in a natural way.

The sampling is collected based on the metropolitan centers of high linguistic diversity, and the sample is chosen according to the different socio-economic backgrounds, as

well as to cover a representative sample. The sample data consists of the age group of 18 to 25 years of age with an equal gender representation and a mix of migrant and local people as they are found in urban areas due to their cultural diversity and languages (Dodsworth, 2017; Nicholls & Uitermark, 2016).

In qualitative content analysis, the concepts that are borrowed and classified according to their meanings, and the process in which they are employed, help with data analysis. Both the corpus data and the survey responses contain borrowed phrases. However, the discourse analysis is used to determine the relationship between the terms of group membership, cultural negotiation, and social status in urban communication. By utilizing these integrated methodologies, it is possible to examine lexical borrowing as one of the factors contributing to the formation of cultural identity in urban settings.

3.1 Tools and Software

The research uses NVivo to classify borrowed words and phrases by conducting qualitative coding and content analysis on audio recordings and interview transcripts. The words that are borrowed are classified and identified using this software. The survey information will make it possible to determine the patterns of lexical borrowing that are important among different demographics. The frequency analysis and statistical tests of survey data are carried out using SPSS. Python is implemented to clean the data, perform text analysis, and visualize the consistency of the frequency of

borrowed terms in the corpus. This provides data on the trends of language use in vernaculars in the cities. The combination of these tools and the analysis of the data in detail guarantees the quantitative rigor and qualitative inference.

3.2 Dataset Description

Local newspapers, text messages, social media posts, and audio recordings of discussions in public settings comprise a wide range of written and spoken language data in metropolitan settings that are utilized as datasets in this study. To gain a less objective, but more qualitative understanding of the cultural appropriateness and application of borrowed words, the research studied participants of the urban vernaculars using a semi-structured interview format. The dataset includes responses to the survey that was sent to people living in the city and recorded quantitative information about the frequency and trends of lexical borrowing. The sample of data represents a wide range of urban environments, comprising different socio-economic backgrounds and ages (18-25 years). The migrant and local communities would guarantee a representative image of linguistic behaviors in multicultural urban environments.

3.3 Evaluation Metrics

Accuracy

$$\text{Accuracy} = \frac{\text{Number of Correctly Identified Borrowed Terms}}{\text{Total Number of Terms Analyzed}} \quad (1)$$

Equation (1) calculates the rate of correctly identified borrowed terms in the survey and corpus data.

Frequency Distribution

$$\text{Frequency} = \frac{\text{Occurrences of Borrowed Term}}{\text{Total Terms in Corpus}} \quad (2)$$

Equation (2) follows the extent of borrowed terms among various urban populations.

Cultural Identity Association (Correlation)

$$\text{Correlation}(r) = \frac{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})^2 \sum(Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}} \quad (3)$$

Equation (3) calculates the connection between the utilization of borrowed patterns and the markers of cultural identity.

Chi-Square Test

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} \quad (4)$$

Equation (4) was employed to determine whether there is any significant correlation between demographic variables and the rate of lexical borrowings.

Thematic Consistency (Cohen's Kappa)

$$\kappa = \frac{P_o - P_e}{1 - P_e} \quad (5)$$

Equation (5) tests the level of consistency of such themes as cultural identity in qualitative content analysis.

These measures can be used to evaluate the accuracy, spread, and meaning of the lexical borrowing in transforming cultural identity in urban vernaculars.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 Patterns of Lexical Borrowing in Urban Speech

The data shows that urban speech exhibits noticeable patterns of lexical borrowing, with most borrowed phrases falling from global languages like English and Spanish, as well as regional languages. The borrowed terms are usually incorporated into the daily communication, especially in informal environments such as social media, text messaging, and simple conversations. The most common one is the cultural borrowing of terms of reference and technical terms, which are used to fill in gaps in the lexicon or to elevate the discourse. The most prevalent borrowed terms that are related to technology and social media are a reflection of both global tendencies and the influence digital platforms have on the language in cities (Domingo, 2014).

4.2 Frequency & Sources of Borrowed Terms

Among various metropolitan populations, borrow words at varying frequencies. The most productive borrowers are young people. Borrowed terms accounted for 45% of the whole examined corpus in casual conversation. In that, English has the highest frequency of 65%, which was followed by Spanish with 10% and regional languages with 25%. These terms are particularly used by the educated and socially mobile population who borrow the terms to demonstrate prestige and social status. The majority of borrowed terms are associated with technology culture (e.g., "fiesta," "chill"), (e.g., "app," "hashtag"), or social media (e.g., "influencer").

4.3 Relationship Between Borrowed Vocabulary and Social Identity Markers

Borrowed words are significantly related to the social identification markers like race, class, and cultural affiliation, according to the study. People from more privileged backgrounds are more likely to borrow words and phrases from other languages and cultures to show their connection to the modern world. Furthermore, the use of English loanwords, which is commonly used by the migrant population, is attributed to their attempts to maintain their cultural integration and retain their ethnic origins (Stewart, 2012). Some social groups use particular borrowed terms that are represented by their social identity. Likewise, in youth subcultures or in professions, which use borrowed words as an indicator of membership of groups and cultural capital

(Jakob, 2020). The frequency of borrowed terms by various language sources is shown in table I.

TABLE I FREQUENCY OF BORROWED TERMS BY LANGUAGE SOURCE

Language Source	Frequency (%)
English	65%
Regional	25%
Spanish	10%

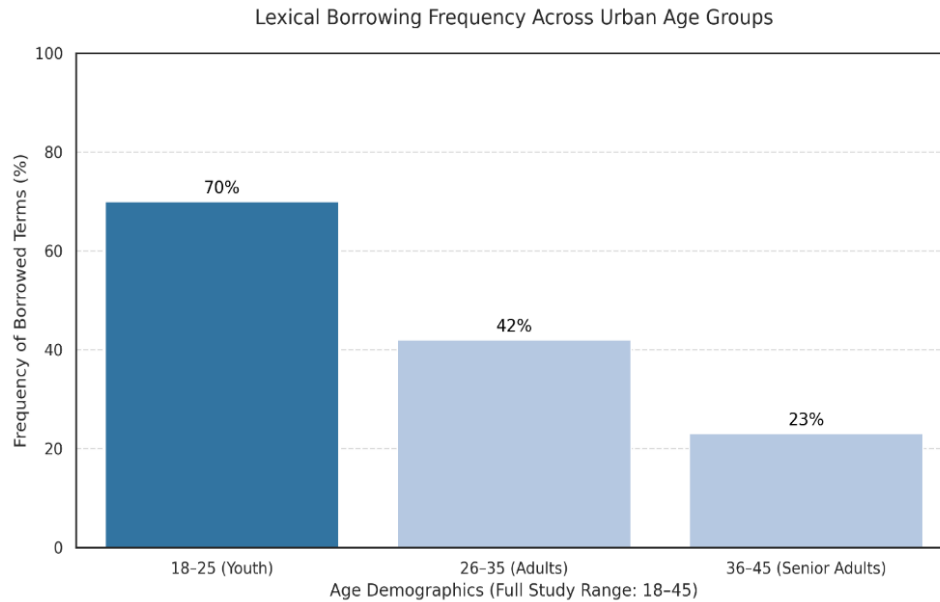


Fig. 3 Use of Borrowed Terms by Age Group

The prevalence of borrowed patterns among various age groups is illustrated in fig. 3. The relationship between digital and technological terms the young age populations poses a large frequency of borrowing were emphasized in this figure.

V. DISCUSSION

This study's findings show that urban vernaculars' lexical borrowing is significantly related to the development of cultural identity. The influence of globalization and media vulnerability on the development of urban language is identified by the increased frequency of borrowed phrases, particularly among younger age groups. The impact of global culture on local identities is reflected in borrowed phrases, especially in technology and social media. The use of this borrowed language in everyday language is an expression of a balance between the local and the global. People use global language to show their social status and affiliation. Language usage serves as a sign of social distinction and cultural negotiation in urban areas. As shown, the association between lexical borrowing and cultural identification indicators, such as social mobility, social class, and ethnicity. This helps us to understand that language is not just a tool for communicating. It also helps to show people's group identity in a difficult multicultural urban environment. This research concludes that the majority of the studies on the correlation between lexical borrowing and cultural identity are

confirmed in this study. Among young people and other socially mobile groups, prior research shows that borrowed terminology serves as a status symbol. Moreover, the study builds upon previous studies as it specifically addresses the urban context that is characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity to a greater extent. It enhances the insight into how lexical borrowing is not only an instrument of communication, but also a cultural instrument of establishing global and local alliances through negotiations. The majority of the past research has been of rural or isolated societies. The present study shows that the urban environment is a more complex landscape in which local cultural factors exist, and global trends. Therefore, urban vernaculars can be a significant location where cultural change can occur.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The language plays a pivotal role in the formation of cultural identity, which was confirmed by this research. It demonstrates that lexical borrowing is a social activity, not only the linguistic process, but also identity bargaining and cultural adaptation in urban cities where globalization and local culture intersect. Two practical aspects where the findings of the study are useful are language policy and city planning. The urban planners, educators, and policy makers understand that language dynamics and cultural integration processes in cities can be better comprehended when they

have a better understanding of how borrowed phrases affect the identities of urban communities. The changing nature of urban speech and its function in social and cultural integration were taken into consideration by communication strategies and language programs in multicultural cities.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study is centered on the historical status of lexical borrowing in shaping cultural identity in contemporary urban vernaculars. The most important results show that 45% of words used in everyday urban discourse are borrowed terminology. This makes 70% of the population urban youth use borrowed terms, and English is the most common language of origin (65%). Borrowed words are a measure of social status as they reflect the tension between national and international identity, particularly among people who have access to the internet and social media. The variables of social identification, such as socio-economic position, ethnicity, and social mobility, were found to have a significant correlation with the frequency of borrowed phrases ($r = 0.72$). Immigrant groups use borrowed terms to go through the process of cultural assimilation, and those with more socioeconomic status tend to use them more frequently to identify with the rest of the world. The work contributes to sociolinguistics in terms of theory by creating a focus on the two functions of lexical borrowing and cultural identity formation and negotiation. It reinforces a point that the language practices are closely linked with the construction of social identity, especially within urban spaces where local and global forces are confounded. It also upholds the fact that speech and the formation of social identities cannot be broken, especially in metropolitan areas where regional and global influences are interacting. This study offers fresh data that urban vernaculars serve as a means of assimilation and cultural accommodation in society. Moreover, the research is limited by the sample size and the geographical area, as it concentrated on some urban centers. It has also dealt with the linguistic properties of lexical borrowing, but did not expound on the psychological and emotive properties of borrowing. These findings should be further explored in future studies by including longitudinal studies and using a more diverse population. The youngest generations (18 to 25) have the highest number of borrowed words used.

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