

THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES ON ALBANIAN YOUTH COMMUNICATION: A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE		Linguistics Keywords: foreign languages, youth communication, English language, multilingualism, language contact, code-switching, social media, linguistic identity, globalization, Albanian language.
Donika Bakiu	PhD in Philological Sciences; Junior Associate for Proofreading in Official Languages, Municipality of Tetovo, Tetovo, North Macedonia	
Abstract The growing demand for foreign languages, in particular English, has changed significantly the communication of young people around the world. The rapid development of technology, the forces of globalization, the emergence of digital platforms, and the possibilities of international learning have made it necessary for a person to be multilingual in everyday communication. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of foreign languages on the verbal communication of young people, in particular the use of English vocabulary in the daily speech of Albanian youth. The study looks at the main social and technological factors that provoke the use of foreign words, such as social media platforms, online entertainment, schools, and communication between cultures. The research was carried out through a qualitative research approach, including a literature review and direct observation of informal communication of young people. The results indicate that the use of English words has become a common practice in the country, especially in informal conversations. Words related to technology, entertainment, fashion, and digital innovations are often included in Albanian conversations, often replacing the native words. This practice, while facilitating international communication and access to international content, also raises concerns about the preservation of the country's linguistic heritage and the protection of the Albanian language. There are pros and cons of learning foreign languages, as research shows. Schools and families should promote multilingualism but also promote the importance of the correct use and preservation of the mother tongue. There is a need for a balance between language development and cultural heritage today in our globalized world to ensure the preservation of cultural identity.		

INTRODUCTION

Language is the basis of human communication and cultural identity and reflects the values, conventions, beliefs, and social experiences of a community. As society, politics, technology, and culture change, so does language. In the present world, globalization has improved the interaction of languages. People engage with each other beyond the borders through education, traveling, commerce, and digital platforms. Therefore, foreign languages have become a must in daily conversation, particularly among the young.

The young generation is the most exposed to linguistic developments, and they are heavy users of social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and other online spaces, which increases the exposure to English and other global languages. Such exposure leads to the integration of foreign words into everyday discussions. This phenomenon is indicative of not only linguistic changes but also the influence of global culture on local discourses.

It is a well-known fact that when speakers of different languages communicate, they trigger linguistic changes via borrowing words and communication techniques. Borrowing isn't a new thing, but the rapid spread of foreign terms now is partly attributable to digital communication. Young people are exposed to English all the time in social media, streaming services, online

gaming, and educational tools. These sources influence vocabulary but also pronunciation and conversational patterns.

As a leading source of loanwords, English has become a source of loanwords for Albanian-speaking youngsters, words such as "post," "story," "like," "follow," "online," "chat," "update," "streaming," "content," and "trend," perfectly embedded in their daily conversations. This incorporation is a sign of the increasing relationship between global digital culture and local linguistic standards.

Scholars point out that multilingual environments enhance linguistic flexibility and communication skills without harming the local language. Research on bilingualism and youth language shows that young speakers migrate between languages to express individuality, inventiveness, solidarity, and group belonging. Research with multilingual youth also suggests that schooling, peer communication, and online groups influence language choices.

The influx of foreign words and expressions has provoked discussion among linguists, teachers, and educational policymakers. Some people say that borrowing makes a language richer and helps people from different countries to communicate. Some people worry that native terms will be lost and languages will lose their uniqueness, especially minor languages like Albanian.

Albanians have a history of borrowing from several languages, including Latin, Turkish, Italian, Greek, and more recently English. Today, however, the impact of English on other languages through digital communication differs from its impact in the past. Today, young people are the primary drivers of language evolution. The rapid spread of foreign words on social media has accelerated the pace of language change among them.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of foreign languages on the communication of Albanian youth. It analyzes the causes for the use of foreign terms, enumerates typical cases of their application, and assesses the advantages and disadvantages for ordinary communication and language preservation. In addition, the study aims to contribute to the discourse on multilingualism, language relations, and the future development of the Albanian language in an increasingly interconnected global community.

METHODOLOGY

The research was based on a qualitative methodology and descriptive analysis to investigate the influence of foreign languages, especially English, on the daily language use of young Albanian speakers. The choice of the qualitative method was determined by its ability to generate

rich and detailed data on language practices, lexical borrowing, and communication styles in real social settings. The data collection was carried out through two main methods:

1. A wide literature review of national and international sources to identify relevant theoretical frameworks on language contact, multilingualism, lexical borrowing, and youth communication.

This review included scientific articles, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference presentations, and official linguistic publications.

2. Observing young people between 18 and 25 years old communicating in school settings, social settings and different online settings like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and messaging apps. The study focused on naturally occurring conversations and, more specifically, on the utilisation of English words in conversations in Albanian, when and why they are used. The data collected were analysed using thematic content analysis. Frequently occurring foreign words were categorised into themes such as technology, social media, education, fun, fashion, and everyday interactions. The categories were useful in recognising recurring language patterns and in understanding the relationship between globalisation, digital communication, and youth language use. The study does not seek statistical generalisation, but the qualitative results offer useful insights into the communication trends of Albanian youth and add value to wider discussions on language evolution, multilingualism, and linguistic identity.

RESULTS

The results of the study show that the main source of the borrowed words in the daily conversations of young Albanian speakers is English. Borrowed words are used most frequently in the conversations related to technology, social media, education, entertainment, and modern lifestyle. Participants often used English words in Albanian sentences without changing the structure of the sentence. The borrowed words mainly refer to technology and social media, where English words are well known. The most borrowed words are post, story, follow, like, online, chat, streaming, content, update, meeting, and project. These words are considered more functional, modern, and socially acceptable in general than the Albanian equivalents. The research indicates that the use of foreign words also depends on the context of communication. The largest number of English borrowings is found in informal conversations with friends, while their use in formal communication within academic or professional environments is less common. The role of social media as an important factor in increasing the borrowing process, due to exposure to English interfaces and global digital content, is also emphasized. The research shows that young people generally have a positive attitude toward multilingualism. A large number of participants consider English vocabulary as a sign of digital skills, educational success, and global connections. Some

respondents also state their concern that over-borrowing may lead to the decline of Albanian words, especially among the younger generations.

Table 1. Frequency of English Loanwords by Communication Domain

<i>Communication Domain</i>	<i>Frequency (n)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Examples</i>
<i>Social Media</i>	52	34.7	<i>post, story, follow, like</i>
<i>Technology</i>	38	25.3	<i>update, download, online</i>
<i>Education</i>	24	16.0	<i>project, presentation, deadline</i>
<i>Entertainment</i>	21	14.0	<i>streaming, playlist, gaming</i>

In Table 1, it is evident that the occurrence of English loanwords differs notably across various communication sectors, with social media standing out as the most prevalent area. Making up 34.7% of all noted borrowings (n = 52), social media platforms contain a substantial number of anglicisms like 'post,' 'story,' 'follow,' and 'like,' which have seamlessly become part of everyday language usage. Technology follows as the second most common sector at 25.3% (n = 38), characterized by standard technical jargon such as 'update,' 'download,' and 'online.' Conversely, education (16.0%, n = 24) and entertainment (14.0%, n = 21) exhibit lower frequencies, indicating a more discerning acceptance of practical terms like 'project,' 'deadline,' 'streaming,' and 'playlist.' This breakdown emphasizes how contemporary digital environments and technological engagements act as primary drivers for incorporating foreign words into the lexicon of young Albanian speakers.

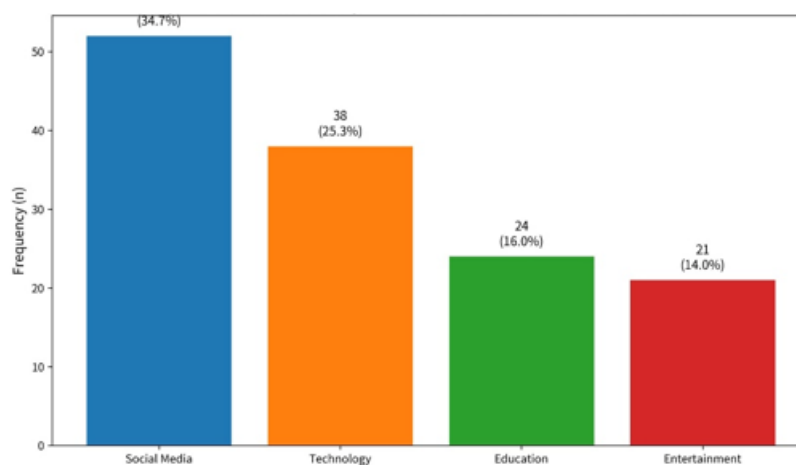


Figure 1. Distribution of English loanwords across communication domains.

The visual representation in Figure 1 shows a clear decrease in the use of loanwords as communication shifts from informal digital platforms to more structured functional environments. The comparison highlights the significant prevalence of social media and technology, accounting for more than 60% of all English borrowed words. The dramatic decrease from technology (38

cases) to education (24 cases) indicates that while informal online spaces encourage the incorporation of new words, formal academic settings are more resistant to adopting loanwords.

This visual breakdown confirms that the borrowing of words is not consistent across all areas but is specific to different domains, heavily influenced by the immediacy and casual style of contemporary communication channels.

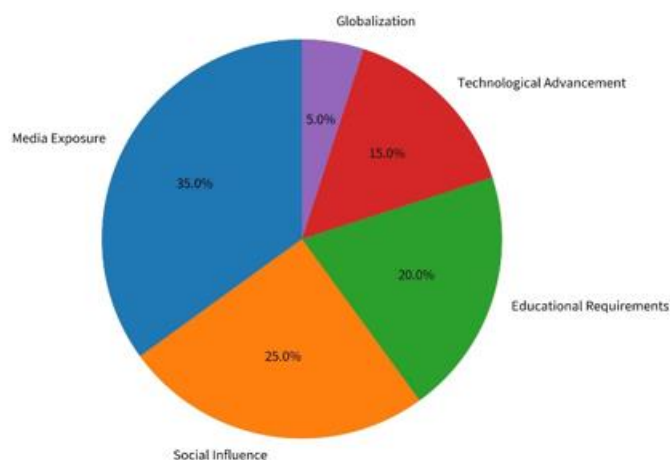


Figure 2. Factors influencing the use of foreign languages among young people.

Figure 2 illustrates the main sociolinguistic reasons that encourage young people to adopt foreign languages. It emphasizes that exposure to media plays the most crucial role, accounting for 35.0%. The second most significant factor is social influence, contributing 25.0%, which shows that interactions with peers and social conformity strongly support the use of foreign words in daily communication. Educational demands represent 20.0%, indicating exposure to international literature and terminology in academia, while technological progress (15.0%) and increased globalization (5.0%) form the rest of the foundation. These relative aspects suggest that incorporating foreign languages is predominantly influenced by daily cultural involvement and interactive media rather than solely formal or large-scale economic factors.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that foreign languages, in particular English, are an integral part of the everyday communication of young Albanian speakers. The high prevalence of English words in informal conversations is indicative of larger processes of globalization, technological advances, and more active participation in international online communities. The findings are in line with previous research on multilingual practices where young people actively mix language resources so that they can signal identity, social relations, and digital skills [2, 4, 6, 7]. The high prevalence of English loanwords in the discourse of technology and social media is mainly due to the global nature of digital platforms. Platforms like *Instagram*, *TikTok*, *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and *WhatsApp* are basically English-speaking; they constantly bring exposure to English vocabulary.

Thus, words such as "post," "story," "follow," "online," and "streaming" have gradually entered the daily vocabulary of many Albanian speakers.

The study also reveals that the choice of language is dependent on the communication context. In general, respondents preferred English words when speaking to friends but preferred Albanian in formal academic or professional contexts. This means that young people are aware of the language and can adapt their speech according to social situations. This phenomenon of linguistic flexibility is one of the elements of proficiency in more than one language.

Nevertheless, these positive results also raise questions about language preservation. The increasing replacement of the vocabulary of Albanian with English words may lead to a decrease in the use of indigenous terms, especially among the younger generation. Foreign words have contributed to the development of the Albanian language in the past, but an excessive presence of foreign vocabulary can affect linguistic identity and cultural heritage if a balanced approach to language education is not adopted. Educational institutions are the primary environment for developing multilingual competence and enhancing proficiency in the mother tongue. Educational institutions serve as the primary environment for developing multilingual competence and enhancing proficiency in the mother tongue. Additionally, students' proficiency in their mother tongue is also enhanced. Language education should not be an obstacle for the acquisition of foreign languages but an opportunity for students to define the context of foreign words, leading to the correct and diverse use of the Albanian language. This approach opens possibilities for global interaction and the preservation of the national language.

To summarize, the findings suggest that the impact of foreign languages should not be considered a mere threat to linguistic identity but rather a consequence of globalization and a solution to be sought in the search for a sustainable balance between international communication and the safeguarding of national linguistic heritage.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to explore the impact of foreign languages on the daily communication of young Albanian speakers, with a particular focus on the increasing use of English words in their informal conversations. The results reveal that globalization, electronic devices, social networks, and internationalized education have had a role in the increasing use of the English lexicon in everyday conversations. It was found that social media is the main factor contributing to the borrowing of words from English, while academic contexts, entertainment sources, and peer groups are supporting factors. Young people consider English expressions to be functional, modern, and globally understandable, which is why they use them extensively, even

when there are no Albanian equivalents. Young people extensively use English expressions, even when there are no Albanian equivalents.

The use of foreign words is very useful for international communication and shows knowledge of more languages, but overborrowing can be a cause for the deterioration of native word usage over time. It is important to find a balance between the usage of several languages and the protection of the Albanian language, which is an important educational and cultural goal. Future research could improve this study by applying quantitative methods with larger groups of participants from different areas of the Albanian-speaking region. Comparative research with different age groups and educational environments would also provide a more complete understanding of current language transformations and multilingual interaction.

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APPENDICES

Examples of Mixed Albanian-English Expressions Frequently Observed in Everyday Communication Among Albanian-Speaking Youth

E uploadova foton dje në **Facebook**.

A mund ta bëjsh **follow** në Instagram këtë faqen?

Kemi një **meeting** nesër në Parlamentin Studentor.

Ky trend i ikjes së të rinjve po bëhet shumë **popular**.

Deadline-i i projektit në dialektologji është javën tjetër.

These instances demonstrate the regular incorporation of English words into Albanian day-to-day conversations, particularly in areas associated with social media, technology, learning, and contemporary living. The utilization of mixed phrases showcases the impact of globalization and digital communication on current youth language usage.

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