Class Identity Signaling through the Strategic Rebranding of Traditional Egyptian Food-Related Terms on Digital Platforms

DOI: https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes.v25i1.597

Waheed M. A. Altohami
Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia
Mansoura University, Egypt
Abdulfattah Omar
Port Said University, Egypt
The Australian National University, Australia

Received: 17.11.2023 Accepted: 24.7.2024 Published Online: 2.8.2024

Abstract: This study investigates the way re-branding traditional Egyptian food-related terms is strategically used by an emerging socio-economic class to assert their class identity in digital milieus. Specifically, it analyzes the strategies employed for the Englishization and hybridization of culinary culture and examines the underlying socio-cultural motivations and dynamics driving such an innovative linguistic practice. Drawing on insights from sociolinguistics and sociology, we analyzed two data sets collected by means of an online survey and semi-structured interviews. Findings revealed that there is an emerging exclusive socio-economic class that manifests itself through specific lexical preferences based on diverse types of lexical borrowings. Additionally, the Englishization of traditional Egyptian food-related terms partially drove the emerging class's rejection of social equality and solidarity with collective socio-cultural Egyptian identity. Such a class division, primarily initiated on digital platforms, was found to be motivated by complex factors at play, including age, gender, educational level, lifestyle, technology usage, etc. The findings of this study have implications for understanding the intersection of language, class identity, and technology in contemporary Egyptian society.

Keywords*:* class identity, culinary culture, Egyptian Arabic, Englishization, lexical borrowing, rebranding

1. Introduction

The 21st century has witnessed an unprecedented development in digital platforms that transcended geographical boundaries and reshaped the dynamics of communication and cultural expression. Among these platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok stand out as prominent examples that have provided fertile ground for linguistic innovations (Mugglestone 2012). Interactions over such digital platforms confirm the linguistic and social differences between online and offline communities, especially with the growing impact of English as a lingua franca in non-English-speaking countries. On digital platforms, new linguistic communities had emerged, and the linguistic innovations and

practices they manipulated had always raised notable scholarly attention (Albirini 2016). Such *new* linguistic communities have been formed and developed primarily through online platforms and digital communication tools, and adopted innovative linguistic practices with new cultural repercussions. These linguistic innovations were often motivated by diverse socio-economic, socio-cultural, and, more recently, technologically-mediated factors (Altohami 2020). Additionally, they helped with the emergence of social media network users as postdigital humans who are intimately intertwined with technology (Savin-Baden 2021).

In Egypt, a country with a rich history and diverse cultural influences, linguistic practices have often been reflective of changing societal dynamics. With the widespread use of digital platforms, a new dimension is added to the Egyptian social structure – one where language evolution intersects with digital spaces and new modes of computer-mediated communication (Bassiouney 2014). Due to interactions over global trends, cultural influences, linguistic innovations, class identity shifts, and societal changes are always anticipated (Heid 2017). Indeed, class identity plays a significant role in shaping social dynamics and opportunities for individuals in Egypt, including the wealthy elite, the middle class, and the impoverished working class, with each class having its own unique set of privileges, opportunities, and challenges (Bassiouney 2014). Such a class division is claimed to influence various aspects of the Egyptian society, thereby shaping the way individuals perceive themselves and others within society (Verme et al. 2014). Understanding the complexities of class identity in Egypt is crucial for comprehending the country's social fabric and the challenges faced by different segments of society.

In the Egyptian context, we assume that the linguistic innovations in digital spaces are expressive of a newly created socio-economic class with a distinct identity residing between the middle class and the high class. This newly constructed class is subsumed to form a new speech community, which evolved due to diverse factors such as globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements. In this regard, Mugglestone (2012) proposes that a speech community is more than just a group of people who speak the same language. Rather, it involves shared linguistic patterns, vocabularies, accents, and even non-verbal communication cues. One of the most recent linguistic innovations and practices of this emerging speech community that motivated the present study is rebranding Egyptian traditional food-related terms that are a part of the Egyptian culinary culture. That is, a group of Egyptians substituted the common Egyptian Arabic names with lexical borrowings from English, thereby extending the lexicon and hybridizing Egyptian Arabic. We hypothesize that this process of Englishization is manipulated for the production of self-generated content on digital platforms, presumably for distancing themselves from other lower classes and for imposing their linguistic identity.

Originated in the area of marketing, the strategy of rebranding redirects an already established brand to a new audience by changing its name, design, or logo in cases of newly merged companies, offering new products, and changing the

features of a current brand (Lee and Davies 2021). However, in the context of the present study, the strategy of rebranding is not implemented by marketers but by Egyptian high- or upper-middle-class consumers of traditional food-related terms. The intriguing coinage of terms such as '*green burger*' for '*falafel*' and '*green soup*' for '*mulukhiya'* exemplifies the seamless amalgamation of English loanwords into the local culinary lexicon of Egyptian Arabic (Nasser 2019). This linguistic practice, having started in the virtual sphere, rapidly extended its reach to the physical realm.

For most Egyptians, the newly coined food-related terms are foreign, and they are used by a small-scale version of society that stands apart from the collective identity of most Egyptians due to having exclusive shared norms, lifestyle choices, and values. Furthermore, the community members carve out their distinct class identity by residing in particular regions of Egypt, where they established exclusive compounds with high-standard buildings, comprising influential business figures and state officials. These endeavors to construct place identity go in tandem with exclusive language practices for building a new code that helps them to identify with a particular class (Pérez-Ahumada 2014). For common Egyptians, the only access to the life of this community is through different digital platforms where they share some aspects of their lives, asserting their class membership.

Despite the significant social implications of the way digital platforms mediate class identity signals towards constructing a new social stratum, or at least a new speech community, scant studies have addressed it, particularly in the Egyptian context (*e.g.,* Warschauer, Said and Zohry 2006; Bassiouney 2014; Elhini and Moursi 2015; Nasser 2019; Smaldino 2022). In light of this argument, the present study draws on sociolinguistic and sociological insights to answer three main questions:

1. What are the lexical borrowing strategies employed by the emerging speech community in Egypt while rebranding Egyptian traditional food-related terms on digital platforms?
2. How does rebranding Egyptian traditional food-related terms reflect and contribute to the construction of a distinct socio-economic class identity?
3. What are the underlying socio-economic and linguistic motivations and dynamics that drive the evolution of such a new speech community in the Egyptian society and the emergence of Egyptians as post-digital humans?

Answers to these three questions aims at: (a) identifying the lexical borrowing strategies that the members of the emerging speech community implemented to form these Englishized food-related terms; (b) offering empirical evidence from digital platforms on how rebranding Egyptian traditional food-related terms helped with highlighting a class division in the Egyptian society and asserting the construction of a distinct class identity; and (c) explicating the socio-economic and cultural motivations underpinning the embrace of this innovative

linguistic practice and the emergence of Egyptians as post-digital humans who acknowledge no barriers between the physical and digital realms.

The significance of the present study is threefold. Firstly, the study offers empirical linguistic evidence on the way digitally-mediated discourse helps to uncover strategic moves towards claiming a distinct class identity. That is, it shows how a country's culinary culture could be changed directly or indirectly due to acculturation and urbanization (cf. Evans, Stubager and Langsæther 2022). Secondly, it draws attention to the idea that the evolution of new speech communities in homogeneous societies, like the Egyptian society, should be taken seriously as it might mark a class divide that does not permit social mobility, and it is always anticipated since food culture is among the culture-specific values that, if disrespected, might stir social unrest (Reddy and Van Dam 2020). Thirdly and finally, the study fosters the dynamic interplay among language, class identity, socio-economic dynamics, and technology, which helped with the emergence of post-digital humans.

The reminder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the current study and reviews related literature to highlight the research gap. Section 3 explains the research methodology in terms of data collection techniques, final data set, and the procedure of analysis. Section 4 analyzes the data sets and discusses the findings in relation to previous research findings. Section 5 summarizes key findings and offers relevant topics for further research.

2. Literature review

This section discusses the concept of class identity and the factors that might drive class division. Also, it shows how the rebranding strategy is conducted through lexical borrowings. Finally, it shows how speech communities digitally emerge given their linguistic innovations.

2.1 Class identity and class division

Linguistic choices play a pivotal role in shaping how individuals present their identity within various social groups. Dialects, accents, and jargons are potent markers that reflect individuals' cultural affiliations and actively signal their place identity, ethnicity, or subculture. Any overt modification to the way language is used with the purpose of aligning with a specific group is known as '*identity signaling*'. Smaldino (2022) defines identity signals as the components of communication transmissions, displays, or other forms of behavior that inform interlocutors that the signaler is a member of a distinguishable group with a particular class identity.

Class identity is a complex, yet coherent, construct that mingles other subsets of identities, including social, linguistic, and cultural identities. A group's social class is defined by their socio-economic status, which is influenced by their social standing, income level, educational level, age, gender, residential area, and

occupation. These factors construct the scales used for social stratification (Wardhaugh and Fuller 2021). The historical social stratification mechanism divides any society into three major social classes with a status-based hierarchy (upper, intermediate, and low), each with a distinct class identity and presumably a distinct speech style. Such distinctness is instantiated during interactions among people belonging to heterogenous social classes. Due to this class hierarchy, individuals tend to mobilize themselves, *i.e.*, to move up the class ladder.

Bottero (2004) and Stubager and Harrits (2022) refashioned class theory by casting light on the multidimensionality of class rather than an individualized hierarchy. Bottero (2004) stressed the culturalist component (*i.e.*, cultural identity) of class analysis, which draws on settings of social life and economic and cultural practices. In this way, class cultures are envisaged as "modes of differentiation rather than as types of collectivity" (Savage 2000:102). Stubager and Harrits (2022) affirm that class identity in capitalist societies, such as Egypt, is a multidimensional complex that relies on diverse resources and dimensions through which individuals form their own conceptions. They offered a holistic framework for the subjective dimensions that can be used for class analysis. The subjective dimensions of class analysis can be traced in the Marxist, Weberian, Bordieuan, and Durkheimian traditions, including class identity, class consciousness, class interests, class origin, class habitus, class lifestyle, and class relations. Sharing all these dimensions drives people to claim the same class identity.

2.2 Re-branding, Englishization and cultural identity

Linguistic dynamicity is attributed to the fact that a living language is intertwined with social, cultural, and cognitive aspects of human life (McCormack and Wurm 2011). As language users update their linguistic resources due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors, novel aspects are added to the structure of their social and cultural identities. During their interactions, people tend to signal such identities, which are formed as a result of having shared norms, belief systems, rituals, world views, attitudes, discourse patterns, and social dynamics (Ahearn 2021). Much to our concern, social identity signals can include both overt and subtle indicators such as clothing, language, education, occupation, and lifestyle choices. For example, an individual from a higher social class may signal his/her class identity through selecting expensive clothing, speaking in a refined English accent, attending prestigious universities, and working in classy professions. In featuring any of these identity signals, language users are keen on identifying themselves as members of a particular speech community where they feel socially important (Kramsch 1998).

In the context of the present study, we propose that rebranding is strategically employed as a class identity signal. Literally, rebranding refers to the process of altering a company's name, logo, and overall identity to better align with its current goals, target audience, or market trends and to stay relevant and competitive (Lee and Davies 2021). Towards rebranding, the target research community were found to implement Englishization strategies excessively. Though the term *Englishization* operates at different linguistic levels, from phonetics to discourse

(Kachru 2005), we use it here to refer to the process of substituting Egyptian Arabic lexical items naming traditional foods with English ones. Historically, the impact of English on other languages has always been explained with reference to two main hypotheses: the dominance hypothesis and the deficit hypothesis (Kachru 2005). The dominance hypothesis entails that when two cultures come into contact, the more powerful culture dominates the other, and therefore the subordinate culture borrows from the dominant one. Complementarily, the deficit hypothesis hold that lexical borrowing occurs to fill in linguistic gaps in any of the two languages in contact, the donor and the recipient. That is, such borrowings are sociolinguistically motivated, and it is mostly employed by educated people.

Relatedly, Durkin (2011) differentiates between two types of lexical borrowing: cultural borrowing and core borrowing. Cultural borrowing occurs due to lexical gaps in the recipient language, while core borrowing occurs due to the perspective that the donor language is more prestigious. More relevant to our present inquiry, lexical borrowing occurs through diverse processes where English is the donor language and Arabic is the recipient language (*cf.* Haspelmath 2009), including (1) *loan words*, where English lexical items are imported (with or without adaptation), compounded, or calqued (literally translated from the donor language), and then nativized in phonology; (2) *loan shifts*, either through metaphorical extension or lexical-bound translation; (3) *hybridization*, where two lexical items from two languages are fused; and (4) *parallel lexical sets*, where a set of lexical items having a similar sense replaces another. Such lexical borrowings are sometimes perceived as indictors of the emergence of new speech communities (Mugglestone 2012).

2.3 Linguistic innovations on digital speech communities

Morgan (2014) defines a speech community as a group of people whose speech shares similar linguistic features, topics, interpretative frames, and interaction styles. However, Salzmann (2007) argues that other aspects should be considered, including how words are said, the grammar used, the words chosen, and how sentences are linked. The rationale is that language is a powerful marker of individual self-perception and group belonging, as it offers insights into the intricate social dynamics at play within a particular group (McCormack and Wurm 2011). Speech communities contribute to the formation of cultural identities, primarily instantiated through language variations, by creating a sense of class belonging and distinctiveness. For instance, though most of the English-speaking world pronounces /h/ initially, most working-class members drop it (*cf.* Trudgill 2000).

Equally important, one distinctive linguistic feature shared by a speech community is its lexical choices that dissociate it from others. In this regard, it has been largely noted that due to globalization, acculturation, and urbanization, such lexical choices tend to include lexical borrowings (Haspelmath, 2009). Drawing on diverse linguistic perspectives, different studies examined lexical borrowings in Egyptian Arabic as Egyptians, especially monolinguals, tend to integrate loanwords in their daily interactions often without awareness of their source (Hafez 1996).

Due to the dominance of English in digital spaces, Egyptians were reported to Romanize Egyptian Arabic, but this linguistic practice did not signify any embrace of Western culture or dissociation from Egyptian identity (Warschauer et al. 2006). Nasser (2019) reported that Egyptian youth employ three main lexical strategies of Englishization to mark their socio-cultural identity, including loanwords (*e.g.*, the use of '*lentil soup'* instead of *'ʃurbit ʕads'*), compounding (*e.g.*, the use of '*golden berries'* instead of '*ħarankʃ*', and metaphor (*e.g.*, the use of '*green soup'* instead of '*muluhxxijja'*).

Early studies in the mid-20th century often revolved around phonological changes, examining shifts in vowel sounds, consonant pronunciation, and syllable structures (*e.g.*, Woidich and Heinen-Nasr 2004). These studies laid the foundation for subsequent research that expanded into syntactic, morphological, and lexical transformations in Egyptian Arabic (Soltan 2020). Findings from related sociolinguistic studies offered interesting insights into the dynamic nature of language evolution and transformation in the Egyptian context (Elgibali 2017). Such a dynamicity is fueled by the unique Egyptian sociocultural landscape due to urbanization and migrations, historical and political influences, technological advancements, and dialectical diversity, which contributed to a rich field of research deciphering the intricate shifts occurring within the Egyptian Arabic dialects (Bassiouney 2014).

Other sociolinguistic studies covered issues related to diglossia, code-switching, multilingualism, language modernization, and language choice and change. Given Egypt's historical significance as a cultural and trade hub, its Arabic dialects have been influenced by various languages, especially English. As a result, Egyptian Arabic became markedly hybridized (Al-Jarf 2023). Additionally, the advent of digital communication and the widespread use of social media platforms and digital tools among Egyptians prompted studies on linguistic innovations and shifts in written language use. Novel lexical creations, abbreviations, neologisms, and loan words are recurrent instances of such digitally-mediated linguistic innovations (Albirini 2016). In these digital milieus, individuals may incorporate entirely new linguistic practices and forms of communication, thereby creating their unique linguistic identity, social class, and cultural background. As such, online communities serve as valuable linguistic laboratories for researchers to investigate the dynamic relationship between language and technology in the digital age.

The increasing integration of digital tools into our daily lives led to the emergence of the concept of 'post-digitalism' (Savin-Baden 2021). That is, the physical and digital realms became inseparable, as technology shaped the way we interact, communicate, and experience the world around us. Cramer (2015) argues that postdigitalism challenges the notion of a clear distinction between the digital and the analog, highlighting instead the hybridity and interconnectedness of digital and physical worlds. An interesting example is that though the Englishization-based rebranding of food-related terms coined and used by Egyptians started on digital platforms, now many restaurants and hypermarkets offer their menus in English using such terms (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. A menu showing the use of Englishized Egyptian traditional food-related terms

Based on this extensive literature review on the intersection of linguistic innovative practices on digital platforms, class identity, culinary culture, and the emergence of individuals as post-digital beings, we can conclude that the present study is the first one that builds on rebranding traditional food by Englishizing their names as a class identity signal. It is geared towards exploring the motivations that drove a group of Egyptians to implement different lexical borrowing strategies to rename traditional foods as a strategic move towards fostering their socio-economic class. Also, it seeks to investigate how members of this hypothetical speech community perceive such innovative linguistic practices.

3. Methodology

Given the objectives of the present study, the methodological approach follows a triangulated procedure that manifests methodological triangulation, data triangulation, and theoretical triangulation (Patton 1999). At the methodological level, the study is based on quantitative-qualitative methods for the analysis of two data sets. The first data set includes instances of Englishized food-related terms observed on diverse digital platforms, and the second data set is self-reported data extracted by means of two instruments: an online survey and semi-structured interviews with a group of Egyptians who were claimed to form a novel online speech community in Egypt. The novelty of this online speech community is attributed to the fact that their use of these peculiar food-related terms under investigation raised hectic debates between them and other members of the

Egyptian society about their impact on their linguistic and cultural identities. These debates led to the need for a comprehensive analysis of both data sets to understand the impact and implications of these Englishized food-related terms in the Egyptian context. That is, the group of respondents has been selected based on their active engagement in using and discussing Englishized food-related terms online, especially in microblogs (*e.g.*, X platform) and social media networking websites (*e.g.*, Facebook, Snapchat, etc.). This random sampling technique would help to have respondents of different ages, educational backgrounds, social class, etc.

Then, a content analysis of the participants' answers is provided after being validated by two professors in linguistics with enough experience in linguistics and Egyptian culture (expert validation). This synergy offers comprehensive answers to the study questions since we seek the interpretation of datasets collected from different sources (observed data and self-reported data) (cf. Alele and Malau-Aduli 2023). The purpose of collecting these two data sets is to examine the extent to which Englishized terms are being used and discussed. By analyzing both observed instances and self-reported data, researchers would gain a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic practices and cultural implications surrounding the adoption of these terms in this particular context.

The online survey includes 10 questions covering the respondents' age, gender, class consciousness, educational level, (parental) occupation, household monthly income, residence, housing type, mostly used digital platforms, and the language mostly used on these digital platforms. This group of questions aims to gather comprehensive demographic information about the respondents. Also, they would help identify any potential correlations between these demographic factors and language usage patterns. Complementarily, the semi-structured interviews aim at gaining deeper insights into the motivations for rebranding Egyptian traditional foods, a practice perceived as a class identity signal. The content analysis draws on insights from sociolinguistics (Kachru 2005; Savin-Baden 2021) and sociology (Bottero 2004; Stubager and Harrits 2022). The underlying rationale driving such a mixed-methods approach lies in the recognition that the utilization of digital platforms as a source for drawing insights about emerging linguistic communities offers useful avenues to explore the details of their distinct linguistic patterns and preferences (cf. Sun, Wang and Feng 2021).

Procedurally, the online survey was administered to 1200 respondents in the summer of 2022 and replicated in the summer of 2023, viz., it was sent to the same respondents. As previously mentioned, these respondents have been selected based on their active engagement in using and discussing Englishized food-related terms online as well as negotiating their influence on the Egyptian linguistic and cultural identity. Both researchers, being already members of diverse online platforms, had the opportunity to observe respondents' innovative linguistic practice. Respondents with missing information were excluded. Though we initially asked the participants to provide their sociodemographic data (*e.g.*, age, sex, social class, *etc.*) in the first part of the survey, the survey included questions requesting sociodemographic data

to doublecheck their accuracy and to manage subjectivity in the qualitative section of analysis (cf. Drapeau 2015).

The analysis of the data sets follows a four-step procedure: (1) outlining participants' background information obtained from the online survey, over a two/five Likert scale; (2) collecting a representative sample of the Englishized food-related terms rebranding traditional Egyptian foods on digital platforms and describing the types of lexical borrowings (Englishization strategies) employed in each term; (3) discussing how rebranding traditional Egyptian food-related terms is strategically employed by participants as a class identity signal; and (4) exploring the underlying motivations and socio-economic dynamics that drove the formation of a distinct class identity. In each step, the study is designed to adhere to ethical considerations regarding privacy, consent, and the use of publicly available online content.

4. Data analysis: Findings and discussion

4.1 The online survey and the semi-structured interviews

The online survey was administered to 1200 male and female participants who use digital platforms on a daily basis. To make sure that all participants were aware of the operational definition of rebranding Egyptian traditional food-related term as used in the context of this study, we offered a short introduction on the term before requesting answers to the survey questions. A few respondents contacted the researchers via email seeking much clarification. We received answers from 1020 respondents, as 48 surveys were excluded due to missing information. In what follows, responses to the survey's questions are displayed, explained, and discussed. Figure (2) below summarizes the responses obtained with reference to respondents' age range.

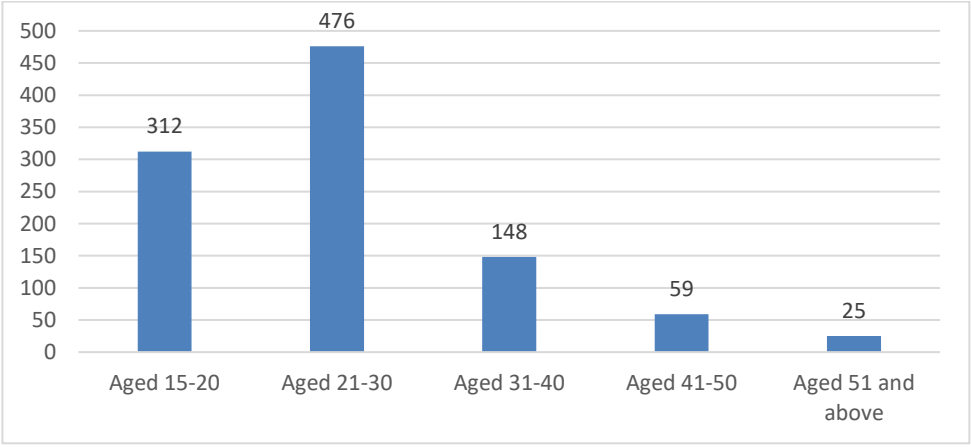


Figure 2. The distribution of respondents' age range

Most of the respondents were youth (around 77%), aged 15-30, and they reported that they always use many of the Englishized food-related terms. All respondents agreed that digital platforms offer a unique environment for linguistic innovation, as individuals of all ages engage in various forms of online communication. Younger respondents Englishized such food-related terms, and older respondents followed them. This affirms the findings of previous studies that showed that younger generations are known for their ability to effortlessly navigate these platforms and create new linguistic norms (Haddock, Ward and O'Dea 2022). Likewise, youth were reported as "linguistic movers and shakers… and a prime source of information about language change and the function of language in social practices" (Eckert 1997:52).

Figure (3) shows the distribution of the respondents' gender and their preference to use such terms in their online interactions. Responses showed that rebranding traditional food-related terms by Englishizing their names is implemented across various social media platforms, suggesting a general preference for English among female respondents (around 61%). Likewise, the interviews showed that females tend to engage more actively on digital platforms, utilizing English as their primary means of communication. This finding agrees partially with Majumdar, Tewatia, Jamkhedkar and Bhatia (2022), who found that men and women tend to interact differently on social media, with men often dominating discussions and women being more conscious of their posts.

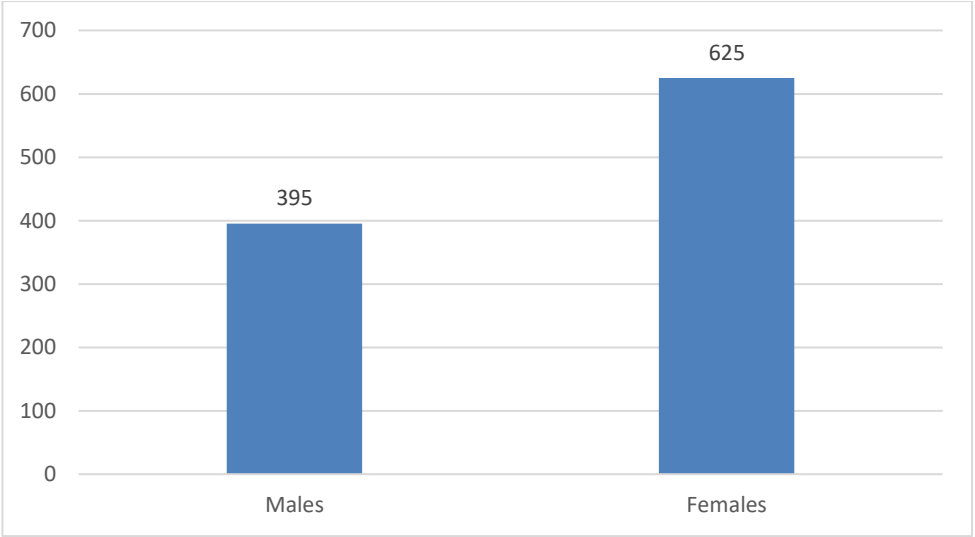


Figure 3. The distribution of respondents' gender

Additionally, the interviews revealed that females not only consume such a linguistic innovative practice but also actively contribute to extending the list of these food-related terms in their online discussions and conversations. For example, in the interviews, some female respondents mentioned that sometimes they refer to

common sandwiches using Englishized terms such as '*panini'*, referring to sandwiches made with Italian bread and toasted. This borrowing of English words not only reflects the influence of globalization on language usage patterns but also highlights their desire to connect with Western culture. Also, females aim to engage with a wider like-minded audience who share similar interests, thereby gaining more visibility for their posts.

Regarding the impact of class consciousness on class identity perception, the respondents were asked to place themselves in one of five social classes: lower class, middle lower class, middle class, upper middle class, or upper class. Figure (4) displays the respondents' self-perceived social classes.

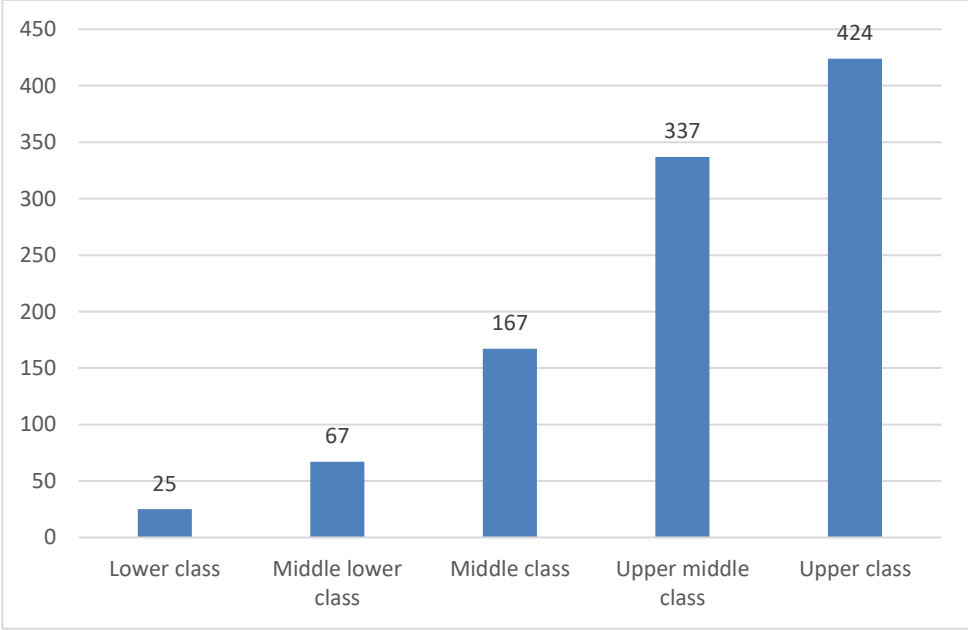


Figure 4. The distribution of respondents' self-perceived social classes

Responses show that most of the respondents belong either to the upper class (around 42%) or to the upper middle class (around 33%). In the interviews, they mentioned that the number of people who use the Englishized versions of food-related terms is not large, and this gives them the sense that they are exclusive. This finding agrees with Savage's conclusion that "in all societies… people's subjective class identification is with the middle-classes or just below, with very few people identifying with the top or bottom classes" (Savage 2000:166). Identifying with a particular class is regarded as a "social filter and a key mechanism individuals utilize in placing themselves and others" (Reay 1997:226). This holds true since individuals evaluate their class position based on the distribution of wealth, power, jobs, and levels of education among others in their immediate vicinity (Evans et al. 2022).

Since the education level is perceived as highly influential in shaping individuals' class identity, the respondents were asked to specify their educational background: uneducated, short further education (*i.e.*, individuals might drop out schools for any reasons), vocational education, bachelor degree, or post-graduate degree (see Figure 5).

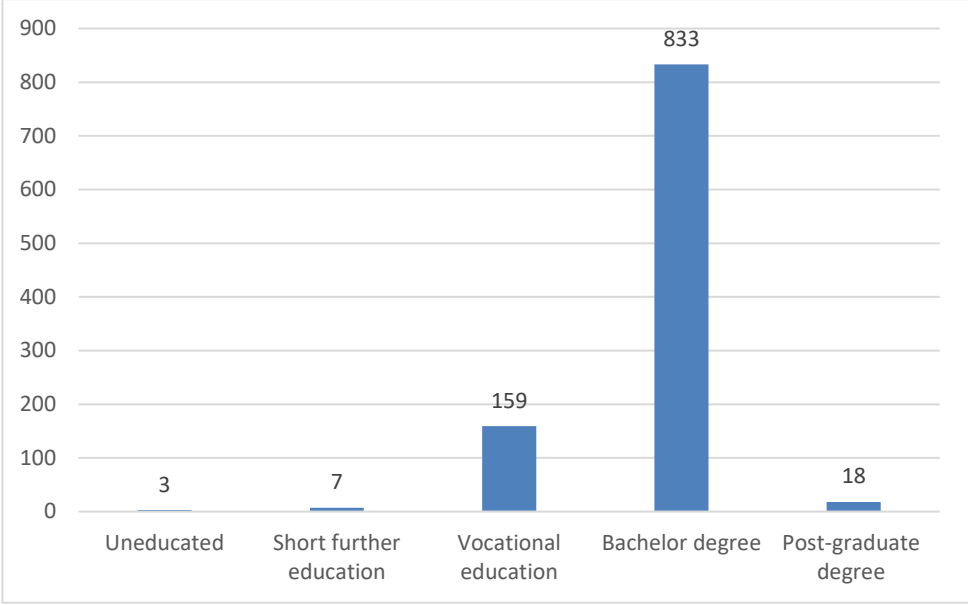


Figure 5. The distribution of respondents' educational level

Most of the respondents obtained a bachelor's degree. As members of either the upper middle class or the upper class, they joined private schools and universities where English was the basic medium of teaching and interaction and Arabic courses were not mandatory. By prioritizing English language education, these schools and universities grant their students an advantage in accessing higher education opportunities abroad or securing high-paying jobs in multinational companies. Conversely, public schools and universities with limited resources struggle to provide quality English language instruction, limiting the opportunities for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to compete on an equal footing. Furthermore, the respondents perceived English as more prestigious, elastic, and flexible. They reported that Englishizing Egyptian traditional food-related terms is natural since all digital platforms use English as their default language. Such Englishization is driven by the belief that English proficiency is a symbol of higher social status, a perspective that perpetuates the divide among different class identities (cf. Elhini and Moursi 2015).

Another influential factor that helped with the establishment of social identity is occupation. As shown in Figure (6), the respondents were asked to specify their

(or their parents') occupation over a five-point scale: higher professionals, lower professionals, self-employed, skilled manual labor, and unskilled manual labor.

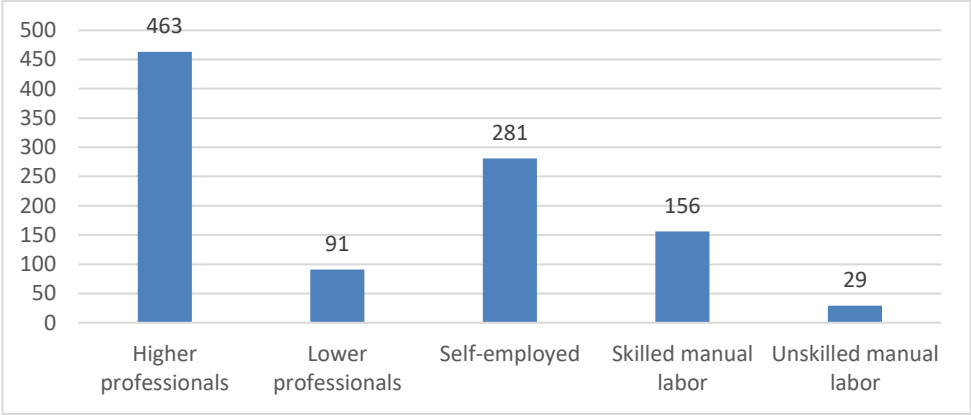


Figure 6. The distribution of the respondent's (parental) occupations

Around 45 percent of the respondents reported that they (or their parents) are higher professionals. In the interviews, the respondents stressed that their (or their parents') occupations determine their level of income, access to opportunities for upward mobility, and influence the way they are perceived, further solidifying their class identity. High-paying occupations (such as doctors, businessmen, and bankers) are often associated with a higher social class, as they provide individuals with the means to afford luxurious lifestyles and prestigious neighborhoods. The financial security and status that come with these occupations can often be seen as a symbol of success and achievement, elevating individuals to a higher social standing.

The higher the occupation, the higher the household income. Therefore, as Figure (7) shows, most of the respondents mentioned that their household monthly income (*e.g.*, salaries, investments, businesses, *etc.*) is either above 15.000 LE and below 20.000 (around 650 USD), or above 20.000 LE.

The monthly household income of most respondents is above 15.000 LE which is above the average monthly income of most Egyptians. They confirmed that household income affects different social classes as it helps individuals to access opportunities for education, healthcare, and social mobility. Additionally, the perception of one's own household income in relation to others in society plays a significant role in shaping class identity. That is, if an individual perceives his household income to be significantly lower than that of others, he may experience feelings of inferiority and a reinforced sense of belonging to a lower social class. In this regard, Reich (2010) stressed that the more affluent class is increasingly becoming less responsible for the less privileged in their own country and more affiliated with elites throughout the globe. These economic differences are reflected

in the class's lifestyle choices, marked by "housing, dress, manner of speech, and occupation" (Giddens 2006: 303).

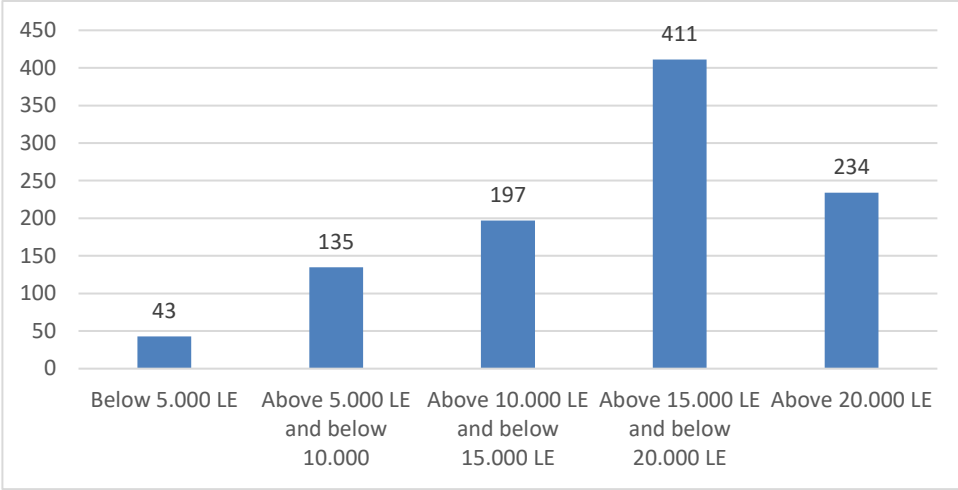


Figure 7. The distribution of the respondent's household monthly salary

Two other interrelated factors that influence the perception of class identity are residence and housing type. Residence is not only a physical location but also plays a significant role in shaping one's social standing and opportunities. Figure (8) shows the distribution of respondents' responses regarding their residence.

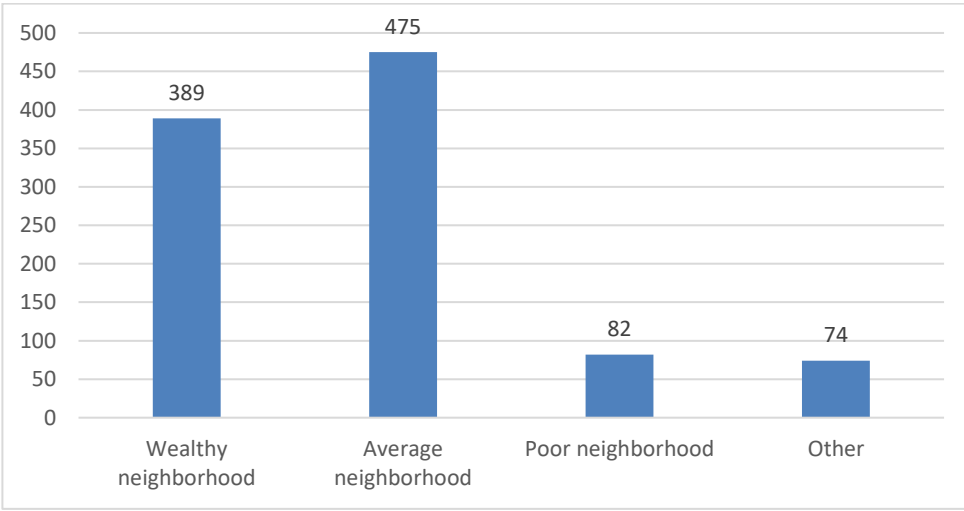


Figure 8. The distribution of the respondent's residences

All respondents agreed that housing choices can either challenge or reinforce existing class divisions. As shown in Figure (8), most of them (around 85%) either live in wealthy or average neighborhoods in edge cities and regions. Moreover,

some respondents argued that all Egyptians can have better residences in newly established cities. That is, as urban areas undergo gentrification, the changes in housing availability and affordability can often lead to shifts in class demographics and cultural landscapes. This finding can provide insights into the impact of housing policies and urban development on class division and social mobility (cf. Elhini and Moursi 2015).

Gentrification, often associated with the influx of wealthier residents and businesses into lower-income neighborhoods, can have profound effects on local culture. As new developments and renovations take place, the demographic makeup of the community may shift, leading to changes in social dynamics. Additionally, the rising cost of living and commercial rent can displace long-time residents and small businesses that have been integral to the cultural fabric of the neighborhood. This displacement can result in the loss of unique cultural aspects, such as local cuisines. This shift can erode the authenticity and diversity of the local culinary scene, leading to a homogenization of food options and diminishing the cultural significance attached to traditional dishes.

The demarcation line between residence and house type is of blurred, as both contribute equally to the establishment of class identity. Figure (9) displays the respondents' different housing types.

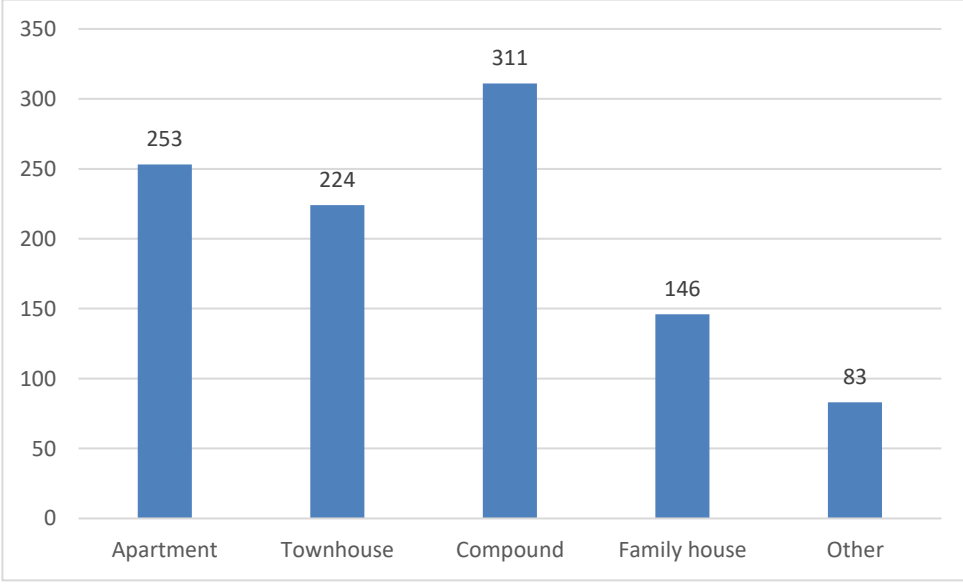


Figure 9. The distribution of the respondent's housing type

Figure (9) shows no major differences among the respondents' housing types. However, all of them affirmed that housing type is associated with their income and social status. For instance, a person with a high income and social status may choose to live in a prestigious neighborhood. Contrarily, a person with a lower income may

be limited to living in public housing. Additionally, the type of housing a person has access to can determine the resources and opportunities available to them (*e.g.*, better schools, and social networks), further shaping their class identity.

In their daily digitally-mediated interactions, the respondents affirmed that they mostly use Twitter (around 48%) and Facebook (around 25%). Figure (10) shows the distribution of the number of users on common digital platforms.

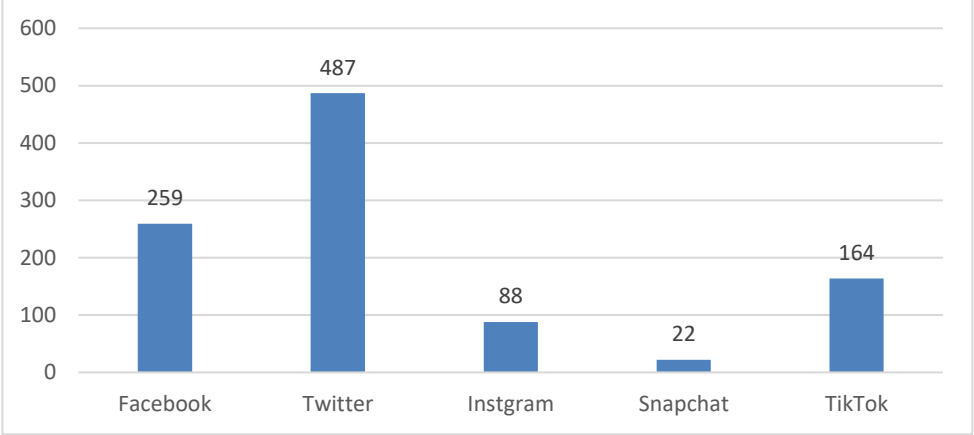


Figure 10. The distribution of the number of users of mostly common digital platforms

Yates and Lockley (2018) argued that different social, cultural, and economic facets of social class status and modern social systems of differentiation coincide with different kinds of digital media use. In using Twitter, respondents reported that they generally tend to have a larger number of followers and engage in more frequent interactions with other high-class or upper-middle-class individuals. This suggests that Twitter may serve as a platform for reinforcing and solidifying existing social hierarchies. Respondents often retweeted and interacted with popular figures in politics and entertainment, thus reinforcing their status. This finding completely concurs with Phua, Jin and Kim (2017) who confirmed that Twitter users had the highest bridging social capital.

Against our expectations, the respondents' responses showed that the language they usually use in their online interactions is Arabic. Figure (11) shows the distribution of the languages mostly used by the respondents.

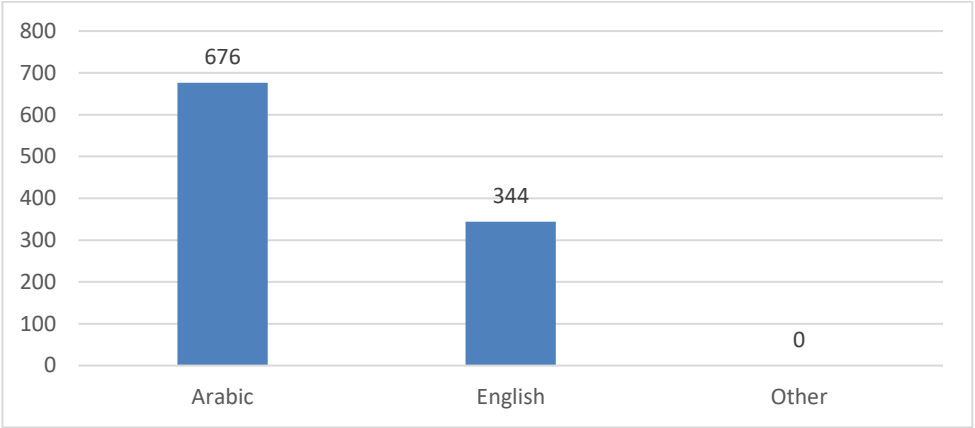


Figure 11. The distribution of the languages mostly used in digital platforms

Most respondents affirmed that they use Arabic to post and tweet their messages to other friends and followers outside their own community to gain more likes and followers. Yet a small group sees the use of English as a way to create a sense of exclusivity and differentiate themselves from the larger Arabic-speaking community. Furthermore, they believe that the simplified grammar and flexible word order of the English language, compared to Arabic (cf. Mudhsh 2021), make it well-suited for digital communication, allowing for concise and efficient messaging in digital spaces. However, the majority of respondents prioritize the act of connecting with others and gaining popularity, leading them to use Arabic in their online interactions.

4.2 Lexical borrowings and food-related terms

The online survey and the interviews showed that the target research community tend to use myriad unconventional and foreign expressions in their daily interactions. More specifically, the respondents reported 22 English terms they used to refer to name Egyptian traditional food. These food-related terms could be classified into four categories: (1) dishes, (2) desserts, (3) fruits, and (4) drinks. All the following interpretations showing the motivations behind such names and their denotations are based on the respondents' own experiences and conventions during the interviews. Extra background information on the origin of these food-related terms is added wherever required and found necessary for better understanding.

Table (1) shows eleven lexically borrowed terms expressing some of the common Egyptian traditional dishes. Still, at this stage of analysis it must be stated that some of these food-related terms are popular in other countries (*e.g.*, *fu:l* and *muluxxijja*), but in Egypt, they are eaten by almost all social strata.

Table 1. Instances of the lexically borrowed terms naming Egyptian traditional dishes

No.	Egyptian Arabic term	Transliteration	Englishizationed rebrands	The Englishization process implemented	The word-formation process employed
1	طعمية/فلافل	taʕmijja/fala:fil	green burger	loan word	compounding
2	فول	fu:l	fava beans	loan word	compounding
3	ملوخية	muluxxijja	green soup	loan word	compounding
4	كشري	kuʃari	Egyptian pasta	loan word	compounding
5	ترمس	tirmis	yellow M &M	loan word	compounding
6	رز بالشعرية	ruz bilʃiʕrija	Italian rice	loan word	compounding
7	محشي	maħʃi	rice rolls	loan word	compounding
8	حوواشي	ħawawʃi	meat and bread	loan word	Importation with adaptation
9	شوربة عدس	ʃurbit ʕads	yellow soup	loan word	compounding
10	فسيخ	fisi:x	yucky fish	loan word	compounding
11	مش	miʃ	old cheese	loan word	compounding

Since it is made of fava beans, onion, garlic, and chopped green herbs, '*taʕmijja/fala:fil'* is common for its inside green color. Such a blend is then rolled up and fried. Due to the resemblance of '*taʕmijja/fala:fil'* with burger as both are shaped as a flat round mass, respondents coined the compound '*green burger'*. Such iconic relationship is also manifested in the coinage of *'yellow M & M'* (an international brand of small round pieces of chocolate) instead of '*tirmis'* (lupin), '*rice rolls'* instead of '*maħʃi'* (a mixture of rice and chopped herbs wrapped by cabbage or vine leaves), '*green soup'* instead of '*muluxxijja'* (smashed mallow green leaves cooked and served as a soup), and *'yellow soup'* instead of '*ʃurbit ʕads'* (lentils soup). Since '*pasta'* is typically Italian, the participants used the descriptive label '*Egyptian'* to rebrand '*kuʃari'* (a mixture of rice, lentils, macaroni, and tomato sauce), and therefore they used the compound '*Egyptian pasta'*.

The term *'yucky fish'* is used to rebrand the traditional Egyptian term *'fisi:x'* which denotes a type of salted fish known for its offensive smell, which justifies the use of the modifier '*yucky'*. Likewise, though '*miʃ"* is a type of cheese, the respondents used the descriptive label '*old'* to signify the time spent to produce such a dish. Further to this, rebranding occurs by compounding the ingredients of a dish, as in the case of '*ħawawʃi'* which is imported and adapted as *'meat and bread'*. Finally, '*ruz bilʃiʕrija'* (rice with vermicelli) is rebranded by the compound *'Italian rice'* which is cooked and served similarly. Apparently, all these Englishized food-related terms are loan words, which are mostly compound nouns structured either as adjective + noun (*e.g.,* old cheese) or noun + noun (*e.g.,* rice rolls).

Table (2) displays all the instances of rebranded desserts mentioned by the respondents.

Table 2. Instances of the lexically borrowed terms naming Egyptian traditional desserts

No.	Egyptian Arabic term	Transliteration	Englishizationed rebrands	The Englishization process implemented	The word-formation process employed
1	كنافة	kuna:fa	baby hair	loan word	semantic shift
2	بلح الشام	balaħ alʃa:m	Cute fingers	loan word	compounding
3	فريسكا	friska	Crispy bites	loan word	compounding
4	قطايف	qata:jif	Cute lips	loan word	semantic shift
5	جلاب	gala:b	Green sweet	loan word	compounding
6	زلابية	zala:bja	Golden doughnuts	loan word	importation with adaptation
7	غزل البنات	ɣazl albana:t	Cotton candy	loan word	Importation without adaptation

Towards the Englishization of Egyptian traditional desserts, the respondents used different Englishization strategies. All of the instances were loan words. Respondents created the compounds *'cute fingers'*, '*crispy bites'*, and *'green sweets'* to substitute '*balaħ alʃa:m'*, '*friska'*, and '*gala:b'* respectively. The modifiers in these rebrands signify either shape (*e.g.,* '*balaħ alʃa:m'* is shaped like human fingers), taste (*e.g., 'friska'* is made of thin crispy waver), or color (*e.g., 'gala:b'* is made of greenish molasses). Also, a semantic shift is employed in two instances: rebranding *'kuna:fa'* as '*baby hair'*, and *'qata:jif'* as '*cute lips*.' Again, iconicity plays a crucial role. That is, *'kuna:fa'*, originally created in the Levant and then transferred to other countries including Egypt, is made of thin noodles resembling babies' short, delicate hair. Likewise, *'qata:jif'*, thought to be originated by the Umayyads, the Fatimids, Al-Andalus or ancient Egypt, is made from a piece of dough filled with nuts, and shaped like closed lips. Still, both Englishized terms draw on two different lexical domains. Finally, the respondents imported the English term *'cotton candy'* without adaptation to replace the term *'ɣazl albana:t'*, while they added the modifier 'golden' to the loan word 'doughnuts' to coin the term *'golden doughnuts'* that replaced the Egyptian dessert '*zala:bja'*.

More interestingly, the respondents rebranded common fruits as shown in Table (3).

Table 3. Instances of the lexically borrowed terms naming common fruits

No.	Egyptian Arabic term	Transliteration	Englishizationed rebrands	The Englishization process implemented	The word-formation process employed
1	حرنكش	ħarankaʃ	Golden berries	loan word	compounding
2	كاكا	ka:ka	Kindo linto	loan word	Importation without adaptation

Both instances are loan words, but two different word formation processes are implemented. The compound *'golden berries'* replaced '*ħarankaʃ* as it shares the same small size as most kinds of berries, but with a yellow color. Additionally, the respondents imported the English term '*kindo linto'* to replace the Egyptian name '*ka:ka'* without any adaptation.

The last group of rebranded food-related terms is drinks (see Table 4). The term *'ʕasˁi:r bilθalʒ*' is replaced by the English term '*smoothie'*. This process of loan shift is implemented to denote a special kind of juice made from fruits, crushed ice, and milk. The other instance is the substitution of *'ʕasˁi:r alqasˁab'* with '*can juice'* through calquing.

Table 4. Instances of the lexically borrowed terms naming common Egyptian traditional drinks

No.	Egyptian Arabic term	Transliteration	Englishizationed rebrands	The Englishization process implemented	The word-formation process employed
1	عصير بالثلج	ʕasˁi:r bilθalʒ	Smoothie	loan shift	Semantic shift
2	عصير القصب	ʕasˁi:r alqasˁab	Can juice	loan word	Calquing

bIn sum, all these lexical borrowings do not have the same denotatum or referent as the original Egyptian Arabic ones. Yet, the respondents regard them as full equivalents. Since terms that are generally untranslatable, they found equivalents based on iconic relations. Drawing on Durkin's distinction between cultural borrowing and core borrowing (Durkin 2011), all these instances of lexical borrowings are not primarily cultural since the newly coined terms do not fill a lexical gap in Egyptian Arabic. Rather, they are core borrowings as the respondents affirmed that they perceive the English versions as classy and trendy.

4.3 Englishization-based rebranding as class identity signal

Regarding whether the phenomenon of Englishizing traditional food-related terms can be considered a signal of the emergence of a new speech community, it is important to delineate the difference between linguistic innovative practices and a fully developed speech community. While such language shifts reflect shared linguistic features and a sense of social belonging, the notion of a speech community typically involves a more extensive and complex set of communicative norms, social interaction patterns, and shared cultural references. However, it is feasible to view this linguistic trend as a precursor to potential speech community formation, as it does show a collective inclination to use certain terms that align with a specific class identity. That is, while Egyptian Arabic retains its role as the primary language, the adoption of innovative language forms and distinct patterns of expression serves as a marker of class differentiation.

The respondents affirmed that their use of the Englishized versions of the food-related terms under inquiry is motivated by their personal assessment that these terms are modern, classy, and exclusionary. Also, they reflect their western lifestyle, and therefore it could be regarded as a move towards cultural appropriation. This finding confirms that "loanwords are often associated with a sophisticated, western lifestyle" (Kay 1995:74). Some respondents mentioned that they use such Englishized terms to show solidarity with their speech community and class. In this regard, it is argued that the purposeful refusal to adopt the same language while you are viewed as belonging to the same culture might be interpreted as an insult that needs some facework repair. Similarly, it has been accentuated that rejecting the use of common language style signifies a rejection of local culture and social identity (Kramsch 1998). However, the respondents believed that, in rebranding these traditional foods, they did not mean to stigmatize or devalue the cultural identity of the other classes. Furthermore, they stated that the influence of social media and exposure to international media has facilitated the integration of foreign terms, creating a linguistic hybrid that resonates with younger generations.

Additionally, the participants expressed that they believe that food and culinary language in general are integral to their cultural identity. However, they argued that their lifestyle is mostly westernized. Adopting the same lifestyle is strategically employed to identify with the emerging community since "[individuals'] choices are governed both by contiguity and by the social comfort that comes from associating with 'people like us" (Bottero 2004: 995). Yet, due to downward social mobility resulting from emergent difficult economic circumstances in Egypt, the target research community found itself obliged to eat traditional food. They found that some of the traditional Egyptian foods are either prepared, served, or shaped in ways similar to other international meals. Therefore, they believe that Englishizing traditional foods cannot harm their cultural identity. They affirmed that this language practice allows them to showcase their unique cultural identity while still appealing to a global audience. It also serves as a

powerful marketing strategy, as it allows local businesses to tap into the growing trend of cultural appreciation.

However, the implications of Englishization on language diversity and cultural identity should be carefully considered, as it may lead to the marginalization of non-English speakers and contribute to the homogenization of online content and discourse. Such discrepancies in cultural preferences among the members of a homogenous society might reproduce inequalities due to unjustified class hierarchy. In this regard, Bottero (2004:993) asserts that "hierarchical position acts as a constraint on aspirations, tastes, networks and resources, and that hierarchy is therefore an important element shaping social identity". Moreover, the overreliance on English can perpetuate a power imbalance where those who are fluent in English have an advantage over those who are not. Therefore, it is important to promote multilingualism and create inclusive digital spaces that value and respect linguistic diversity, fostering a truly global and interconnected online community.

5. Conclusion

Understanding the role of language in (re)shaping class identity and acknowledging the power dynamics associated with innovative linguistic practices are crucial for creating a more equitable and inclusive online environment. Age, gender, income, education, class consciousness, housing type, and occupation are among the factors that motivate the establishment of class identity signals in digital spaces. It is essential to prioritize inclusivity in digital spaces to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate and contribute to the online community. Therefore, lexical borrowings, both cultural and core, do not necessarily indicate denigrating local language or stigmatizing individuals who use it. Moreover, recognizing the value of different languages can lead to the preservation and celebration of cultural heritage, including culinary culture, thereby fostering a sense of belonging and pride for individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Yet promoting multilingualism does not necessarily guarantee inclusivity, as it may still prioritize certain dominant languages over others. That is, it might lead to exclusion for those who do not speak the prioritized languages, hindering their participation and sense of belonging in the online world. Future studies are recommended to explore other class identity signals in the digital space.

Acknowledgements

This study is supported via funding from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University project number (PSAU/2024/R/1445)

Waheed M. A. Altohami – Corresponding author
Associate Professor of Linguistics
Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia
Mansoura University, Mansoura, Egypt
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-8742-1366
Email: w.m.altohami@gmail.com

Abdulfattah Omar
Associate Professor of Linguistics
Port Said University, Port Said, Egypt
The Australian National University, Australia
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-3618-1750
Email: a.a.omar2010@gmail.com

References

Ahearn, Laura M. (2021). *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons.

Albirini, Abdulkafi. (2016). *Modern Arabic Sociolinguistics: Diglossia, Variation, Codeswitching, Attitudes and Identity*. London: Routledge.

Alele, Faith and Bunmi Malau-Aduli. (2023). *An Introduction to Research Methods for Undergraduate Health Profession Students*. Australia: James Cook University.

Al-Jarf, Reima. (2023). 'Lexical hybridization in Arabic: The case of word formation with borrowed affixes'. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation,* 6 (10): 61-70. https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2023.6.10.9

Altohami, Waheed M A. (2020). 'Text messages: A computer-mediated discourse analysis'. *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications,* 11 (7): 79-87. https://doi.org/10.14569/ijacsa.2020.0110711

Bassiouney, Reem. (2014). *Language and Identity in Modern Egypt*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bottero, Wendy. (2004). 'Class identities and the identity of class'. *Sociology,* 38 (5): 985-1003. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038504047182

Cramer, Florian. (2015). 'What is 'post-digital'? In David M. Berry and Michael Dieter (eds.), *Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design*, 12–26. New York: Palgrave Macmillan https://doi.org/10.1057/ 9781137437204_2

Drapeau, Martin. (2015). 'Subjectivity in research: Why not? But…'. *The Qualitative Report*, 7 (3). https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2002.1972

Durkin, Philip. (2011). *The Oxford Guide to Etymology*. Oxford: OUP.

Eckert, Penelope. (1997). 'Gender and sociolinguistic variation'. In Jennifer Coates (ed.) *Readings in Language and Gender*, 64-75. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Elgibali, Alaa. (2017). *Investigating Arabic: Current Parameters in Analysis and Learning*. Leiden: Brill.

Elhini, Maha and Tarek Moursi. (2015). 'Social mobility and education: The case of Egypt'. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research,* 1 (1): 49-49. https://doi.org/10.24289/ijsser.106401

Evans, Geoffrey, Rune Stubager and Peter E. Langsæther. (2022). 'The conditional politics of class identity: Class origins, identity and political attitudes in comparative perspective'. *West European Politics,* 45 (6): 1178–1205. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2 022.2039980

Giddens, Anthony and Simon Griffiths. (2006). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Haddock, Aaron, Nadia Ward, Rondy Yu and Nicole O'Dea. (2022). 'Positive effects of digital technology use by adolescents: A scoping review of the literature'. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health,* 19 (21): 1-17. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192114009

Hafez, Ola. (1996). 'Phonological and morphological integration of loanwords into Egyptian Arabic'. *Égypte / Monde Arabe,* 27-28: 383-410. https://doi.org/10.4000/ema.1958

Haspelmath, Martin. (2009). 'Lexical borrowing: Concepts and issues'. In Martin Haspelmath and Uri Tadmor (eds.), *Loanwords in the World's Languages: A Comparative Handbook*, 35-54. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110218442.35

Heid, Nathan. (2017). *The Evolution of The Language Used in Social Media*. Munich: Grin Verlag.

Kay, Gillian. (1995). 'English loanwords in Japanese'. *World Englishes,* 14 (1): 67-76. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1995.tb00340.x

Kachru, Braj B. (2005). *Asian Englishes: Beyond the Canon*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Kramsch, Claire J. (1998). *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lee, Zoe and Iain Davies, I. (2021). 'Nonprofit brand and managing nonprofit rebranding strategy'. In Fran Hyde and Sarah-Louise Mitchell (eds.), *Charity Marketing*: *Contemporary Issues, Research and Practice*, 46-58. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003134169-2

Nasser, Marwa Adel. (2019). 'Englishization as a linguistic phenomenon among Egyptian youth with reference to selected Egyptian traditional dishes: A lexical-cultural approach'. *Journal of Scientific Research in Arts,* 5 (9): 84-110. https://doi.org/10.21608/jssa.2019.75613

McCormack, William C. and Stephen A. Wurm. (2011). *Language and Society: Anthropological Issues*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Morgan, Marcyliena H. (2014). *Speech Communities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mudhsh, Badi Abdulhakim D. M. (2021). 'A comparative study of tense and aspect categories in Arabic and English'. *Cogent Arts and Humanities*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2021.1899568

Mugglestone, Lynda. (2012). *The Oxford History of English*. Oxford: OUP.

Majumdar, Sramana, Maanya Tewatia, Devika Jamkhedkar and Khushi Bhatia. (2022). "You don't know me so don't try to judge me": Gender and identity performance on social media among young Indian users'. *Frontiers in Psychology,* 13: 1-12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.855947

Patton, Michael Quinn. (1999). 'Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis'. *Health Sciences Research,* 34: 1189–1208.

Pérez-Ahumada, Pablo. (2014). 'Class consciousness in a mature neoliberal society: Evidence from Chile'. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 38: 57–75. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2014.06.002

Phua, Joe, Seunga V. Jin and Jihoon J. Kim. (2017). 'Uses and gratifications of social networking sites for bridging and bonding social capital: A comparison of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat'. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 72: 115-122. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.02.041

Reay, Diane. (1997). 'Feminist theory, habitus, and social class: Disrupting notions of classlessness'. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 20 (2): 225–233. doi:10.1016/s0277-5395(97)00003-4.

Reddy, Geetha and Rob M. Van Dam. (2020). 'Food, culture, and identity in multicultural societies: Insights from Singapore'. *Appetite*, 149: 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104633

Reich, Robert B. (2010). *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalis*. New York: Vintage.

Salzmann, Zdenek. (2007). *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. Avalon Publishing: Westview Press.

Savage, Michael. (2000). *Class Analysis and Social Transformation*. New York: Open University Press.

Savin-Baden, Maggi. (2021). *Postdigital Humans: Transitions, Transformations and Transcendence*. Basingstoke: Springer Nature.

Smaldino, Paul E. (2022). 'Models of identity signaling'. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 31 (3): 1-7. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/xv9j8

Soltan, Usama. (2020). 'On the syntax of correlation: Evidence from Egyptian Arabic'. *Studies in Arabic Linguistics*, 9: 71-107. https://doi.org/10.1075/sal.9.04sol

Stubager, Rune and Gitte S. Harrits. (2022). 'Dimensions of class identification? On the roots and effects of class identity'. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 73 (5): 942-958. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12977

Sun, Ya, Gongyuan Wang and Haiying Feng. (2021). 'Linguistic studies on social media: A bibliometric analysis'. *SAGE Open*, 11 (3): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211047572

Trudgill, Peter. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*. London: Penguin UK.

Verme, Paolo, Branko Milanovic, Sherine Al-Shawarby, Sahar El Tawila, May Gadallah and Enas A. A.El-Majeed. (2014). *Inside Inequality in the Arab Republic of Egypt: Facts and Perceptions across People, Time, and Space*. Washington: The World Bank.

Wardhaugh, Ronald and Janet M. Fuller. (2021). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons.

Warschauer, Mark, Ghada R. Said and Ayman G. Zohry. (2006). 'Language choice online: Globalization and identity in Egypt'. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 7 (4): 199-216. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2002.tb00157.x

Woidich, Manfred and Rabha Heinen-Nasr. (2004). *Kullu Tamām! An Introduction to Egyptian Colloquial Arabic*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Yates, Simeon and Eleanor Lockley. (2018). 'Social media and social class'. *American Behavioral Scientist,* 62 (9): 1291-1316.