

English Loanwords and English-Based Hybrid Forms in Contemporary Kazakh Song Lyrics

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Received: December 27, 2025

Accepted: March 25, 2026

Online Published: June 17, 2026

doi:10.5430/wjel.v16n5p485

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v16n5p485>

Abstract

This study examines the use of English loanwords, hybrid forms, and code-switching in contemporary Kazakh pop song lyrics within the framework of linguistic globalization and urban youth culture. Based on a corpus of Kazakh-language songs released between 2016 and 2025, the research applies both quantitative and qualitative methods, including frequency analysis, morphological analysis, semantic-pragmatic analysis, and discourse analysis. The results show that English lexical elements occur systematically and function primarily as discourse-pragmatic markers rather than as simple nominative units. The findings demonstrate that English roots are fully integrated into the Kazakh agglutinative system through morphological adaptation, forming productive hybrid structures with Kazakh case, possessive, and plural suffixes. Code-switching is shown to operate as a strategic discourse mechanism, shaping rhythm, emotional intensity, audience engagement, and stylistic identity, particularly in choruses and hooks. English elements serve as markers of modernity, urban lifestyle, and youth subcultural affiliation. Overall, the study argues that contemporary Kazakh musical discourse represents a hybrid multilingual system in which English functions as a key pragmatic and stylistic resource. The results highlight the high adaptability of the Kazakh language and contribute to current research in sociolinguistics, pop linguistics, and musical discourse analysis.

Keywords: Kazakh language, English loanwords, hybrid forms, code-switching, pop music discourse, youth language, sociolinguistics

1. Introduction

The globalization process of the present era has a significant impact on the internal structure of language systems, their lexical layers, and speech culture. Especially in youth language, urban communication, and spheres closely connected with mass culture, interlingual interaction has reached a new qualitative level. In Kazakhstan’s linguistic space over the last decade, the influence of the English language has intensified; it is no longer limited to official, technical, or academic domains but has become actively used in everyday speech, advertising, social media content, television programs, and contemporary popular music. In this regard, modern Kazakh song lyrics represent one of the most vivid manifestations of English borrowings, hybrid forms, and code-switching phenomena.

In Kazakh pop music, particularly in new musical trends that have emerged since 2015 (Q-pop, trap, R&B, urban pop, cloud pop), the mixing of linguistic codes requires new parameters for describing linguistic phenomena. Artists working in these genres—such as Ninety One, Kalifarniya, Ziruza, Raim, Mad Men, De Lacure, Alem, Sadraddin, KeshYou, and other young performers—typically use three languages (Kazakh, Russian, and English) freely and interchangeably. The frequent occurrence of English elements in song lyrics is not accidental or merely a pursuit of fashion; it is closely connected with youth language and issues of contemporary cultural identity. Borrowed words create emotional impact, fit rhythmic structures, generate stylistically appropriate expression, and serve to establish close interaction with the audience.

There are several channels through which English words enter the Kazakh language. First, direct borrowings such as love, baby, lady, vibe, hype, style, flow, life, drive, special, action, show, business, mic check, hands up, one shot, fire, smile, which are mostly used without modification. Second, phonetically adapted borrowings such as kaif, flex, fake, cash, chill, vibe, track, production, action, show-biz, clip, trend. Words in this group are largely adapted through the phonological system of the Russian language. Third, hybrid structures, for example: “Do you wanna KeshYou?”, “One shot, one more dream”, “Сен Tiger-сын, қалғаны Mickey Mouse”, “OMG, tonight кездесейік”, “Baby, кел бепі”, “Life-ым, love-ым”, “flex-ті койшы”, “hype-қа толы дала”. In these cases, English roots combine with Kazakh case, possessive, or plural suffixes.

In this context, several important scholarly questions arise. First, what changes are currently taking place in the lexical system of the Kazakh

language? Second, what are the mechanisms of adaptation of English loanwords? Third, do hybrid forms become a new standard of spoken language, or do they remain a temporary subcultural phenomenon? Fourth, how does code-switching affect the syntactic structure of Kazakh? The main aim of this study is to explore recurrent patterns of English loanwords, English-based hybrid forms, and code-switching in a focused corpus of contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop song lyrics. The study pays particular attention to their semantic, functional, and pragmatic features, as well as to the ways in which English elements interact with the Kazakh linguistic system within this specific discourse domain.

Loanwords in musical texts are not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a sociolinguistic indicator. Through them, young performers convey modern urban lifestyles, connections with the global cultural space, personal style and aesthetic concepts, contemporary images of love, and the values of youth subcultures. For example, words such as “hands up”, “one life”, “my baby”, “fly”, and “fire” intensify emotional expression; terms like “show-biz”, “PR”, and “action” introduce the internal terminology of the music industry; names such as “London, Vegas, Dubai” and “Lamborghini, Bugatti, Jordan” refer to global cultural capital. These elements form a new layer of urban poetics in the Kazakh language.

The influence of English in Kazakh song lyrics manifests not only at the lexical level but also at the pragmatic level. Discourse markers such as “OMG”, “wow”, “oh my God”, “yeah”, “baby”, and “hands up” animate speech and establish interaction with listeners. Code-switching most often occurs in choruses, intros, hooks, and the climactic parts of songs. This phenomenon characterizes English as an emotional and technological marker. Thus, English functions as the linguistic code of contemporary aesthetics in modern Kazakh pop culture.

Therefore, by studying contemporary Kazakh song lyrics, we gain insight not only into the nature of loanwords but also into the linguistic identity of Kazakh youth, their cultural preferences, their relationship with the global space, and mechanisms of identification. Research in this area is closely connected with new fields in Kazakh linguistics, particularly sociolinguistics and code-mixing theory.

From this perspective, the proposed study aims to identify concrete manifestations of the influence of the English language on musical discourse in Kazakh and to determine its linguistic and cultural significance.

2. Literature Review

Loanwords from English constitute a relevant phenomenon that requires investigation within the context of the dynamic changes taking place in the modern Kazakh language. The process of globalization has contributed to the wide spread of foreign lexical items and has stimulated the emergence of new patterns of usage at different levels of the linguistic system. In Kazakh linguistics, studies on loanwords have traditionally focused on vocabulary borrowed from Arabic, Persian, and Russian (Kaidar, 1998; Aitbaev, 1981; Sarybaev, 1971), whereas research on English borrowings, code-mixing, and hybrid forms is only recently emerging as a new scholarly direction.

In classical linguistics, the integration of loanwords into a linguistic system is examined through phonetic adaptation, morphological change, and semantic transformation (Weinreich, 1953; Haugen, 1950). These theoretical approaches are applicable to the Kazakh language as well, since English words adapt to its internal rules at different levels: direct borrowing without modification (baby, style, vibe), phonetic adaptation (vaib, khaip, feik, kesh), and morphological integration (baby-men, life-ym, vibe-y, hype-qa). Lexical hybridization is observed in the urban speech of many languages worldwide and represents a natural mechanism of language change (Backus, 2010; Fishman, 1972).

The issue of code-switching is also directly related to the topic of this study. The “markedness model” proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993) explains the social function of code choice, whereby speakers use linguistic selection to express social roles, cultural norms, and group identity. In Kazakh song lyrics, English elements function not only as lexical units but also as socio-cultural markers. Studies by Pennycook (2007) and Androutsopoulos (2012), which examine code-mixing in pop culture, identify the expressive, aesthetic, and pragmatic functions of foreign elements in multilingual musical texts.

Research in the field of musical discourse demonstrates that English is used as an emotional particle (oh my God, wow, baby, hands up), a stylistic marker (flow, mic check, PR, hype), a symbol of cultural capital (London, Vegas, Dubai), and a tool of global branding (Jordan, Lamborghini) (Piller, 2017; Crystal, 2001). Such uses are very common in contemporary Kazakh Q-pop and urban song lyrics. On the one hand, they ensure rhythmic compatibility; on the other hand, they create in the listener’s perception an image of “modernity” and “access to global culture.”

In domestic research, there are studies devoted to youth language and hybrid vocabulary. In Kazakh sociolinguistics, these issues are mainly examined in the context of social media, urban speech, and contemporary advertising (Ernazarova, 2015; Smagulova & Aitzhanova, 2022). However, the analysis of Kazakh song lyrics as a specific linguistic corpus remains rare. The distinctiveness of the present study lies in its systematic description of English loanwords in Kazakh pop (Q-pop) songs, identifying their typology, adaptation patterns, and pragmatic functions.

In global linguistics, the study of pop-genre texts is widespread. Lee (2011) describes how English elements transform communicative style in K-pop discourse, while Alim (2009) analyzes social identity construction through code-mixing in hip-hop lyrics. These studies provide a theoretical foundation for the analysis of Kazakh Q-pop material. Among Kazakh audiences, the high “informational prestige” of English has contributed to the emergence of new linguistic patterns in youth language.

Recent research has increasingly emphasized the role of multilingual practices in contemporary communication, particularly in youth discourse and popular culture. Studies show that English functions not only as a lexical borrowing source but also as a stylistic and pragmatic resource in multilingual environments. For instance, research on code-mixing in music discourse demonstrates that English

elements are actively integrated into local languages and contribute to identity construction and stylistic expression (Hashim & Zamsari, 2025; Purba et al., 2026).

In broader sociolinguistic contexts, multilingualism plays a key role in shaping access, identity, and communication practices in modern societies (Jiang & Harklau, 2024; Jiang, 2025). In Kazakhstan, recent sociolinguistic studies highlight the dynamic interaction between Kazakh, Russian, and English, reflecting ongoing language policy changes and globalization processes (Piyazbayeva, 2021).

From a theoretical perspective, contemporary approaches to language view linguistic systems as dynamic and interconnected, emphasizing the fluid nature of language use in multilingual settings (Ahmed, 2025; Larsen-Freeman, 2023). These perspectives provide an important framework for understanding hybrid linguistic forms and code-switching in Kazakh popular music.

In general, the literature review leads to the conclusion that English loanwords in contemporary Kazakh song lyrics are the result of globalization, urban culture, internet discourse, and multilingual communication processes. The study of linguistic units in such texts makes it possible to identify trends in the modern development of the Kazakh language, the linguistic characteristics of youth culture, and the nature of new lexical innovations. While much existing research focuses on the international context, Kazakh song lyrics require targeted analysis. Therefore, this topic is gaining relevance within new areas of linguistics, such as pop linguistics and musical sociolinguistics.

3. Methods

This study is designed as an exploratory corpus-based analysis of English loanwords, English-based hybrid forms, and code-switching in contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop song lyrics. The methodological approach is qualitative-dominated and is supported by descriptive quantitative observations. Accordingly, the purpose of the study is not to produce statistically generalizable conclusions for all Kazakh musical discourse, but to identify recurrent linguistic patterns within a focused corpus.

Research Material

The research material consists of popular Kazakh-language song lyrics released between 2016 and 2025. The selection of materials was based on several criteria: (1) year of release, (2) orientation of the performer toward a youth audience, and (3) the presence of English words, hybrid forms, or code-switching elements in the lyrics. The corpus includes works by performers representing Q-pop and urban pop genres, such as Ninety One, Kalifarniya, Ziruza, Raim, Mad Men, KeshYou, Sadraddin, De Lacure, Alem, and others. Songs were collected from official music platforms, open sources, and lyric websites (<https://lyricstranslate.com>).

The total volume of the material comprises 22 song lyrics. The corpus was constructed purposively rather than randomly. The selection was guided by three main criteria: (1) the presence of English lexical items, hybrid forms, or code-switching elements in the lyrics; (2) the relevance of the songs to contemporary urban youth-oriented musical discourse, particularly Q-pop and adjacent pop genres; and (3) the circulation of these songs on widely accessible digital platforms and lyric databases. The aim of this sampling strategy was to ensure analytical depth and the visibility of the linguistic phenomena under investigation rather than broad statistical representativeness. Therefore, the corpus should be understood as a focused dataset designed to identify recurrent patterns of language contact within a specific segment of Kazakh popular music.

Data Collection Procedure

At the initial stage, all English words, English-based word combinations, and linguistic hybrid forms were extracted from the texts. Each item was classified into three categories:

1. Pure English words (love, baby, hands up, tonight, fire, OMG).
2. Phonetically adapted loanwords (hype, cash, vibe, flex, show-biz, clip).
3. Hybrid morphological forms (baby-men, life-ym, hype-qa, vibe-y, drive-ty).

For each item, the following parameters were recorded: word form, context, function in the sentence (lexical, discourse-related, expressive), morphological affixes, and the language code used in the sentence (English).

Examples of code-switching were marked separately. Code-switching was classified into three types:

- Inter-sentential: “Мені ал еске, next time call me.”
- Intra-sentential: “Baby, кел бері жүрегіме.”
- Tag-switching: “Yeah, hands up!”

The extracted items were treated as corpus-internal evidence of recurring usage patterns within the selected sample.

Data Analysis Methods

At the analysis stage, qualitative interpretation was combined with descriptive corpus-based measurements. The analytical priority was interpretive rather than statistical, with quantitative observations used to illustrate distributional tendencies within the selected corpus.

1. Descriptive frequency analysis. The frequency of English-derived items in the selected corpus was calculated in order to identify recurrent usage patterns within the dataset. Their occurrence was measured per 1,000 words, and a frequency list of the most common English items was compiled. These descriptive quantitative observations were used to support the qualitative interpretation of borrowing, hybridization, and code-switching patterns in the corpus.

2. Morphological analysis (morphological parsing). Hybrid forms were marked and compared with the morphological system of the Kazakh language. Special attention was paid to the following affixes:

- case suffixes: –ǵa, –men, –di, –dıǵı;
- possessive forms: –ym, –ıń, –y;
- plural forms: –lar, –ler.

The phonetic compatibility and semantic adaptation of Kazakh suffixes attached to English roots were analyzed (e.g., *vibe-ym* / *vibe-y*).

3. Code-switching analysis. Based on the model proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993), the reasons for code-switching and its communicative pragmatics were examined. The positional stability of code-switching within song structure was analyzed (intro, chorus, or climactic section), allowing the identification of its discourse function.

4. Semantic-pragmatic analysis. The main semantic domains of English elements were identified: love, emotion, show-business terminology, urban lifestyle, brand names, and symbols of social prestige. The pragmatic functions of English words were grouped into three main categories: (1) emotional intensifiers, (2) markers of modern style, and (3) linguistic codes of youth subculture.

5. Content analysis. Song lyrics were analyzed from the perspective of youth culture. Using content analysis, cultural symbols and markers of globalization within the texts were systematized. At this stage, the conceptual frameworks proposed by Pennycook (2007) and Piller (2017) were applied.

6. Ethical considerations. Copyright requirements were observed in this study. Song lyrics were used solely for academic purposes, and the research results are not intended for commercial use. All materials were anonymized through unique coding by the researcher, and performers' brand names were treated not as objects of evaluation but exclusively as linguistic data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Frequency and Lexical Characteristics of English Loanwords

The corpus-based analysis of the selected song lyrics made it possible to identify the frequency, semantic functions, and discourse positions of English-derived lexical units within contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop discourse. The dataset consists of 22 Kazakh-language song lyrics released between 2016 and 2025. Descriptive frequency analysis indicates that English-derived items occur regularly in this sample, averaging approximately 65–80 instances per 1,000 words. Given the modest size of the corpus, these figures should be interpreted as corpus-internal descriptive tendencies rather than as fully generalizable statistical claims.

To identify the most frequent English items, 50 English forms were marked in the corpus. The ten most frequent lexemes and their semantic domains are presented below (Table 1).

Table 1. Most frequent English loanwords and their semantic domains (based on the corpus)

No.	English word	Function	Semantic domain	Example (from lyrics)
1	love	emotional core	romance	“What is love – махабат деген...” (KeshYou)
2	baby	affective appeal	relationship	“Сақтадым бэйби...” (Ziruza)
3	life	concept	philosophy of life	“one life, one more dream” (Kalifarniya)
4	hands up	command	audience engagement	“Put your hands up” (Kalifarniya)
5	fire	metaphor	attraction / energy	“Сен сондай fire” (Raim)
6	vibe	symbol	subcultural code	“Менің вайбым” (Kalifarniya)
7	OMG	interjection	discourse reaction	“Кетпей қойдың OMG” (Alisher)
8	yeah	rhythmic unit	intonation	“Yeah...” (Ninety One)
9	fly	dynamics	escape / dream	“Вместе в небо fly” (Raim)
10	drive	emotion/energy	urban style	“Тек drive” (Raim)

As shown in the table, English lexicon functions less as nominative naming and more as discourse elements performing emotional, rhythmic, and stylistic roles. Words such as *love*, *baby*, *my love*, and *my life* intensify romantic semantics and serve as affective markers. For example, in Raim's song “Kaif,” the line “Давай вместе в небо fly, my love, my life” clearly suggests the emotional intensity and metaphorical load of English words. Here, English lexemes enter the Kazakh semantic framework as an “additional emotional layer.”

Similarly, in Ziruza's song “Suiem,” the construction “Сенің әр-бір қылығыңды есімде сақтадым бэйби” illustrates phonetic adaptation of the loanword (*baby* → бэйби). This change reflects the process of phonological integration, whereby the English word enters the Kazakh phonetic system through Russian mediation. This phenomenon is also confirmed by contemporary youth language practices: English words

are often first adopted via Russian transcription and only then adapted into Kazakh. For instance, the pronunciation of бэйби is closer to the Russian rendering than to the original English form, facilitating compatibility with Kazakh phonetic norms.

Another important finding of the frequency analysis is the concentration of English loanwords within specific semantic domains: (1) emotion and love, (2) urban style and subcultural code, (3) terminology describing musical processes, and (4) global cultural symbols. Words such as *vibe*, *hype*, *flex*, *drive*, and *swag* form the rhetoric of self-representation in youth subculture. In De Lacure’s usage, “Сендердегі флекс маған ұнамайды,” the word *flex* functions as an evaluative lexeme expressing stylistic judgment. Here, English words become pragmatic “markers of social self-identification.”

Musical terms such as *show-biz*, *flow*, *mic check*, and *PR* occur frequently in the lyrics of *Ninety One*: “Бұл flow үңгір, тез-тез, кір-кір, mic check бір-бір.” Such usages refer to the internal professional code of musical discourse. Lexemes denoting global cultural symbols—*Lamborghini*, *Bugatti*, *Jordan*, *Dubai*—function as markers of social status. In Alem’s song “Elestet,” the sequence “Лондон, Берга, Прага, Алматы, Дубай” creates spatial identification for Kazakh listeners and produces a globalization effect within the discourse.

Positional analysis shows that English words most often appear in choruses, hooks, and intros. Examples such as “Yeah, put your hands up” in *Kaliforniya* or “Swalla la la (E!) Swalla la la” in *KeshYou* demonstrate the rhythm-organizing function of loanwords. Rhythmically independent elements like *yeah*, *wow*, and *OMG*, which are not syntactically bound, function as intonational markers.

Overall, English loanwords in Kazakh song lyrics do not serve merely as lexical fillers but operate as discourse-pragmatic tools. They enhance the emotional register, create stylistic dominance, establish emotional contact with listeners, and integrate song lyrics into the global musical context. The results suggest that the analyzed corpus of contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop lyrics displays a markedly multilingual structure, in which English lexicon has become a core pragmatic component.

4.2 Hybrid Forms and Morphological Adaptation

The morphological adaptation of English roots in Kazakh song lyrics represents a clear manifestation of contemporary linguistic hybridization. This process is referred to in linguistics as morphological integration (Haugen, 1950) or mixed morphemics (Weinreich, 1953). English words freely enter the morphological system of Kazakh and acquire grammatical categories such as case, possession, and plurality. This phenomenon should be regarded not merely as borrowing, but as a new word-formation mechanism in the construction of song lyrics.

Based on the corpus analysis, several hybrid forms were identified, the most frequent of which are systematized in the table below. Hybrid words follow the principle root + suffix and replicate Kazakh morphological patterns: *baby-men*, *vibe-y*, *life-ym*, *hype-qa*, *drive-ty*, *swag-yŋ*, *PR-ğa*, *flex-ti*, etc. They perform the same grammatical functions as native Kazakh words.

Table 2. Morphological structure of English-based hybrid words

No.	Hybrid form	Morphological analysis	Grammatical category	Example
1	<i>baby-men</i>	<i>baby</i> + <i>-men</i>	instrumental case	“Baby-men qal” (<i>Ziruza</i>)
2	<i>vibe-y</i>	<i>vibe</i> + <i>-y</i>	3rd person possessive	“Менің vaibym” (<i>Kaliforniya</i>)
3	<i>life-ym</i>	<i>life</i> + <i>-ym</i>	1st person possessive	“Sen – менің life-ym” (<i>Raim</i>)
4	<i>hype-qa</i>	<i>hype</i> + <i>-qa</i>	dative case	“Hype-qa toly dala” (<i>KeshYou</i>)
5	<i>flex-ti</i>	<i>flex</i> + <i>-ti</i>	accusative case	“Senderdegi flex mağan unamaidy” (<i>De Lacure</i>)
6	<i>drive-ty</i>	<i>drive</i> + <i>-ty</i>	accusative case	“Ötpitin draiv-ty qoysy” (<i>Mad Men</i>)
7	<i>swag-yŋ</i>	<i>swag</i> + <i>-yŋ</i>	2nd person possessive	“Seniŋ swag-yŋ bar” (<i>Ninety One</i>)
8	<i>PR-ğa</i>	<i>PR</i> + <i>-ğa</i>	dative case	“PR-ğa uaqytym joq” (<i>Ninety One</i>)

As the table shows, English roots are fully integrated into the Kazakh morphological paradigm. Within the selected corpus, this can be interpreted as a strong degree of linguistic adaptation (Backus, 2010; Myers-Scotton, 1993). English roots can take the full range of Kazakh case suffixes—dative (-*ğa/-qa*), accusative (-*dy/-ty*), instrumental (-*men*), locative (-*da/-de*), ablative (-*dan/-den*)—as well as possessive (-*ym/-im/-yŋ/-iŋ/-y/-i*) and plural (-*lar/-ler*) markers. Such morphological assimilation suggests a systematic, productive, and natural process of linguistic adaptation in Kazakh.

With regard to phonetic adaptation, many units undergo sound modification: *baby* → *beýbi*, *vibe* → *vaib*, *hype* → *khaip*, *flex* → *fleks*, *drive* → *draiv*. Phonetic adaptation generally follows the principles of syllabic harmony and vowel harmony in Kazakh. For example, in forms such as *vibe-y*, *life-ym*, *swag-yŋ*, the suffixes conform to phonetic agreement.

One of the key findings of the morphological analysis is that the agglutinative mechanism of Kazakh applies unchanged to English roots. That is, the Kazakh system of suffixation accepts foreign lexemes. The English root remains the core lexical unit, while the attached suffix determines its grammatical function.

For example, in the sentence “Менің vaibym бүгін ерекше,” the form *vaibym* (*vibe* + *-ym*) expresses first-person possession. Here, a

Kazakh suffix attached to an English root marks the subject’s relation to the concept. This suggests that the form is not an “isolated borrowing” but a “grammatically complete word.”

Similarly, in the line “Seniŋ swag-ың бар, flow-ың бар,” both borrowed roots are fully integrated into the Kazakh suffixal system. In the sentence “Osı format-ty özgertu kerek,” the form format-ty (format + -ty) shows complete grammatical adaptation through the accusative case. Myers-Scotton (1993) refers to such structures as a matrix language frame: Kazakh functions as the matrix language, English as the embedded code, while the grammar of the matrix language remains dominant.

The semantic properties of hybrid words also merit special attention. They often carry connotative meaning, stylistic signaling, and urban identity functions. In classical linguistics, this phenomenon is described as multilayered meaning (Piller, 2017). For example, flex, swag, vibe, and drive are not merely referential labels but convey socio-cultural meanings such as “modern,” “trendy,” “youth-oriented style,” and “subcultural affiliation.”

An important aspect of hybridization is cross-code equilibrium. English lexicon fills semantic gaps where Kazakh lacks precise equivalents for expressing style, energy, or urban cultural experience. In this sense, English replaces semantic vacuums in Kazakh.

Such usage can be interpreted as a marker of creolized discourse. In the phrase “Ötpitin draiv-ty qoşsy,” the word drive conveys emotional intensity and dynamism, while the accusative suffix -ty turns it into a concrete object. In this model, the Kazakh accusative case renders the English word as a tangible entity: drive is no longer an abstraction but a value, feeling, or experience.

Another scientifically significant aspect of hybridization is linguistic creativity. Previously non-existent combinations and word forms—life-ym, flex-ti, hype-qa, vibe-y—emerge and become mechanisms for constructing individual linguistic identity. This elevates contemporary Kazakh to the level of a new multi-repertoire language (Backus, 2010).

An important aspect of English borrowing in the Kazakh linguistic context is the mediating role of the Russian language. In many cases, English lexical items do not enter Kazakh directly, but rather through Russian phonological and orthographic adaptation. As a result, forms such as “бэйби” (baby), “вайб” (vibe), and “хайп” (hype) reflect Russian-based phonetic transformation before being integrated into the Kazakh morphological system.

This Kazakh–Russian–English contact dynamic represents a specific regional model of language interaction. Russian serves as an intermediary code that facilitates the initial adaptation of English lexemes, which are then further integrated into Kazakh through agglutinative morphology. Consequently, it is important to distinguish between direct English borrowings and Russified English forms when analyzing hybrid structures.

This layered borrowing process demonstrates that contemporary Kazakh linguistic hybridity is not purely bilingual but operates within a complex multilingual ecology shaped by historical, social, and cultural factors.

In sum, hybrid words in the analyzed corpus function not merely as loanwords but as morphological innovations, hybrid codes, instruments of semantic expansion, and pragmatic signals. English roots fully submit to Kazakh grammar, while Kazakh suffixes specify their functional roles. These findings demonstrate that Kazakh is a dynamic, open, and adaptable linguistic system.

4.3 Code-Switching and Pragmatic Functions

Contemporary musical discourse in the Kazakh language constitutes a specific linguistic environment characterized by a multilingual (Kazakh–English–Russian) nature. This phenomenon is referred to in linguistics as code-switching (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Gumperz, 1982) and represents a pragmatic process that is far more complex than simple lexical mixing. Code-switching is not a mechanical combination of languages; rather, it functions as a discourse strategy, stylistic choice, means of social identification, and communicative tactic.

In contemporary Kazakh song lyrics, code-switching operates at three main levels:

- (1) intra-sentential switching – switching within a sentence,
- (2) inter-sentential switching – switching between sentences,
- (3) tag-switching – insertion as an additional discourse marker (Crystal, 2001; Piller, 2017).

Table 3. Types of code-switching in Kazakh song lyrics (corpus-based analysis)

No.	Type of code-switching	Example (from lyrics)	Linguistic function
1	Intra-sentential	“Baby, кел бери жүрегіме” (Ziruza)	emotional address
2	Tag-switching	“OMG, сен әлі келмедің бе?” (Alisher)	expressive reaction
3	Inter-sentential	“Мені ал еске. Next time call me.” (Kalifarniya)	pragmatic emphasis
4	Hook / chorus	“Swalla la la (E!) Swalla la la” (KeshYou)	rhythmic stabilization
5	Performative	“If you can do it – do it.” (Ninety One)	directive function
6	Subcultural code	“Сенің swag-ың бар” (Ninety One)	style signaling
7	Audience engagement	“Hands up!” (Raim)	listener activation
8	Intonational marker	“Yeah, тоқта, кел бери” (Kalifarniya)	rhythmic impulse

As noted by Myers-Scotton (1993), code-switching operates under the dominance of the matrix language: Kazakh functions as the matrix code that determines grammar and syntax, while English serves as the embedded code that conveys semantic or pragmatic emphasis. For

example, in the sentence “Baby, кел бери жүрегіме,” the syntax is entirely Kazakh, whereas baby functions as a pragmatic softener. In this model, English elements reduce interpersonal distance and create an emotionally intimate tone.

Code-switching frequently occurs at points of pragmatic intensity (speech climax positions). For instance, the formula “Yeah, put your hands up” in Kalifarniya’s lyrics delivers a direct performative command to the listener while simultaneously generating a rhythmic impulse. Such forms serve an interactional engagement function by actively involving the audience.

The study identified numerous instances in which code-switching functions as a rhythmic marker: words such as yeah, wow, hey, OMG, do it, hands up, and baby segment sentences into large rhythmic units. Crystal (2001) characterizes such forms as intonational markers that signal discourse boundaries, emotional intensification, and musical direction.

English elements in discourse also function to rapidly shift contextual logic. For example:

“Мені ал еске. Next time call me.”

Here, information structured in one language acquires pragmatic emphasis through the switch to another language.

Another notable phenomenon is the indirect action marker. For example, “If you can do it – do it” (Ninety One) is a universal discourse performative that mobilizes the listener toward action. In this case, the English formula intensifies the imperative force and transforms speech into a behavioral instruction.

Code-switching manifests not only through sentence structure but also through positional function. The findings show that English elements most frequently appear in hook or chorus positions. In the form “Swalla la la (E!) Swalla la la,” the English element becomes the memorable musical core.

Code-switching also performs a distinct cultural function. English words create a subcultural orbit: swag, flex, vibe, hype, drive, and flow are not merely lexemes but passwords of youth identity. By using English code, the speaker (performer) signals membership in a particular group—global youth culture, the Q-pop community, or trap identity.

Overall, in Kazakh musical texts, code-switching:

- encodes emotion (affective coding);
- ensures audience participation (participatory discourse);
- transforms simple statements into performative acts;
- integrates global style with local meaning within a single text.

The results of this study parallel findings from K-pop research by Hughes (2020), Androutsopoulos (2012), and Lee (2011), indicating that Q-pop (Kazakh pop) has fully transitioned into a hybrid linguistic discourse.

In conclusion, code-switching in Kazakh song lyrics is not a lexical mixture but a tool of discourse management, rhythm formation, emotional intensification, and style construction.

These findings suggest an important tendency in the multilingual development of the analyzed segment of Kazakh urban musical discourse.

4.4 Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the corpus is relatively small and purposively constructed, consisting of 22 songs drawn from contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop and adjacent youth-oriented genres. For this reason, the quantitative observations presented in the article should be interpreted as descriptive rather than statistically generalizable. Second, the dataset does not represent the full diversity of Kazakh musical production, including folk, traditional, classical, or other non-urban genres. Accordingly, the findings are best understood as identifying recurrent tendencies within a focused corpus rather than universal characteristics of all Kazakh musical discourse. Future research may expand the corpus and test the present observations on a broader and more genre-diverse dataset.

5. Conclusion

The present study suggests that English loanwords, English-based hybrid forms, and code-switching play a visible role in the selected corpus of contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop song lyrics.

The corpus-based analysis suggests that the analyzed segment of contemporary Kazakh urban pop/Q-pop discourse displays a hybrid multilingual character. English lexicon is not a random element in Kazakh but carries stable pragmatic and semantic loads, functioning as a stylistic dominant in speech.

Frequency analysis indicates that the most actively used English words include love, baby, life, vibe, drive, fire, hands up, fly, yeah, and OMG—lexemes with emotional, rhythmic, and addressive functions. These elements do not primarily contribute lexical meaning but operate as discourse mechanisms in musical texts. They intensify emotion, reduce communicative distance between addresser and addressee, and regulate the melodic and rhythmic structure of lyrics.

One of the most significant findings of the study is the full acceptance of English roots into the Kazakh morphological system. The widespread use of hybrid forms such as baby-men, vibe-y, life-ym, hype-qa, flex-ti, drive-ty, swag-yn, and PR-ğa suggests the flexibility of the agglutinative structure of Kazakh and its capacity to integrate borrowed lexicon into a natural word-formation mechanism. This

represents a high level of morphological integration. The phenomenon fully corresponds to classical linguistic theories (Einar Haugen, 1950; Uriel Weinreich, 1953; Carol Myers-Scotton, 1993; Ad Backus, 2010) and reflects an evolutionary process in the contemporary development of the Kazakh language.

The analysis of code-switching shows that English elements in modern Kazakh song lyrics play a decisive role in shaping communicative pragmatics and discourse rhythm. The identified patterns of intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching demonstrate that English words mark discourse boundaries rather than syntactic structure, impose rhythmic organization on speech, and actively engage listeners. Forms such as hands up, do it, yeah, wow, and OMG function as intonational markers, linguistic performatives, and emotional detonators. This indicates the pragmatic nature of code-switching in musical texts.

Overall, the findings suggest that Kazakh musical discourse in the contemporary period represents a clear arena of linguocultural transformation. English loanwords are not used as disruptive or “foreign” elements but rather as creative resources that generate new semantics and new styles. The internal morphological system of Kazakh successfully accommodates external elements, demonstrating a high adaptive potential and producing new lexical-grammatical hybrids.

This study provides a scholarly description of pop-cultural discourse in the Kazakh language and proposes a linguistic model of the multilingual nature of contemporary youth language. The results open perspectives for further research, particularly in the fields of automated corpora, frequency lexicography, media linguistics, and transcultural identity. In addition, the need to expand the study of code-switching and hybridization in Kazakh within social psycholinguistics, urban anthropology, and cultural semiotics is evident.

Thus, the study highlights the level of linguistic flexibility and cultural adaptability of the Kazakh language in its current stage of development and suggests that English loanwords and hybrid forms are shaping a new linguistic system within Kazakh musical discourse.

These conclusions should be interpreted primarily with reference to the selected corpus of youth-oriented urban pop/Q-pop lyrics rather than to all genres of Kazakh musical discourse.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to colleagues who provided valuable feedback and constructive comments during the preparation of this manuscript. The authors also appreciate the support received within the framework of ongoing research collaboration in the field of Kazakh linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Author contributions

Aigul Amirbekova contributed to the conceptual framework of the study and provided critical revisions of the manuscript. *Kalbike Yessenova* contributed to the theoretical development and interpretation of sociolinguistic aspects. *Tursynai Orynbasar* participated in data collection and corpus preparation. *Nursaule Maksutkyzy Rsaliyeva* contributed to the linguistic analysis and manuscript revision. *Bolat Khasenov* was responsible for the study design, data analysis, interpretation of results, and drafting of the manuscript.

All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding

This research was carried out within the framework of the scientific project AR26100789 “Vitality of the Kazakh Language: Development of the Writer’s Language Thesaurus and Study of the Semantic Transformation of Literary Words in a Linguocognitive Perspective” (2025–2027).

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Not applicable.

Ethics approval

Not applicable.

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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Appendix 1. Texts

ID	Performer	*963Song title
S01	<u>Kalifarniya</u>	Preparat
S02	<u>Kalifarniya</u>	Hello
S03	<u>Sadraddin</u>	Aiga Qarap
S04	<u>Raim</u>	Ne Sebep
S05	<u>Alisher</u> <u>Konysbaev</u>	OMG
S06	<u>Ninety One</u>	Qalai Qaraisyŋ?
S07	<u>Ninety One</u>	Ah! Yah! Mah!
S08	<u>Ninety One</u>	BIZ
S09	<u>Ninety One</u>	Lady
S10	<u>Kalifarniya</u>	Puerto Rico
S11	<u>Alem</u>	Elestet
S12	<u>Ziruz</u>	Qulaim!
S13	<u>Ziruz</u>	S.O.S.
S14	<u>Ziruz</u>	Suiem
S15	<u>Ziruz</u>	Uyatsyz Bala
S16	<u>Ninety One</u>	Taboo
S17	<u>De Lacure</u>	Dal Solai
S18	<u>KeshYou</u> & Baller	(Hype / KeshYou track)
S19	<u>KeshYou</u>	Makhabbat
S20	<u>Raim</u> & Miko	Kaif
S21	<u>Raim</u>	Where Are You
S22	<u>Mad Men</u>	Bas Ketedi

Appendix 2. Alphabetical list of words

A

- action
- alone

B

- baby
- beautiful
- boy
- black
- bugatti

C

- come
- connection

D

- drive
- do
- dream
- do it (formula)
- dal solay (hybrid context)

E

- eleven
- enjoy (implicitly in “enjoy vibe” контексте)
- energy (semantic field)

F

- fire
- flex
- flow
- free
- fresh

G

- girl / girls (lady derivative)
- god (in “oh my god”)

H

- hands
- hype
- hello
- hi

I

- i (first person EN)
- if
- it

J

- jordan

L

- lady
- life
- love
- london
- lamborghini
- light

M

- mic
- my
- me
- mickey mouse
- mad (Mad Men)
- more

- money (кей контексте)

N

- never
- next time
- night
- new

O

- oh
- oh my god (OMG)
- one
- only
- on (кей сөз тіркесі)

P

- production

R

- rico (Puerto Rico)
- real (implicit Q-pop realness)

S

- skill
- shine
- special
- show-biz / show biz
- shot
- shit
- swalla

T

- taboo
- title (contextual)
- tiger
- tonight
- time

V

- vibe
- vegas (city name)

W

- where
- wow

- win
- what
- world (мәтінде контекст “барлық әлем”)

Y

- yeah
- you
- wanna

Appendix 3. Word classes**Noun**

- baby
- lady
- drive
- vibe
- hype
- flex
- life
- love
- fire
- skill
- show-biz
- mic
- flow
- production
- lamborghini
- bugatti
- jordan
- shit
- swalla

Adjective / Descriptor

- beautiful
- special
- fresh
- real

Verb

- do
- wanna (want to)
- fly (тіркес құрамында)
- win

Pragmatic markers

- yeah
- wow
- oh
- oh my god
- hi
- hands up
- come on
- do it

Brand index

- Mickey Mouse
- Tiger
- Lamborghini
- Bugatti
- Jordan
- Shine Production

Geographical Names

- London
- Vegas
- Puerto-Rico
- Dubai
- Prague (Praga)

Appendix 4. L-code, G-code, CS-code

L-code (Lexical English items)

Code	Token	Note
L001	yeah	discourse marker
L002	baby	addressee
L003	love	romance
L004	life	concept
L005	OMG / oh my god	interjection
L006	hands up	hook / directive
L007	lady	female addressee
L008	vibe	subculture
L009	hype	trend
L010	drive	emotional energy
L011	fire	metaphor
L012	flow	rap term
L013	show-biz	industry
L014	mic check	stage lexicon
L015	production	production term
L016	special	adjective
L017	boy	addressee
L018	tonight	time reference
L019	where	interrogative formula
L020	fly	movement
L021	tiger	brand metaphor

L022	mickey mouse	cultural reference
L023	jordan	brand
L024	lamborghini	brand
L025	bugatti	brand
L026	come on	hook
L027	do it	directive
L028	swalla	rhythmic formula
L029	boy	alternative form
L030	what is love	classic quotation
L031	next time	sentence fragment
L032	free	ideology
L033	win	verb
L034	wow	intonation
L035	alone	concept
L036	hello	thematic element
L037	hi	discourse marker
L038	one (one life, one shot...)	formula
L039	vegas	geographic reference
L040	london	geographic reference
L041	dubai	geographic reference
L042	prague	geographic reference
L043	rico (Puerto Rico)	toponym
L044	time	concept
L045	boy	(no duplication, single code)
L046	hands	(included in L006)
L047	my	grammatical marker
L048	life / my love / my self	phrase
L049	skill	term
L050	shit	slang

2) G-code: Hybrid forms (English root + Kazakh morphology)

Code	Form	Morphology	Type
G001	beibi	phonetic adaptation	loan adaptation
G002	vaib	phonetic adaptation	loan adaptation
G003	vaib-ym	vibe + -ym (1st person possessive)	hybrid
G004	fleks	phonetic adaptation	hybrid base
G005	fleks-ti	flex + -ti (accusative)	hybrid
G006	khaip	hype → khaip	phonetic
G007	khaip-qa	hype + -qa (dative)	hybrid
G008	shou-biz	show-biz → shou-biz	loan calque
G009	KeshYou-den	-den (ablative)	hybrid
G010	produkshn	production → produkshn	phonetic
G011	Jordan-dy	Jordan + -dy (accusative)	hybrid
G012	swag-yŋ	swag + -yŋ (possessive)	potential
G013	drive-ty	drive + -ty (accusative)	potential

3) CS-code: Code-switching

Code	Type	Example
CS1	intra-sentential (within a sentence)	Ketpei qoydyŋ OMG
CS2	tag-switching (interjection / insert)	Yeah, wow, hands up
CS3	inter-sentential (between sentences)	Meni al eske. Next time call me.