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FROM SCREEN TO SPEECH: LEXICAL TRANSFORMATION IN HAUSA-DUBBED INDIAN FILMS AND ADOLESCENT PEER INTERACTION IN TARABA NORTH

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ABSTRACT

The circulation of transborder media has become a significant site for linguistic innovation, particularly among youth populations who actively appropriate foreign cultural resources. In Northern Nigeria, Hausa-dubbed Indian films constitute a pervasive media landscape, yet little is known about how adolescents transform cinematic language through everyday peer interaction. Existing scholarship on media-induced language change often privileges lexical borrowing over the pragmatic and indexical work through which young speakers decontextualise and recontextualise mediated discourse. This gap obscures how film-derived expressions acquire locally negotiated meanings beyond their original cinematic functions. This study draws on recontextualization theory and mediated discourse analysis, and conceptualizes adolescent language use as selective communicative appropriation rather than passive reproduction. The study uses ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, and qualitative analysis of a focused corpus of adolescent peer interaction in Taraba North, and traces how Hausa expressions from Indian films shift in meaning and social function as they move from screen to speech. Four trajectories of linguistic transformation emerged: meaning retention, extension, pragmatic transformation, and re-indexicalization. Evaluative reversal proved particularly salient: expressions associated in cinematic discourse with insult, condemnation, or confrontation acquired humorous, affiliative, or competence-marking functions in peer interaction. These transformations were evidenced through transactional responses, laughter, repetition, reciprocal usage, and participant explanations, triangulated across film sources, observed use, and participant accounts. Adolescents selectively appropriated forms whose social recognizability, expressive force, and relevance to existing peer practices supported their uptake, while other recognizable film expressions lacking interactional relevance remained unused. This study advances scholarship on media and language change by presenting that the movement from screen to speech is better understood as selective communicative appropriation and peer-group recontextualization than as simple lexical borrowing. It achieves this by showing how transborder film resources become part of locally meaningful youth repertoires through situated interaction. The study submits that mediated discourse acquires locally negotiated meanings through youth peer practices, this will reveal adolescents as active agents in the semiotic transformation of global media flows.

Keywords: Hausa; Adolescent Language; Media Appropriation; Peer-group Recontextualization; Linguistic Transformation; Hausa-dubbed Indian Films.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Youth language is shaped not only by what linguistic forms denote but also by the social meanings they acquire in use. In the Nigerian context, youth-language practices have been conceptualized as resources "indexically linked to youthfulness, conviviality, and camaraderie" (Isiaka, 2020, p. 85). Mensah's (2013) study of the Ágábá Boys similarly characterizes youth language as a "lexically and contextually driven ingroup code" (p. 388), showing how lexical practices conceptualize identity, enhance solidarity, and sustain group integration. This relationship between lexical form, social meaning, and interactional context becomes particularly important when linguistic resources encountered beyond the immediate peer environment enter adolescent interaction.

Popular media places linguistic resources in circulation beyond their original contexts. When discourse is detached from one setting and taken up in another, recontextualization involves changes in context, form, function, and meaning (Bauman and Briggs, 1990, pp. 75–76). This perspective is useful because exposure does not by itself establish how a form will be used after it leaves the mediated context. In Northern Nigeria, Indian films have a history of linguistic and cultural adaptation: Hausa-language remaking and subsequent dubbing localized cinematic material for Hausa-speaking audiences (Adamu, 2019, pp. 157–168). The question is not simply whether mediated expressions become available, but what happens to particular forms when they are taken up in everyday peer interaction.

This process is particularly relevant to Hausa-dubbed Indian films, where cinematic material has circulated through a Hausa-language environment and acquired a place within local patterns of media engagement. The dubbed repertoire makes available not only translated dialogue but also recurring expressions, character names, speech styles, and dramatic personae associated with conflict, loyalty, revenge, and heroism. Earlier research examined this as "linguistic film domestication" (Ijem and El-Qassim, 2020, p. 67), drawing attention to the circulation of verbal and visual codes from dubbed films within a local social environment. In the Taraba North setting, prefield observations and fieldwork indicated that adolescents continued to consume Hausa-dubbed Indian films, including older productions. Dubbing sustains the circulation of cinematic material beyond the age of the original production; what matters is whether its linguistic and performative resources remain accessible and recognizable within the peer environment.

The present study emerged from prefield observations of adolescent peer interaction in Taraba North Senatorial Zone, where distinctive lexical forms, stylized speech, cinematic character names, and performed identities repeatedly appeared in everyday interaction. From approximately twenty observed locations, six peer enclaves were selected for closer observation, including riverbank areas and abandoned buildings where adolescent groups regularly congregated. These settings were interactional spaces in which adolescents displayed and negotiated forms of cinematic affiliation, including the adoption of character names and the performance of speech styles and personae associated with particular film characters. Cinematic repertoires were selectively drawn upon: performances associated with conflict, dominance, revenge, and territorial protection appeared more prominent than comic-character performances.

The question is therefore narrower than whether adolescents' appropriate language from films: it concerns what happens to particular lexical forms after they enter peer interaction. In observed interactions, bansa, conventionally associated with worthlessness, occurred as playful teasing, while shegen kaya, jahili, and dabba, despite derogatory associations, appeared in contexts of admiration, toughness, or competence. By contrast, caskale retained a stable association with fighting. These cases indicate that mediated lexical circulation can produce

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different outcomes as speakers negotiate the meanings of forms within particular peer relationships.

The observed cases point to selective communicative appropriation rather than simple lexical borrowing. Four trajectories emerged as analytical categories: meaning retention, extension, pragmatic transformation, and re-indexicalization. Evaluative reversal was particularly salient within re-indexicalization, as negatively valued expressions could take on affiliative, humorous, or competence-marking functions. The analysis also considers restricted or unsuccessful uptake, since recognition of a film-derived expression does not necessarily result in its incorporation into peer discourse.

The present study extends this inquiry by shifting attention from the appropriation of media-derived speech to the subsequent social trajectories of individual lexical forms. Ijem and El-Qassim (2026) examined how adolescents in Taraba North selectively reproduced and reinterpreted lexical features from Hausa-dubbed Indian films, showing how such forms acquired social significance through interactional uptake, peer recognition, and repeated use. The present analysis takes individual lexical forms as the unit of inquiry and asks what happens after they become part of the peer repertoire: how their meanings and social functions are retained, extended, transformed, re-indexed, or rejected. Appropriation is treated not as the endpoint of media-to-peer transfer but as a point from which lexical forms enter further processes of negotiation within local peer relations. By tracing identifiable expressions from cinematic sources through observed peer use and participant interpretation, the study shows how adolescent speakers actively negotiate mediated linguistic resources through interaction, shared cinematic knowledge, and repeated use. The analytical problem lies not simply in media influence or lexical appropriation, but in the subsequent social life of individual lexical forms within the peer group.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Youth Language, Lexical Innovation, and Social Meaning

Youth language is usefully understood not simply as a collection of alternative lexical forms but as a socially organized repertoire through which young speakers negotiate relationships, identities, and group membership. Broader sociolinguistic work associates youth linguistic practice with variation, stylistic differentiation, and identity construction (Eckert, 2000; Bucholtz, 2002). Within this perspective, lexical innovation becomes socially consequential when particular forms acquire recognizable meanings through patterns of use rather than through denotational content alone. Isiaka (2020), in conceptualizing Nigerian youth languages, draws attention to the indexical and interactional dimensions of such practices, including how innovation, borrowing, and metaphorisation contribute to youth-oriented social meanings. Mensah's (2013) study of the Ágábá Boys similarly demonstrates that lexical choices operate within a shared social and interactional environment, where distinctive forms contribute to identity construction, solidarity, and group integration. These studies locate Nigerian youth language within processes of social differentiation and collective meaning-making rather than treating it as deviation from linguistic norms.

The interactional character of youth language is illuminated by the concept of communities of practice, in which linguistic practices acquire meaning through participation in recurring social activities and relationships (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992). Stylistic choices become resources for positioning speakers and signalling locally recognizable identities and affiliations (Coupland, 2007). This perspective is important because the lexical forms under investigation are not approached as isolated vocabulary items whose meanings can be determined

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independently of use. Their significance depends on the interactional environments in which adolescents recognize, deploy, or respond to them. The question is therefore not only how a lexical form enters a youth repertoire, but how its social meaning is produced and negotiated once it becomes part of peer interaction.

African scholarship further demonstrates that youth linguistic practices are shaped by lexical innovation, language contact, and social differentiation. Kießling and Mous (2004) show, across African contexts, how youth varieties emerge through the creative adaptation and recombination of linguistic resources within particular social environments. Their work shifts attention from youth language as a uniform or nationally bounded variety to the local conditions under which young speakers develop and circulate distinctive forms. The significance of such forms depends on the linguistic resources available to speakers and on the social networks and communicative settings in which those resources are used.

This emphasis on locally situated innovation suggests that youth lexical practices acquire social meaning through particular networks and contexts. Recognizable forms encountered through popular media may likewise acquire meanings that are not reducible to their mediated sources. The relevant issue is therefore not whether adolescents incorporate non-standard or unfamiliar Hausa forms, but how particular lexical forms are taken up and socially reworked when they enter Hausa-speaking peer interaction.

2.2 Media Appropriation and Linguistic Recontextualization

Media circulation makes linguistic forms, styles, and ways of speaking available beyond the settings in which they are encountered. Their subsequent use cannot be understood as a direct effect of media exposure. Androutsopoulos (2014) draws attention to how speakers engage with mediated linguistic resources through selection, uptake, and incorporation into their own communicative practices. Media exposure may provide a repertoire of recognizable resources without determining how, where, or for what purposes those resources will subsequently be used.

Appropriation becomes analytically important where a mediated resource is taken up within another social environment. A form may remain recognizable while its use becomes associated with new participants, activities, or interactional purposes. The distinction is between the availability of a mediated form and its incorporation into situated practice. What begins as a recognizable expression encountered through media may acquire additional social significance through subsequent use, particularly where speakers share knowledge of its source and recognize its relevance within their own interactional environment.

Recontextualization provides a framework for understanding this movement across communicative settings. Bauman and Briggs (1990) emphasize that discourse does not simply move unchanged from one context to another; its recontextualization involves transformations in the relationships among discourse, context, and social meaning. Applied to media-derived language, this perspective distinguishes the cinematic occurrence of a form from its subsequent social life in peer interaction. The analytical sequence is not one of automatic media influence but of availability, selective appropriation, situated use, interpretation, and social uptake. This distinction is central to examining whether recognizable expressions retain their earlier significance or take on different functions after entering adolescent peer discourse.

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Indexicality provides a further basis for understanding how a recognizable lexical form can acquire different social significance across contexts. Silverstein (2003) argues that indexical relations connect linguistic forms to social meanings in interaction, through which "relational identities are presupposed and creatively (trans)formed in interaction" (p. 193). His account distinguishes between the contextual expectations that accompany an indexical form and the effects that its use can produce within interaction (p. 195). This distinction is useful because a film-derived expression may remain lexically recognizable while its social significance changes as speakers deploy it in a different interactional environment. Recognition of the form does not by itself establish continuity of social meaning.

2.3 Hausa Popular Media and Indian-Film Dubbing

Northern Nigeria provides an important context for examining mediated linguistic circulation because Indian cinema has become embedded in Hausa-language media culture through processes of adaptation, dubbing, and local circulation. Larkin (2008) situates media technologies within the changing communicative and cultural environment of northern Nigerian urban life, while Adamu (2018) traces the incorporation of Indian cinema into Hausa popular culture through successive processes of adaptation and dubbing. This history is significant because the movement of Indian cinematic material into Hausa did not involve the transfer of dialogue alone; it also placed characters, voices, styles of speech, and culturally recognizable dramatic repertoires within a Hausa linguistic environment.

The localization of Indian cinema in Northern Nigeria unfolded through multiple historical phases. Initially, Hindi films circulated in their original language with English subtitles, accessible primarily to urban, educated audiences. Subsequently, the emergence of Hausa-language remakes—locally produced films adapting Indian plotlines, character archetypes, and narrative conventions—marked a deeper level of cultural translation (Adamu, 2018, pp. 159–162). The most recent phase involves direct dubbing of Indian films into Hausa, a practice that has exponentially expanded the availability of cinematic content while maintaining the visual and performative elements of the original productions (Ijem and El-Qassim, 2020, p. 67). Each phase represents a different modality of linguistic and cultural mediation, with dubbing occupying a distinctive position: it preserves the indexical associations of original performances (voices, emotional registers, speech styles) while rendering dialogue comprehensible to Hausa-speaking audiences with limited or no knowledge of Hindi or English.

This mediated linguistic environment has particular significance for adolescent language practices. Unlike adult audiences who may engage with dubbed films primarily as entertainment, adolescents inhabit a developmental stage characterized by heightened sensitivity to peer-group norms, identity experimentation, and the strategic deployment of linguistic resources for social positioning (Mensah, 2013, p. 388; Isiaka, 2020, p. 85). The dubbed repertoire makes available not only translated dialogue but also recurring expressions, character names, speech styles, and dramatic personae associated with conflict, loyalty, revenge, and heroism—thematic domains that resonate strongly with adolescent concerns around status, affiliation, and boundary-making.

The Taraba North Senatorial Zone exemplifies these broader patterns while presenting distinctive features. As a linguistically diverse region where Hausa functions as a lingua franca alongside numerous indigenous languages, Taraba North provides a setting in which mediated linguistic resources can acquire additional layers of social meaning through cross-ethnic peer

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interaction. Prefield observations indicated sustained consumption of Hausa-dubbed Indian films among adolescents, including older productions whose linguistic and performative resources remained recognizable despite temporal distance from original release. This continuity suggests that dubbing sustains the circulation of cinematic material beyond the age of the original production, creating a palimpsestic media environment in which multiple generations of films coexist as resources for contemporary peer interaction.

The theoretical significance of this context lies in its demonstration of how transborder media flows are not simply received but actively transformed through local linguistic and cultural practices. Bauman and Briggs's (1990) concept of recontextualization—whereby discourse detached from one setting undergoes changes in context, form, function, and meaning when taken up in another—provides a framework for understanding how cinematic expressions acquire new social lives in adolescent peer interaction. However, the Northern Nigerian case extends this framework by showing how recontextualization operates not only at the level of individual utterances but also at the level of entire mediated repertoires that have themselves undergone prior processes of linguistic and cultural adaptation. The movement from Hindi to Hausa through dubbing represents one layer of recontextualization; the subsequent uptake of Hausa-dubbed expressions in adolescent peer discourse represents a second, analytically distinct layer.

This multi-layered process raises questions about agency, selectivity, and the conditions under which mediated forms become interactionally relevant. Not all film-derived expressions enter peer discourse, and those that do undergo different trajectories: some retain their original associations, others extend into new semantic domains, and still others undergo pragmatic transformation or re-indexicalization. Understanding these trajectories requires attention not only to the availability of mediated resources but also to the interactional work through which adolescents negotiate their meanings within specific peer relationships and local social environments.

2.4 Peer Interaction and Social Uptake

The social significance of a linguistic resource becomes visible in the interactional setting in which it is used. Peer interaction provides a context in which speakers position themselves in relation to others, display familiarity, negotiate relationships, and organize participation. Goffman (1981) draws attention to the organization of meaning through situated interaction, while Bauman (2001) emphasizes the social and performative dimensions of communicative practice. For the present study, these perspectives make interactional context central to understanding how a media-derived expression acquires significance beyond its cinematic source.

In the present study, social uptake is approached through observable interactional responses to the use of particular expressions. Repetition, reciprocal use, and endorsement provide evidence of how interlocutors respond to a form and whether its use is recognized and sustained within the interaction. Participant explanations provide a complementary source of evidence by indicating how adolescents themselves understand particular expressions and the contexts in which they consider them appropriate. Together, observed responses and participant accounts make it possible to examine social uptake without treating mere occurrence as evidence of established meaning.

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The same evidentiary approach accommodates restricted or unsuccessful uptake. A media-derived expression may be recognized without becoming part of ordinary peer discourse, remain confined to particular interactional situations, or be explicitly identified as cinematic rather than everyday language. Such cases demonstrate that exposure does not automatically produce incorporation. Uptake is selective and depends on whether a form acquires sufficient interactional and social relevance within the peer group to be reproduced, recognized, and sustained.

2.5 Research Gap

The literature establishes three relevant propositions: adolescents actively innovate with linguistic resources; popular media circulate linguistic forms beyond their original contexts; and social meanings are negotiated through situated interaction rather than determined by lexical form alone (Eckert, 2000; Bucholtz, 2002; Androutsopoulos, 2014; Silverstein, 2003). What remains insufficiently examined is the intersection of these processes in Hausa-speaking adolescent communities, particularly where recognizable linguistic forms are encountered through popular media and subsequently enter peer interaction.

African youth-language research has documented lexical creativity, social differentiation, and the influence of popular culture, while research on media and language has shown how mediated forms circulate beyond their original contexts. Less attention, however, has been given to tracing identifiable expressions from specific mediated sources into actual peer interaction and examining what happens to them after uptake. In the Hausa context, scholarship establishes both the vitality of youth linguistic practices and the importance of popular media, but the post-appropriation trajectories of specific expressions originating in dubbed films remain insufficiently documented.

The present study addresses this gap by tracing selected film-derived expressions from identifiable cinematic sources into adolescent peer discourse. Rather than treating the occurrence of a form in peer interaction as evidence of media influence, it examines the relationship among cinematic source, situated use, peer response, and participant interpretation. This allows the analysis to distinguish among meaning retention, extension, pragmatic transformation, and re-indexicalization, while also accounting for restricted or unsuccessful uptake.

The analytical problem is not simply whether media-derived expressions are borrowed, but what happens to recognizable forms after they enter local communicative practice. This focus provides an empirical basis for examining lexical appropriation as socially negotiated meaning-making rather than one-directional transfer, establishing the need for a theoretical framework capable of accounting for movement across contexts, changing social meanings, interactional performance, and selective uptake.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study brings together recontextualization, indexicality, Social Learning Theory, and performance as complementary perspectives on the movement of media-derived linguistic forms into adolescent peer interaction. Recontextualization and indexicality constitute the primary theoretical framework because they address the central analytical problem: how a linguistic form changes, or remains recognizable, when it moves from one communicative setting into another. Bauman and Briggs (1990) define recontextualization as a process through which discourse is detached from one context and reintroduced into another, making the

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transformation of context central to the analysis of mediated language. Indexicality complements this perspective by directing attention to the social meanings that linguistic forms acquire through situated use. Silverstein (2003) places this process within the relationship between linguistic forms and their social contexts, arguing that linguistic signs in use point to "contexts of occurrence structured for sign-users" (p. 195). He further emphasizes that relational identities can be "creatively (trans)formed in interaction" (p. 193). Together, these perspectives provide the principal basis for distinguishing the recognizable continuity of a lexical form from the possible transformation of its social and interactional significance.

Performance provides a complementary interactional perspective because the adolescents in this study do not merely repeat lexical items; they use recognizable expressions, speech styles, character names, and personae within particular encounters. Bauman's performance perspective treats performance as a mode of speaking whose significance emerges through the relationship among communicative form, event, and social structure (Bauman, 1975). Goffman's (1981) account of participation directs attention to the organization of interaction around speakers, recipients, and other participants. An utterance, he argues, establishes a "participation framework" that structures the relationships among those involved in an interaction (Goffman, 1981, p. 137). His related concept of footing is also relevant because speakers may sustain or change their alignment in response to what occurs during discourse (Goffman, 1981, p. 325). These perspectives situate media-derived lexical forms within the performed identities and interactional relationships through which adolescents give them social significance.

Social Learning Theory provides a secondary perspective on how salient mediated forms may become available for observation and possible reproduction. Bandura (1977) emphasizes observational learning and the role of attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation in the acquisition of observed patterns. Applied cautiously, the theory helps explain why particular cinematic expressions, character-linked forms, or speech styles may become available for subsequent use after repeated exposure. It does not, however, establish automatic linguistic transfer from film to peer discourse, nor does it establish a causal relationship between media consumption and adolescent behaviour. Its relevance is limited to the conditions under which salient mediated resources may become available for reproduction and continued circulation.

The perspectives are brought together as an analytical pathway linking mediated resources, exposure, selective appropriation, peer re-use, interactional uptake, and situated social meaning. This pathway is heuristic rather than deterministic. Exposure does not necessarily produce adoption; adoption does not necessarily produce sustained circulation; and circulation does not necessarily result in transformation. A form may retain its source meaning, extend into new contexts, acquire a different pragmatic function, or develop new indexical associations. It may also remain recognizable as film-derived without becoming part of ordinary peer discourse. The framework accounts for continuity, transformation, selective uptake, and non-uptake rather than presupposing a single trajectory from media exposure to linguistic change.

Recontextualization and indexicality remain central because they address what happens to a linguistic form after it moves from mediated discourse into local interaction. The analysis distinguishes between the form's identifiable cinematic source and its situated use, asking whether its semantic, pragmatic, and social value is retained, extended, or transformed. Performance directs attention to how such forms are deployed within encounters, including the

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adoption of character-linked identities and personae, while Social Learning Theory provides a limited account of how salient mediated resources may become available for reproduction. The empirical analysis gives primary evidential weight to the relationship among cinematic source, lexical form, peer use, interactional response, and participant interpretation. The study examines lexical transformation and social meaning without treating media exposure as sufficient evidence of incorporation or making behavioural-causal claims that the qualitative design cannot establish.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study adopts an interpretivist qualitative design combining ethnographically informed observation, analysis of naturally occurring peer interaction, semi-structured interviews, contextual fieldnotes, and selective comparison of adolescent expressions with their occurrence in Hausa-dubbed Indian films. The design traces identifiable media-derived lexical forms from cinematic discourse into adolescent peer interaction and examines how their meanings, pragmatic functions, and social associations are negotiated in local use.

The study emerged from preliminary observations prompted by media reports concerning the perceived influence of Hausa-dubbed Indian films on adolescent behaviour and language use in Northern Nigeria. Preliminary observation identified recurring patterns of linguistic imitation and behavioural appropriation, including non-standard expressions, stylized verbal exchanges, and the adoption of character-linked names and personae associated with protagonists and antagonists in dubbed films.

The study does not assume that exposure to such films causes violent behaviour. Rather, it examines an empirically observable relationship between media consumption, linguistic appropriation, and behavioural influence. Where participants attributed expressions or behaviours to films, such accounts were treated as participant interpretations rather than evidence of causation. Observed similarities between cinematic and local practices were examined as instances of appropriation and recontextualization rather than causal effects.

The empirical design connects four evidential domains: occurrence in dubbed-film discourse, observed use in peer interaction, participants' explanations, and interactional responses through which uses are accepted, repeated, or corrected. This triangulation distinguishes between a form that merely appears in both media and peer discourse and one that has acquired recognizable local meaning through social use.

The analysis is informed primarily by recontextualization and indexicality, supplemented by Social Learning Theory and a performance-oriented perspective. These perspectives are used heuristically rather than as a deterministic model of media influence.

3.2 Researcher Positionality

As a Hausa-speaking researcher with prior familiarity with the research sites, the principal researcher possessed linguistic and cultural knowledge that enabled engagement with the field and interpretation of participant accounts. At the same time, the researcher's position as an adult academic required attention to the distance between the researcher and adolescent peer networks.

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Observation was supported by research assistants across the six enclaves, using structured fieldnote procedures to document candidate expressions, interactional contexts, participant responses, and repetition. The principal researcher conducted the semi-structured interviews, allowing linguistic and contextual knowledge to inform questions concerning the meanings, origins, and uses of the expressions under investigation.

3.3 Participants and Research Sites

3.3.1 Study Area

Fieldwork was conducted in the Taraba North Senatorial Zone of Nigeria, a linguistically heterogeneous region in which Hausa functions prominently as a lingua franca in adolescent peer interaction. The area was selected because of the circulation of Hausa-dubbed media, the presence of adolescent peer networks in semi-public gathering spaces, and the sociolinguistic relevance of informal language practices.

3.3.2 Participants

Approximately 45–60 adolescents were encountered across the six selected peer enclaves. Thirty-six adolescents were selected for semi-structured interviews on the basis of their relevance to observed interactions and accessibility. Participants ranged from 12 to 19 years, with the majority between 14 and 17 years. Both male and female adolescents were encountered, although male participants were more numerous. The study also drew on 23 adult contextual/key informants, comprising teachers, guardians, school management personnel, and security personnel. These informants provided contextual information concerning adolescent media use and peer environments; their accounts were not treated as substitutes for adolescent participants' interpretations.

3.3.3 Research Sites and Sampling

Preliminary reconnaissance identified approximately twenty informal adolescent gathering enclaves displaying relevant characteristics, including riverbank spaces, areas beneath vegetation, and abandoned buildings. One enclave was purposively selected in each of the six locations within Taraba North Senatorial Zone, guided by accessibility and the presence of adolescent peer interaction relevant to the study. These spaces provided settings in which joking, teasing, verbal challenges, and reciprocal exchanges could be observed outside institutional environments. The sites were treated as interactional settings rather than representative samples.

3.3.4 Fieldwork Duration

Fieldwork was conducted over approximately four months. Research assistants visited the six enclaves on a rotating basis three to four times per week, with observation sessions lasting 1.5–4 hours. Approximately 120–150 hours of observation were accumulated.

3.4 Data Sources and Collection Procedures

The empirical corpus was constructed from four sources: (1) selected Hausa-dubbed Indian film texts; (2) naturally occurring adolescent peer interaction; (3) semi-structured interviews; and (4) researcher fieldnotes.

3.4.1 Film Source Verification

Lexical forms were treated as media-derived only where their occurrence in the film corpus could be established and participant accounts provided a connection to cinematic sources. Source verification addressed whether the expression occurred in the dubbed film, what it

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meant in its cinematic context, and how that use compared with its subsequent use in peer interaction.

3.4.2 Observation and Peer Interaction

Observation was conducted across the six enclaves. Fieldnotes recorded circumstances in which candidate expressions occurred, conversational context, interlocutor responses, repetition, reciprocal use, and correction. Attention was also given to character names, stylized speech, and performed personae associated with Hausa-dubbed Indian films. The analysis focused on short interactional episodes in which a target expression occurred. Interactional responses such as laughter, agreement, repetition, correction, or endorsement were considered evidence of how a form was being interpreted and socially taken up.

3.4.3 Interviews and Fieldnotes

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 36 adolescent participants and 23 adult informants. Adolescent interviews addressed perceived origin, meaning, and contexts of use. Adult informants provided contextual information concerning media consumption and peer environments. Participant accounts were compared with observed usage and verified film occurrences rather than treated independently as proof of cinematic origin. Fieldnotes preserved contextual information concerning setting, participant relationships, and patterns of repetition, supporting interpretation by situating expressions within interactional circumstances.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study incorporated informed assent from adolescent participants and consent from guardians and gatekeepers, together with anonymization and secure storage of records. Audio recording was restricted to contexts in which consent had been obtained. Observation remained non-interventionist, and the study avoided eliciting risky behaviour. Care was taken to ensure that participation did not depend on or disclose involvement in activities associated with particular gathering locations.

3.6 Methodological Justification

The methodology implements the study's theoretical concerns through complementary evidence. Observation establishes interactional context; film verification establishes provenance; interactional analysis examines how forms function in peer use; and participant interviews provide interpretive evidence. Triangulation distinguishes simple lexical resemblance from demonstrable connections among cinematic source, peer use, social response, and participant interpretation.

3.7 Limitations and Reflexivity

The findings are context-specific and not intended for statistical generalization. The corpus is limited to two films and six enclaves. Observer reactivity cannot be eliminated entirely, although sustained engagement helped reduce disruption. Reflexive fieldnote practices recorded positional considerations and interpretive decisions.

The distinction between observed occurrence, participant attribution, and verified cinematic source was maintained throughout. This distinction is important because the presence of a form in a film does not establish that adolescents acquired it from that source. The analysis gives primary evidential weight to cases in which source occurrence, observed peer use, and participant interpretation correspond. Initial attempts to observe interaction without disrupting

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the peer environment required repeated adjustments to observer positioning, as the presence of an unfamiliar adult altered conversational dynamics in two sites.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS

The analysis proceeded through qualitative, case-oriented comparison of lexical forms documented in Hausa-dubbed Indian films and their subsequent use in adolescent peer interaction. The unit of analysis was the lexical case: a form for which a connection could be established between its occurrence in the cinematic corpus, its use in adolescent interaction, and participants' recognition or explanation of its meaning and social function.

4.1 Corpus Reduction and Case Selection

Candidate expressions were considered for inclusion where evidence could be established across three domains: (1) occurrence in the Hausa-dubbed film corpus; (2) occurrence in observed adolescent interaction; and (3) participant recognition or explanation of the expression's meaning, origin, or social function. All cases retained possessed evidence from at least two domains, with fully triangulated cases (S+U+I) constituting the core analytical corpus.

Table 1. Film Corpus

Hausa Title	Original Hindi Title	Year Dubbed	Year Produced	Studio
Caskale	[Mogambo]	2023	1985	Algaita, Bauchi
Daaku	[Daaku]	2024	1990	Algaita, Bauchi

The dubbing artist at Algaita Studio confirmed the creative nature of this practice:

"Ba duk kalmomin ne Hausar asali ba... misali, shekewa, fecewa ko magarkama. Duk kirkira ta ce. Amma idan ka duba, har sun shiga cikin Hausar matasa."
"Not all the words are original Hausa... for example, shekewa, fecewa, or magarkama. They are all inventions. But the words have already become parts of the language of the youth."
— Dubbing Artist [DA-001]

Participant Coding Reference

Code	Meaning
AP-XXX	Adolescent Participant (interviewed)
AI-XXX	Adult Informant (interviewed)
RA-XXX	Research Assistant

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Code	Meaning
DA-XXX	Dubbing Artist
ID-XX	Adolescent Identifier (observed, not interviewed)
FN-YYYY-MM-DD	Fieldnote Entry

The working corpus comprised **19 lexical cases** (Table 2). Ten interactional extracts were selected for closer analysis as they provided particularly clear evidence of situated use, recipient response, and social function.

4.2 Lexical Transformation Patterns

Each case was examined across three evidential levels: source evidence (cinematic occurrence and meaning), interactional evidence (peer use and recipient response), and participant evidence (speakers' own explanations). Analysis revealed several distinct trajectories of lexical change.

4.2.1 Meaning Retention

Caskale remained associated with fighting or commotion in both film and peer use. In *Caskale* (Timestamp 2:45-50), the term appears during a fight where the protagonist prevails against multiple antagonists.

Majaga remained associated with matches or lighters in both film and enclave use. In *Daaku* (Timestamp 1:39:29), the antagonist calls: *"Ku kyasta majagan nan na ce"* ("I said, burn this village up").

Magarkama appeared in both films with the meaning of prison (standard Hausa: *gidan yari* or *gidan fursuna*). Timestamps: *Caskale* (1:30-32, 2:20-21); *Daaku* (0:20-23). An adult informant commented:

"Kalmar magarkama, ba mu san shi ba. Amma kamar garkamewa ta na nufin dauri... a Hausa-Indian film language."
"We don't know magarkama, but it is probably derived from garkamewa... a Hausa-Indian film language."
— Adult Informant [AI-008]

Karya and **mai hankali** were excluded as their cinematic provenance could not be specifically established.

4.2.2 Domain Shift

Daga moved from cinematic combat imperative to competitive context.
Source (*Daaku*, Timestamp 0:40-41): *"Dole za a ja daga a nan... zan bari kadan a cikin ku su fece don isar da sako."* ("There must be an attack here... I will leave some to escape to deliver the message.")

Peer use:

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ID-51: *"Mu je mu ja daga! Dole ne wannan."*
"Let's go and attack! This is compulsory."
[FN-2024-05-02, Enclave B]

Adult testimony confirms the shift:

"Ai kullum a jan daga su ke... watakila fim din ne... Before now, there was no talk of fighting to protect territories."
— Adult Informant [AI-007]

Fada and **rikici** showed similar extension from physical fighting to broader confrontation. Peers preferred non-conventional coinages (*caskale*, *suburbuda*) over standard Hausa equivalents (*fada*, *duka*) because these mark peer identity and carry affective intensity.

Suburbuda appeared in both films (Timestamps 1:40-41 and 0:50-51): *"Za ku ga yadda hannun zaki ke suburbuda"* ("You will see how the hands of a lion violently beats you all").

4.2.3 Pragmatic Transformation

Dallah (from *Don Allah*, "for God's sake") retained emphatic force but shifted interactional function.

Source (both films, Timestamps 2:30-32 and 1:10-11): *"Dallah banzaye ku bar nan. Idan ba ku kawo mini kan sa, zan sheke ku"* ("Hey, worthless ones, leave. Bring me his head or I will kill you").

Peer use during football disagreement:

ID-31: *"Dallah! Ba zan yarda ba. Arsenal ta fi Man City."*
ID-32: *[laughing] "Zancen banza. Dallah gafara!"*
[FN-2024-05-15, Enclaves A, E, F]

Laughter and reciprocal repetition indicate playful disagreement.

Banza transformed from insult to teasing:

ID-17: *"Kai, banza ne gaskiya."* → ID-18: *[laughter] "To, mu je."*
[FN-2024-04-20, Enclave A]

Allah ya tsine maka moved from cinematic curse to playful exaggeration.

Source (*Caskale*, Timestamp 2:45:04): *"Allah zai tsine muku ta hannu na"* ("Allah will curse you through my hands").

Peer use: *"Allah ya tsine maka"* [both laugh, walk off] [FN-2024-05-10, Enclaves C, E, F]

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4.2.4 Evaluative Reversal

The most striking transformations involved expressions acquiring positive evaluative force despite derogatory cinematic associations.

Shegen kaya shifted from contemptuous reference to praise:

ID-23: *"Shegen kaya! Ka yi kyau."* → Recipient: *[smiles, nods] "Na sani."*
ID-23: *"Ka ga yadda ya tsaya? Shegen kaya."*
[FN-2024-06-01, Enclave D]

Jahili reversed from "ignoramus" to "fearless/competent":

ID-41: *"Kai, dan nan ba karamin jahili ba ne. Ya tsaya ya yi fadan nan."*
ID-43: *"Jahili ne."* [laughs]
ID-42: *[laughing] "Shegen jahili ma kuwa!"*
[FN-2024-06-10, Enclave D]

Source (*Daaku*, Timestamp 2:30-32): *"Kai dabba... Jahili"* ("You animal... ignoramus").

Dabba similarly shifted from animality to strength.

Participant explanation:

"Jahili is a compliment in our group. It means you don't care about danger." — Adolescent Participant [AP-015]

Adult confirmation:

"Watakila salon magana ne... ana cewa mutum jahili, amma hakan wai yabo ne... sai idan kai abokinsa ne."
"Perhaps it's a new way of speaking... someone called jahili, that is actually praise... unless you are their friend."
— Adult Informant [AI-012]

Phrase-level extensions (*ba karamin jahili ba ne, kai wane irin dabba ne?, shege dabba ya san hanun shi*) showed the same pattern.

4.2.5 Hybrid and Ambiguous Use

Mugu could function as either insult or praise depending on context.

Source (both films, Timestamps 0:30-32 and 0:10-11): *"Ba a taba mugu iri na ba"* ("There has never been an evil one like me").

Peer interpretation varied:

"Kai fa mugu ne mutumin nan." — *"You, that person is really wicked."* [FN-2024-06-15, Enclave C]

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"Su kan ce mugu! Hakan na nufin jajirtacce ko mai ilmi." — "They say wicked! That means brave or knowledgeable." [AP-022]

Matsala was excluded as its general Hausa meaning prevented establishing cinematic provenance.

4.2.6 Character-Name Uptake (Nicknames)

Beyond isolated lexical forms, adolescents appropriated full character names and performer identities. This represents the most comprehensive level of appropriation, where a cinematic persona becomes a peer-group identity.

Nickname	Cinematic Source	Peer Rationale	Enclaves
Audu Ajay Devghan	Ajay Devgn	*"Ya iya kafa"* — skilled acrobatic fighter	A, B, D, E, F
Chindo Sharukhan	Shah Rukh Khan	*"Ya iya soyayya"* — loverboy	C, E
Bala Mogambo	Mogambo (Amrish Puri)	*"Bala is always the boss"*	A, F
KB Diram	Dharmendra	*"Diram na da karfi"* — strong	B, D

Participant confirmation:

"Mu kan kira shi Audu Ajay Devghan domin Audu ya iya kafa kamar Ajay Devgn." "We call him Audu Ajay Devghan because Audu is skilled with his legs like Ajay Devgn." [AP-031]

"Chindo Sharukhan ya iya soyayya. Kamar Sharukhan na fim." "Chindo Sharukhan is a loverboy. Like Sharukhan in the films." [AP-029]

"Bala Mogambo shi ne shugaba. Kullum shi ne ke ba da umarni." "Bala Mogambo is always the boss. He gives orders." [AP-034]

Adult corroboration:

"Mu kan ji sunayen nan a cikin matasa... Ba sunayen Hausa ba ne. Daga fina-finan Indiya suka zo." "We hear these names among the youth... They are not Hausa names. They come from Indian films." [AI-009]

Implication: Character-name uptake confirms appropriation extends beyond lexical borrowing to full identity performance. The combination of Hausa given names with Indian surnames demonstrates active, creative recontextualization.

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4.3 Interactional Evidence

Recipient responses established how expressions functioned in situated discourse.

Extract 1: Banza (Playful Teasing)

ID-17: *"Kai, banza ne gaskiya."* → ID-18: *[laughter] "To, mu je."* [FN-2024-04-20]

Extract 2: Shegen Kaya (Positive Evaluation)

ID-23: *"Shegen kaya! Kai ka yi kyau."* → Recipient: *[smiles, nods]* → ID-23 repeats: *"Shegen kaya."* [FN-2024-06-01]

Extract 3: Dallah (Emphatic Play)

ID-31: *"Dallah! Arsenal ta fi Man City."* → ID-32: *[laughing] "Dallah!"* [FN-2024-05-15]

Extract 4: Jahili (Evaluative Reversal)

ID-41: *"Ba karamin jahili ba ne."* → ID-43: *"Jahili mai ƙarfi."* → ID-42: *[laughing] "Kai ma jahili ne!"* [FN-2024-06-10]

Extract 5: Daga (Domain Shift)

ID-51: *"Mu je mu ja daga!"* [FN-2024-05-02]

Extract 6: Character-Name Uptake

ID-07: *"Audu Ajay Devghan ya zo!"*
ID-09: *[laughter] "Audu Ajay Devghan! Ka zo, Bala Mogambo na nan."*
ID-07: *"Kai, ka yi shiru. Chindo Sharukhan ya fi ku duka."*
[FN-2024-06-20]

4.4 Participant Triangulation

Participant accounts corroborated interpretations across three levels.

"When you watch films, you hear these words... and you know they are bad words. But we use them for our friends. It is like we make them our own." [AP-028]

Research assistant confirmed media provenance:

"Tabbas haka ne. Ka ga kalmar suburbuda ai ba Hausa ba ce. Daga India-Hausa aka samo ta." [RA-003]

Adult confirmation:

"Kawai dai dadin yaren a ke ji. Ba ka ganin har kwaikwayon muryoyin ake yi?" [AI-005]

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4.5 Negative Evidence

Not all recognizable film expressions achieved uptake.

Mai girma and **jarumi** showed limited or no sustained peer use. Participants explained:

"Mu kan ji mai girma a fim, amma ba mu amfani da shi a nan. Kalmar tsohuwa ce." [AP-019]

"Jarumi? Wannan kalmar tsohuwa ce. Muna son sababbin kalmomi." [AP-027]

Similarly, **karya** and **mai hankali** were excluded as general Hausa usage. Participants confirmed:

"Karya da mai hankali, kalmomin Hausa ne kawai. Ba su da banbanci." [AP-018]

Uptake depends on novelty, interactional usefulness, expressive force, and peer relevance.

4.6 Summary

The movement of film-associated lexical forms into adolescent peer interaction produced several distinct trajectories:

Trajectory	Forms	Description
Meaning Retention	*caskale, majaga, magarkama*	Cinematic meaning preserved
Domain Shift	*daga, fada, rikici, suburbuda*	Extended to new domains
Pragmatic Transformation	*dallah, banza, Allah ya tsine maka*	Function shifted
Evaluative Reversal	*shegen kaya, jahili, dabba*	Negative → positive meaning
Hybrid Use	*Mugu*	Ambiguous by context
Character-Name Uptake	*Audu Ajay Devghan, Chindo Sharukhan, Bala Mogambo, KB Diram*	Full identity performance
Non-Uptake	*mai girma, jarumi, karya, mai hankali*	Recognizable but unused

The pattern is not uniform transfer but recontextualization through situated interaction.

Theoretical Alignment:

The findings support the study's theoretical framework in the following ways:

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Theoretical Concept	Empirical Support
Recontextualization (Bauman & Briggs, 1990)	Forms moved from cinematic to peer contexts, acquiring new n and functions (Sections 5.2.1–5.2.5)
Indexicality (Silverstein, 2003)	Forms acquired new social indexicalities through peer use (e.g., praise rather than insult)
Performance (Bauman, 1975; Goffman, 1981)	Nicknames and stylized speech deployed within peer en (Section 5.2.6; Extract 6)
Selective Appropriation	Not all recognizable forms achieved uptake; novelty and inte usefulness determined incorporation (Section 5.5)

The Dubbing Artist's Confirmation:

The dubbing artist's assertion that creative coinages *"have already become parts of language of the youth"* is empirically supported through:

1. **Lexical appropriation:** 19 cases documented across six enclaves
2. **Evaluative reversal:** Forms acquiring opposite meanings (*shegen kaya*, *jahili*, *dabba*)
3. **Character-name uptake:** Full identity performance (*Audu Ajay Devghan*, *Chindo Sharukhan*, *Bala Mogambo*, *KB Diram*)
4. **Participant explanations:** Adolescents explicitly connecting forms to cinematic sources
5. **Adult corroboration:** Exterior confirmation of the phenomenon

The pattern is not uniform transfer but recontextualization through situated interaction. Negative evidence (*mai girma*, *jarumi*, *karya*, *mai hankali*) further qualifies exposure-to-adoption models. Incorporation depends not simply on film exposure but on negotiation of meaning, usefulness, novelty, and social value within peer repertoires.

Table 2. Working Corpus of Lexical Cases

No.	Form	Cinematic Association	Peer Use	Classification	Evidence
1	Caskale	Fight/commotion	Fight/commotion	Retention	S+U+I

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No.	Form	Cinematic Association	Peer Use	Classification	Evidence
2	Daga	Combat imperative	Competition	Domain shift	S+U+I
3	Fada	Physical fight	Confrontation	Extension	S+U
4	Rikici	Serious conflict	Tension	Extension	S+U
5	Dallah	Earnest assertion	Emphatic exclamation	Pragmatic	S+U+I
6	Banza	Worthlessness	Mock-insult/teasing	Pragmatic	S+U+I
7	Allah ya tsine maka	Curse	Playful exaggeration	Pragmatic	S+U+I
8	Shegen kaya	Contempt	Praise/admiration	Reversal	S+U+I
9	Jahili	Ignorance	Fearlessness/competence	Reversal	S+U+I
10	Dabba	Animality	Strength/valour	Reversal	S+U+I
11	ba karamin jahili ba ne	"No small fool"	"Truly formidable"	Reversal	S+U+I
12	kai wane irin	Insult	Strength/impressiveness	Reversal	S+U+I

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No.	Form	Cinematic Association	Peer Use	Classification	Evidence
	dabbane?				
13	shege dabba ya san hanun shi	Animal reference	Combat competence	Reversal	S+U+I
14	Mugu	Evil/wickedness	Ambiguous insult/praise	Hybrid	S+U+I
15	Majaga	Lighter/matches	Lighter/matches	Retention	S+U+I
16	Magarkama	Prison	Prison	Retention	S+U+I
17	Suburbuda	Violent beating	Intense action/performance	Domain shift	S+U+I
18	Mai girma	Film-associated honourific	Limited/no uptake	Non-uptake	S+I
19	Jarumi	Hero/warrior	Limited/no uptake	Non-uptake	S+I

5. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

This study examined what happens to recognizable words and phrases from Hausa-dubbed Indian films when adolescents in Taraba North use them in everyday peer interaction. The findings show that the movement from screen to speech is not simple copying or passive imitation. Instead, adolescents actively select, adapt, and reshape mediated language through peer-group recontextualization. Four main patterns emerged: meaning retention, domain shift, pragmatic transformation, and evaluative reversal. The study also found evidence of character-name adoption and restricted uptake. Together, these patterns demonstrate that adolescents negotiate mediated resources rather than reproducing them without change.

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The findings build on Bauman and Briggs's (1990) work on recontextualization by showing how linguistic forms change across multiple dimensions when they move from films to peer interaction. Retention (caskale, majaga, magarkama) shows that some forms keep their original meaning while shifting to new contexts. This supports Bauman and Briggs's observation that recontextualization does not always involve semantic change but may involve changes in how forms are used in different settings. Domain shift (daga, suburbuda) shows forms keeping their core meaning while extending to new interactional domains. For example, combat commands from films become competitive challenges in peer play. This aligns with Androutsopoulos's (2014) work on media-derived language, which emphasizes that appropriation involves not only borrowing words but also adapting them to local communicative needs.

Pragmatic transformation (dallah, bansa, Allah ya tsine maka) reveals forms keeping their emphatic force while shifting from serious statements to playful exchanges. This finding resonates with Isiaka's (2020) documentation of youth language practices in Northern Nigeria, where conventional expressions acquire new pragmatic functions through peer-group usage. Most significantly, evaluative reversal (shegen kaya, jahili, dabba) demonstrates complete inversion of evaluative meaning. Words associated with contempt, ignorance, or animality acquired positive peer meanings of admiration, fearlessness, and strength. As one participant explained, "When you watch films, you hear these words... and you know they are bad words. But we use them for our friends. It is like we make them our own" [AP-028]. This active reclamation represents a particularly creative form of recontextualization that extends existing scholarship on youth language innovation.

The pattern of evaluative reversal documented here parallels findings from other contexts of youth linguistic appropriation. Mensah's (2013) study of the Ágábá Boys showed how stigmatized words could be revalued as markers of ingroup solidarity and street credibility. Similarly, studies of youth language in urban Africa have documented how derogatory terms can be inverted to signal toughness, authenticity, or resistance to adult norms (Mensah, 2013; Isiaka, 2020). The Taraba North case extends this literature by showing how mediated discourse—specifically cinematic language—provides resources for such inversion. This suggests that transborder media flows can supply the raw material for local processes of semantic revaluation.

Furthermore, the findings extend Silverstein's (2003) account of indexicality by showing how forms acquire new social meanings through peer use that outsiders cannot fully interpret. In cinematic contexts, jahili and dabba signal ignorance and animality. In peer interaction, they signal fearlessness, competence, and strength. Adult informants recognized the forms but could not always interpret their peer meanings [AI-008, AI-009, AI-012]. As one noted, "We hear someone called jahili, and that is actually praise. But I guess you cannot call them that unless you are their friend" [AI-012]. The new meanings are restricted to the peer group. Adults and outsiders lack access to the interpretive framework that gives these forms their peer meanings. This pattern supports Silverstein's (2003) distinction between referential and indexical meaning, while demonstrating how indexical associations can be systematically reconfigured through local interactional practices. The peer-specific nature of these new meanings also aligns with Eckert's (2008) work on variation and social meaning, which emphasizes that linguistic forms acquire social significance through their association with particular social categories and stances. In this case, the relevant social category is not demographic (age, gender, ethnicity) but interactional: membership in the peer group and access to its shared cinematic knowledge.

The opacity of these forms to adults has important implications for understanding youth language as a site of generational boundary-making. The inability of adults to fully interpret

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peer usage—even when they recognize individual words—creates a semiotic barrier that reinforces group cohesion and excludes outsiders from full participation. This finding extends scholarship on youth language and social boundaries by showing how mediated resources can be deployed to construct interactional spaces that are simultaneously recognizable (through shared film knowledge) and exclusive (through peer-specific reindexicalization).

Character-name uptake (Audu Ajay Devghan, Chindo Sharukhan, Bala Mogambo, KB Diram) represents the most comprehensive level of appropriation. Adolescents do not merely borrow words; they perform full cinematic identities. The nicknames signal specific attributes: Audu Ajay Devghan signals acrobatic fighting skill; Chindo Sharukhan signals romantic success; KB Diram signals strength; Bala Mogambo signals leadership. This extends Bauman's (1975) performance perspective by showing how mediated personae become resources for identity construction in everyday interaction.

The adoption of cinematic character names as peer nicknames resonates with Larkin's (2008) analysis of media and urban culture in Nigeria, which emphasizes how cinematic forms provide templates for self-fashioning and social positioning. However, the Taraba North case extends this analysis by showing how such templates are not simply adopted but selectively adapted. Adolescents choose characters whose attributes align with locally valued forms of masculinity, competence, or social capital. The prominence of action-hero personae over comic or romantic leads reflects the interactional contexts in which these names are deployed—often in competitive or confrontational exchanges where displays of toughness or dominance are at stake.

This finding also contributes to broader scholarship on media and identity. Studies of youth culture and media consumption have documented how young people draw on mediated images to construct identities (Buckingham, 2000; Lemish, 2007), but the Taraba North case shows how this process operates at the level of linguistic performance. Adolescents do not simply admire or emulate characters; they become them through the adoption of names and speech styles. This suggests that media-derived identity work is not only visual or behavioral but also deeply linguistic, involving the incorporation of cinematic repertoires into everyday communicative practices.

Negative evidence (mai girma, jarumi, karya, mai hankali) is analytically crucial. These forms were recognizable but did not achieve sustained uptake. Participants explained this as a function of novelty: "Jarumi? That word is old. We like new words" [AP-027]. Uptake depends on novelty, interactional usefulness, expressive force, and peer relevance. This selectivity qualifies any simple model of media influence. Exposure does not automatically produce incorporation (Androutsopoulos, 2014).

The restricted uptake of certain film-derived forms aligns with Androutsopoulos's (2014) argument that media influence on language is mediated by local interactional practices and communicative needs. Forms that lack expressive force, interactional utility, or alignment with peer-group values remain unused despite recognition. This finding challenges deterministic models of media effects, which assume that exposure leads to imitation. Instead, it supports a view of adolescents as active agents who evaluate, select, and transform mediated resources according to local criteria of relevance and value.

The emphasis on novelty is particularly significant. The preference for "new words" over established terms like jarumi (hero) suggests that media-derived language serves not only communicative functions but also symbolic ones. It marks speakers as current, knowledgeable, and attuned to contemporary cultural flows. This aligns with broader scholarship on youth language and innovation, which emphasizes the role of linguistic novelty in signaling group membership and cultural capital (Androutsopoulos, 2014; Isiaka, 2020).

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6. CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP

This study makes three contributions to existing scholarship. First, it provides empirical documentation of post-appropriation trajectories of specific lexical forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films into adolescent peer interaction, an intersection not previously systematically examined. While earlier research documented the appropriation of media-derived speech (Ijem and El-Qassim, 2026; Adamu, 2018), this study extends that work by tracing what happens after forms enter the peer repertoire: how their meanings and social functions are retained, extended, transformed, re-indexed, or rejected.

Second, it demonstrates that recontextualization comprises distinct trajectories (retention, domain shift, pragmatic transformation, and evaluative reversal), providing a more precise vocabulary for examining media-derived language. This typology extends Bauman and Briggs's (1990) framework by specifying the range of transformations that can occur when mediated discourse is taken up in local interaction. It also provides a basis for cross-contextual comparison. Future research can examine whether similar trajectories emerge in other settings of media-induced language change.

Third, it extends theories of indexicality and performance by showing how cinematic resources become locally negotiated identity resources. The findings demonstrate that indexical meanings are not fixed properties of linguistic forms but emergent outcomes of interactional use, and that performance is not limited to staged or ritual contexts but permeates everyday peer interaction. This contributes to broader debates in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology about the relationship between language, identity, and social action (Silverstein, 2003; Eckert, 2008; Bucholtz and Hall, 2005).

The findings suggest that adolescents are active negotiators of mediated resources, not passive consumers. They complicate narratives of direct media influence, showing that uptake depends on local interactional relevance and peer-group values. They also highlight the importance of peer-group context for understanding linguistic change. Media-derived forms do not simply spread through exposure; they are evaluated, selected, and transformed through interactional practices that reflect local social dynamics and communicative needs.

This has implications for broader debates on globalization and cultural flow. The Taraba North case shows how transborder media resources are not simply imposed on local contexts but are actively reworked through local practices of meaning-making. Hausa-dubbed Indian films provide raw material, but adolescents determine what becomes socially significant through their interactional choices. This supports Appadurai's (1996) argument that globalization involves not only the circulation of cultural forms but also their reinterpretation and reembedding in local contexts.

The findings also have implications for understanding language change in mediated environments. As digital media increasingly place linguistic resources in circulation beyond their original contexts, processes of recontextualization like those documented here are likely to become more widespread. Understanding how speakers negotiate these resources—what they select, how they transform meanings, and what social functions they serve—is essential for understanding contemporary linguistic change.

6.2 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The findings are context-specific and not intended for statistical generalization. The corpus is limited to two films and six enclaves in Taraba North. Future research could extend this analysis to other regions, media genres, and age groups. Comparative studies could examine whether similar trajectories emerge in other contexts of media-induced language change, such as social media, music, or television. Longitudinal research would examine whether these

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forms persist or transform as peer groups age, addressing questions about the durability of media-derived linguistic innovation.

The role of social media in circulating these forms also warrants investigation. While this study focused on face-to-face peer interaction, digital platforms may accelerate the spread of film-derived expressions and create new pathways for recontextualization. Research on the intersection of traditional media (film) and new media (social platforms) would provide a more comprehensive picture of how mediated linguistic resources circulate in contemporary youth culture.

Finally, future research could examine the gendered dimensions of media appropriation. This study did not systematically analyze differences in how male and female adolescents appropriate film-derived language. Given the prominence of action-hero personae and the masculine-coded attributes they index, gender may shape both the forms that are appropriated and the trajectories they undergo.

7. CONCLUSION

This study shows that linguistic forms from Hausa-dubbed Indian films do not enter adolescent peer interaction through simple borrowing or direct media influence. Instead, they undergo selective appropriation and peer-group recontextualization. Forms are retained, extended, transformed, reversed, or rejected based on their interactional usefulness, novelty, and fit with peer values. The clearest evidence of this process appears in evaluative reversal, where derogatory cinematic terms become peer compliments, and in character-name uptake, where cinematic personae become performed identities.

The dubbing artist's remark that creative coinages "have already become parts of the language of the youth" [DA-001] points in the right direction. The findings refine this claim: such coinages become parts of peer repertoires, sustained through situated interaction, shared cinematic knowledge, and ongoing negotiation of social meaning. Adolescents do not absorb cinematic language passively. They rework it into locally meaningful resources for identity, affiliation, and expression.

These findings complicate deterministic accounts of media influence. They show that transborder media flows are reworked through local interactional practices. Adolescents evaluate, select, and transform mediated resources according to peer-group criteria of relevance and value. This aligns with work on globalization and cultural flow, which holds that cultural forms are reinterpreted and reembedded in local contexts rather than simply imposed upon them (Appadurai, 1996).

The study contributes to scholarship on media and language change by documenting post-appropriation trajectories, specifying distinct recontextualization patterns, andextending theories of indexicality and performance. The movement from screen to speech is selective communicative appropriation and peer-group recontextualization, not lexical borrowing. Mediated discourse acquires locally negotiated meanings through youth interaction, integrating transborder film resources into peer repertoires.

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