English and Slang Adaptation on E-Commerce Platforms as an Implication for Students' Digital Language Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how university students adapt to English and slang on e-commerce platforms and the implications for their digital language comprehension. The research focuses on understanding how students interpret informal expressions, abbreviations, and context-specific terminology commonly used in online marketplaces, reflecting their digital literacy and contemporary English competence. Utilizing a qualitative approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and analysis of student interactions on e-commerce platforms. Findings indicate that frequent engagement with digital marketplaces enhances students' ability to comprehend and use both standard and informal English forms, including slang, in contextually appropriate ways. This study highlights the importance of integrating digital language experiences into English learning, emphasizing that e-commerce environments can serve as a practical space for developing digital literacy and communication skills.

Keywords: English adaptation; slang; e-commerce; digital literacy; university students

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the Society 5.0 era has fostered increasingly intensive digital communication practices, including on e-commerce platforms. According to Crystal (2019), technology and social media continuously reshape language use. This leads to the emergence of new forms such as informal English, slang, idioms, and digital abbreviations in modern communication platforms, including e-commerce. Modern communication platforms accelerate interaction and shift human communication paradigms toward faster and more global digital patterns. The digital language used by students in online transactions and interactions aligns with linguistic variation studies such as General Extenders (GEs) in Toronto, which indicate that language change is influenced by community social practices, lexical shifts, and generational communication patterns (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2010).

Eble (1996) states that slang is a set of colloquial words and expressions that constantly evolve and are used to build identity and group solidarity. This aligns with the view that slang is a language variation emerging in specific social contexts and is dynamic. Slang arises from social interactions, trends, and the expressive needs of speakers. Digital media accelerates the emergence and spread of slang and other new language forms, making language change both structural and social (Coupland, 2014). On e-commerce platforms, slang is used to facilitate fast, efficient, and contextual communication because of its brevity and memorability (Androutsopoulos, 2014). Students familiar with these terms are able to quickly interpret meanings, understand conversational contexts, and adapt English in real digital communication situations. This demonstrates that slang is not only a linguistic aspect but also part of social practice developing in digital environments.

Digital literacy comprehension depends on traditional reading literacy, as well as the ability to understand and use digital language in technological contexts. Digital literacy is the ability to read, interpret, and use digital language, including understanding terms, idioms, and digital expressions (Leu et al., 2015). Students accustomed to digital language can interpret words or terms, understand the intended meaning of communication, and adjust their responses in online interactions. Therefore, mastering digital literacy supports contemporary English learning, particularly in facing informal language variations, idioms, and slang developing on e-commerce platforms.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, language use on e-commerce platforms can be seen as a social practice reflecting the digital communication culture of the younger generation (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2010). This phenomenon affects communication patterns relevant to social-humanities studies because it is influenced by social interactions, communication culture, and context-based English learning strategies. In this context, slang and digital terms function as symbols of communication culture among students actively interacting online and serve as valuable data for understanding language evolution in modern digital environments.

Recent studies highlight the significant role of digital media in English learning. Ningrum and Apoko (2025) found that active social media use can enhance vocabulary, speaking skills, and motivation among students. Maulida and Norliani (2025) showed that students use various social media platforms, such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, to expand vocabulary and practice English in informal and authentic contexts. Furthermore, Rosida, Rahmawati, and Sunarti (2025) emphasized that integrating social media into English teaching can increase student participation, motivation, and comprehension through multimodal content, despite challenges like internet access and teacher training.

International studies also support the relevance of slang and language variation in digital contexts. Pham, Pham, and Meyers (2024) show that social media serves as a real "laboratory" for English variations, including non-standard forms and slang. Sun, Hu, Gupta, Zemel, and Xu (2024) stress that slang, as part of online informal language, is a real phenomenon important for digital language comprehension and processing. Mahardika (2024/2025) explores how social media facilitates the dissemination and use of slang among adolescents and students. These studies support the relevance of research focusing on English and slang adaptation on e-commerce platforms.

In English education, students are expected not only to master formal English but also to understand and use digital language variations emerging online. Mastering slang and digital idioms on e-commerce platforms can enhance students' pragmatic competence, enabling them to understand informal communication meanings and contexts often not taught in formal classrooms (Eble, 1996). Therefore, integrating e-commerce language phenomena into English learning strategies is expected to strengthen students' language adaptation

abilities and prepare them for global digital communication.

While many studies discuss informal English on social media, most focus on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or discussion forums (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2010; Androutsopoulos, 2014). Research highlighting slang and idioms on e-commerce platforms, particularly their impact on students' digital language comprehension, remains limited. This gap is important because e-commerce terms have unique characteristics, combining formal, informal, and abbreviated language used contextually, presenting both challenges and opportunities for students to adapt to digital language.

This study aims to identify forms of English and slang adaptation emerging on online shopping platforms, explain how students utilize e-commerce terms and slang to enhance digital English comprehension, and analyze the implications of this phenomenon for context- and digitally-based English learning practices. The research is expected to provide theoretical benefits by enriching applied linguistics and sociolinguistics literature on digital language and slang adaptation, practical benefits for developing English learning materials relevant to digital contexts, and social benefits by strengthening students' digital literacy and enhancing their English communication skills.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because the research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of English and slang adaptation on online shopping platforms, as well as how students utilize it to enhance digital language comprehension. The analysis focuses on the context of students as active e-commerce users, allowing the data obtained to reflect real digital language practices and adaptation strategies used in daily interactions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Merriam & Stuckey, 2016).

The research subjects consisted of 30 students from the English Education Program at Universitas Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen, including 15 fourth-semester students and 15 sixth-semester students who actively use e-commerce platforms. The research was conducted on the campus of Universitas Ma'arif Nahdlatul Ulama Kebumen, which is representative because students have regular experience using e-commerce for transactions and digital communication. Data sources include students' interactions on e-commerce platforms, digital slang and idioms used, as well as students' experiences obtained through semi-structured interviews. Documentation of digital terms found on the platforms serves as primary data, while student interviews provide supplementary data on digital language adaptation strategies.

Data collection techniques included observation of language interactions on e-commerce platforms, semi-structured interviews with students, and documentation of slang and idiomatic expressions appearing in online communication. The collected data were then analyzed using content analysis and a sociolinguistic approach to interpret language functions, social contexts, and implications for English learning. The analysis process was conducted systematically by categorizing digital terms, identifying slang usage patterns, and linking the findings to students' language adaptation strategies, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of digital language phenomena on e-commerce platforms (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Forms of English and Slang Adaptation Emerging on Online Shopping Platforms

To understand the patterns of students' use of slang and e-commerce terms, a systematic mapping of the forms of language adaptation they employ in digital interactions is required. This mapping includes categories of meaning, communicative functions, and types of language adaptation arising from the use of English, abbreviations, and local-digital mixes. By presenting the data in the form of an analysis table, the study can more clearly identify how students interpret, modify, and apply e-commerce slang as part of their digital English competence. The following table provides a structured overview of the variations of terms used and the underlying adaptation patterns.

No	Slang Term	Meaning	Function in Communication	Type of Language Adaptation
1	SS	Screenshot	Facilitates sharing product images	English abbreviation
2	WL	Waiting List	Indicates item is ordered, waiting for stock	English abbreviation
3	PO	Pre Order	Ordering items not yet available	English abbreviation
4	Ready	Ready to Ship	Indicates item is available for immediate purchase	Direct English
5	CO	Check Out	Confirms purchase and completes transaction	English abbreviation
6	Keep	Save	Requests seller to hold the item for later purchase	Direct English
7	Payment	Payment	Process of transferring or settling purchase	Direct English
8	Paylater	Pay Later	Payment feature postponed until after receiving item	Informal English / digital term
9	Spill	Full Story / Info	Requests detailed product explanation in a friendly manner	Informal English
10	Tb	Height	Adjusting product size (clothing/shoes)	Abbreviation + local adaptation
11	Bb	Weight	Adjusting product based on buyer's weight	Abbreviation + local adaptation
12	Size	Size	Determines product size choice	Direct English
13	Etalase	Shop Category	Groups products by type	Indonesian (e-commerce concept adaptation)
14	Lelang	Auction	Sells items through a timed bidding system	Indonesian (e-commerce concept adaptation)
15	BU	Need Money	Seller reason to sell quickly and cheaply	Abbreviation + local-digital
16	PL	Preloved	Second-hand items still usable	Informal English
17	Giveaway	Free Gift	Attracts buyers through free item promotion	Direct English
18	Diskon	Discount	Attracts buyers with lower	Indonesian (e-

			price	commerce concept adaptation)
19	Flash Sale	Quick Sale	Creates urgency to buy in limited time	Direct English
20	Ongkir	Shipping Cost	Cost of delivering item	Abbreviation + local-digital
21	Restock	Restock	Indicates item will be available again	Direct English
22	Sold Out	Sold Out	Information that item is no longer available	Direct English
23	Launching	Product Launch	Announces new product to consumers	Direct English
24	Murce	Super Cheap	Attracts buyers with affordable price	Abbreviation + local-digital
25	Reseller	Reseller	Offers special price for wholesale buyers/sellers	Direct English
26	Testimonial	Customer Review	Evidence from previous buyers about product quality	Direct English
27	Real Pict	Original Photo	Ensures authenticity of product images	Informal English
28	DM	Direct Message	Direct communication channel between buyer and seller	English abbreviation

The phenomenon of English and slang adaptation on online shopping platforms reflects how students develop efficient digital communication strategies. Data shows that terms such as "SS" (Screenshot), "WL" (Waiting List), "PO" (Pre Order), and "CO" (Check Out) are English abbreviations that facilitate interaction and accelerate communication among users. Students who are accustomed to using these short but contextualized terms, similar to slang in digital platforms, demonstrate the ability to interpret meaning quickly and accurately, which is part of digital literacy as well as contemporary English competence (Crystal, 2001). Modern literacy not only involves reading traditional texts but also includes the ability to utilize technology, interact in online communities, and interpret language that evolves dynamically through digital media, including in e-commerce contexts (Coiro, 2003; Kinzer & Leander, 2003). This adaptation aligns with Eble's (1996) theory that slang is dynamic and emerges in specific social contexts to facilitate communication within particular groups.

Beyond abbreviations, there are terms that use direct or informal English, such as "Ready," "Keep," "Payment," "Spill," and "Real Pict." These terms not only expand students' English vocabulary but also help them understand pragmatic meanings in digital contexts. For example, "Spill" is used to request explanations in a casual manner, while "Real Pict" emphasizes the authenticity of product information. This approach supports pragmatic literacy, where students learn to recognize the social function of language and understand implicit meanings in digital communic
ation (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2010; Thorne et al., 2009).

Language adaptation is also evident in local-digital mixes, such as "Tb" (Tinggi Badan / Height), "Bb" (Berat Badan / Weight), "BU" (Butuh Uang / Need Money), "Murce" (Murah Cekali / Very Cheap), and "Ongkir" (Ongkos Kirim / Shipping Fee). These terms reflect a combination of English, abbreviations, and local language to fit students' social contexts. This strategy demonstrates students' ability to perform code-mixing and creative adaptation to make communication more relevant to their digital culture and needs (Myers-Scotton, 1993; Androutsopoulos, 2014). Thus, students not only learn English vocabulary but also

develop contextual and pragmatic language adaptation strategies.

Some terms retain Indonesian but are adapted for e-commerce contexts, such as "Etalase" (Showcase), "Lelang" (Auction), and "Diskon" (Discount). This adaptation emphasizes that digital language phenomena are not limited to English but also involve adjusting local vocabulary to remain relevant in students' digital social contexts. This reinforces the concept of situated learning, where language learning occurs through authentic experiences and interactions in digital social practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Students who actively use these terms learn to interpret context, predict meaning, and use vocabulary effectively in e-commerce communication.

The analysis table above shows that students' language adaptation strategies on e-commerce platforms include: the use of English abbreviations for communication efficiency, direct and informal English to understand pragmatic contexts, local-digital mixes to adjust to social interactions, and adapted Indonesian for contextual relevance. This phenomenon demonstrates that e-commerce platforms provide authentic digital English learning spaces, where students can simultaneously develop vocabulary, communication strategies, and digital literacy. In other words, language adaptation not only facilitates online interaction but also serves as an effective means to enhance students' English proficiency in the Society 5.0 era.

Utilization of E-Commerce Terms and Slang to Enhance Students' Digital English Comprehension

The phenomenon of using terms and slang on e-commerce platforms provides students with opportunities to enhance their digital English comprehension. Data shows that students actively use various terms such as "SS" (Screenshot), "PO" (Pre Order), "CO" (Check Out), "Paylater," "Flash Sale," and "Real Pict" in transactions and daily communication on e-commerce platforms. These terms function not only as concise communication tools but also as a means for students to internalize English vocabulary contextually (Crystal, 2001; Eble, 1996). By understanding these terms, students can interpret message contexts, identify conversational intentions, and improve their reading and writing skills in digital English.

Students employ e-commerce terms and slang through informal learning strategies, learning while directly interacting in authentic digital contexts. This process aligns with the theory of situated learning, where learning occurs through authentic experiences and participation in social practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991). For instance, terms such as "Keep" or "DM" allow students to understand communicative intentions without relying on formal dictionaries. Terms like "PL" (Preloved) or "Murce" (Murah Cekali) introduce students to creative and idiomatic language usage that blends English and local language pragmatically. This adaptation process enhances students' ability to understand English in modern digital contexts while fostering digital literacy competencies (Leu et al., 2015).

The use of e-commerce slang also supports the development of students' pragmatic competence. Their ability to understand implied meanings and communicative purposes in specific situations grows (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2010). Students familiar with terms like "Flash Sale," "Diskon," or "Restock" can interpret urgency, promotional offers, and product availability contexts. Using these terms strengthens cognitive adaptation strategies, enabling students to recognize patterns, predict meanings based on context, and apply terms in digital communication. This aligns with Thorne, Black, and Sykes (2009), who argue that interaction in online communities enhances target language comprehension through authentic social experiences.

Furthermore, students use e-commerce slang to improve written communication skills, as digital interactions require concise, clear, and precise messaging. Terms such as "SS," "CO," and "Payment" allow students to express intentions efficiently in English while practicing contemporary vocabulary. This approach corresponds with the concept of New Literacies, emphasizing the ability to read, interpret, and use language in digital contexts as

part of 21st-century literacy competencies (Leu et al., 2015; Godwin-Jones, 2018). Thus, the adaptation of e-commerce terms and slang becomes an effective strategy for learning digital English, integrating linguistic, social, and technological elements.

Students utilize e-commerce terms and slang through observation, interaction, and hands-on practice on digital platforms, enabling them to understand English in real contexts. This adaptation not only enhances vocabulary and pragmatic skills but also forms contextual digital literacy strategies. The phenomenon demonstrates that e-commerce platforms are not merely transactional media but also authentic learning spaces for digital English, relevant to the lives of modern students. Integrating these experiences into formal learning strategies can enhance the mastery of contemporary English in the Society 5.0 era.

Implications of This Phenomenon for Socially and Digitally Contextualized English Language Learning

The phenomenon of using terms and slang on e-commerce platforms has significant implications for socially and digitally contextualized English language learning. The use of terms such as "SS," "PO," "Flash Sale," "Paylater," and "Real Pict" indicates that students are not only acquiring new vocabulary but also internalizing the social context of language use. According to Thorne, Black, and Sykes (2009), interaction in online communities provides language learners with opportunities to understand the meaning, function, and context of language authentically. This demonstrates that e-commerce can serve as an effective informal learning medium, as students participate in real communication practices while developing language skills.

The impact of e-commerce slang on formal learning practices can also be seen through the enhancement of students' digital literacy competencies. Students accustomed to digital terms such as "Ongkir," "BU," "Tb," and "Bb" learn to interpret vocabulary meaning from digital contexts, recognize language patterns, and apply these terms in relevant communication. This process aligns with the New Literacies theory, which emphasizes the importance of reading, writing, and interpreting language in modern digital contexts (Leu et al., 2015; Godwin-Jones, 2018). Integrating slang and digital terms into learning practices allows students to develop reading and writing skills in a more contextualized and practical manner.

This phenomenon also supports the application of socially situated learning. Adaptation of local-digital terms such as "Murce," "PL," and "Keep" shows how students adjust English to their cultural and social interactions. This aligns with the situated learning concept (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where language learning occurs through authentic experiences and participation in real social practices. Thus, students do not merely memorize vocabulary but also understand how language is used in specific social contexts, enhancing their pragmatic competence and interpersonal communication skills.

Moreover, the use of e-commerce slang has implications for digital-based English teaching strategies. Teachers or lecturers can integrate digital slang terms into learning materials, such as online interaction analysis tasks, e-commerce transaction simulations, or digital vocabulary discussions. This approach reinforces task-based language learning (TBL), which emphasizes language learning through the completion of real tasks in authentic contexts (Ellis, 2003). By utilizing digital slang as learning material, students gain relevant real-world learning experiences while improving their English proficiency in digital contexts.

E-commerce slang provides a tangible contribution to socially and digitally contextualized English language learning. Students use digital terms to expand vocabulary, understand pragmatic language functions, develop digital literacy, and apply language in authentic social contexts. Integrating this phenomenon into formal learning strategies can strengthen students' overall English competence in line with Society 5.0 demands, emphasizing digital literacy, effective communication skills, and contemporary language

mastery. Consequently, e-commerce is not merely a transactional medium but also an authentic and contextual learning space for digital English.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the adaptation of English and digital slang on e-commerce platforms has created new forms of communication increasingly familiar to students. Terms such as "checkout," "restock," "preloved," "real pict," "spill," and "paylater" function not only as transactional vocabulary but have also become part of students' everyday language in digital activities. This phenomenon indicates that e-commerce serves as an interactive space that enriches students' linguistic experiences and influences how they understand and interpret English in digital contexts.

The findings also show that students utilize e-commerce terms as a means to strengthen their comprehension of contemporary English. The use of abbreviations, digital idioms, and mixed English–Indonesian vocabulary helps students become more adaptive in reading information, navigating application features, and communicating efficiently in digital environments. Thus, the language that develops on e-commerce platforms functions not only as a transactional tool but also as a relevant source for learning English.

This study provides important contributions to the development of socially and digitally contextualized English language learning. The findings confirm that integrating digital language into learning can enhance the relevance of instructional materials and help students understand the practical use of English in everyday life. Future research could expand to analyze language use across other digital platforms or specific language skills, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the role of digital language in English language learning.

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