

English Department Students' Attitudes Toward The Use Of English Slang On X (Twitter)

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received: Apr 15, 2026 Revised: May 14, 2026 Accepted: June 12, 2026	Purpose of the study: This study examines how English Department students at Universitas Airlangga evaluate English slang on X (Twitter), the communicative advantages and obstacles they report, and the motivations behind their decisions to use, adapt, or avoid it. Methodology: The study uses a qualitative design framed by Baker's (1992) language attitudes model and Crystal's (2004) account of internet language. Data came from 30 students of the 2022 cohort through an open-ended questionnaire adapted from Hunaeda and Rahmat (2024) and semi-structured interviews, and were analysed thematically and mapped onto cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. Main Findings: Three attitude patterns appeared: positive, negative, and neutral or context-dependent. Students linked slang with efficiency, informality, enjoyment, social bonding, inclusion, self-image, and informal vocabulary growth. They also reported misunderstanding, exclusion, irritation at overuse or inappropriate use, and concern that heavy slang use might affect formal language habits. Several verified unfamiliar items before using them or adjusted their language to the interlocutor. Novelty/Originality of this study: The study joins language-attitude research to digital discourse on X and focuses on English Department students, who are trained users of English and are rarely the population in studies of English slang on social media. It shows that students judge slang against audience, context, cultural knowledge, and communicative purpose, and that the same student can accept a form in one setting and reject it in another.
Keywords: English Department students; English slang language attitudes; X (Twitter)	
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A. Introduction

Digital platforms have changed where people write English and how they shape it. On X, formerly Twitter, posts are short, public, and quickly circulated through replies, reposts, quoted posts, and hashtags. A user usually writes for a familiar community while knowing that strangers may read the same message. Research on social media in language education describes these platforms as spaces where interaction, identity work, and informal language practice overlap (Reinhardt, 2019; Lambton-Howard et al., 2021; Barrot, 2022). For Indonesian university students who study English, X is at once a social space and a place where English appears outside the classroom.

English slang is one of the most visible features of that environment. A slang item does more than name something informally. It can mark familiarity, group membership, humour, an evaluative stance, or a generational position. Online it is often compressed through clipping, acronyms, creative spelling, and code-mixing. Indonesian studies have traced these processes on Twitter, Instagram,

TikTok, and other platforms, and they report that users adopt slang because it makes interaction feel relaxed, current, and close (Sabrina, 2021; Pratiwi & Maghfira, 2022; Saputra et al., 2023; Halim et al., 2023).

The social usefulness of slang comes with a communicative condition. An expression that is transparent to one audience can be opaque to another, and the difference often depends on cultural references, community practice, or shared online knowledge as much as on vocabulary size. This matters for users of English as a foreign language. Work on informal digital learning of English reports that out-of-class exposure widens learners' contact with naturalistic language and can support motivation, confidence, and willingness to communicate, although what learners gain depends on how they interpret and reuse what they meet (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2019; Lee, Xie, & Lee, 2021; Zadorozhnyy & Lee, 2023).

Language attitudes offer a way to examine that tension. Baker's (1992) framework treats an attitude as multidimensional. The cognitive component covers what users believe about a form, the affective component covers what they feel toward it, and the conative component covers what they are willing to do. The model suits slang because a single student can believe that an abbreviation saves time, enjoy using it with friends, and still leave it out when writing to a lecturer. Kirilenko (2024) places attitudes in social experience and in the way speakers position themselves toward language practices, while Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021) locate such evaluations within wider sociolinguistic variation, where a judgment about a variety carries a judgment about its users.

Studies with Indonesian and other EFL learners show that attitudes toward English are tied to educational experience, perceived opportunity, identity, and practical value (Kurniasari & Mbato, 2018; Wati, 2023). Huwari (2021) reports that attitudes differ with learners' backgrounds and experiences. Yuan et al. (2023) find that students in English-medium instruction hold favourable orientations that still shift with the situation, and Putra and Tustiawati (2024) describe multilingual university students in Bali who evaluate several varieties positively while choosing among them according to setting and interlocutor. Evaluations of slang therefore need to be read together with the communities and situations in which students use English.

Crystal's (2004) account of Netspeak describes internet language as written in form and conversational in function, with a tendency toward abbreviation, playfulness, and economy. Those properties help explain why slang is dense on social media, where users write quickly, compete for attention, and keep contact going with little effort. Later work treats online language as a site of participation, audience design, and identity performance (Reinhardt, 2020; Lambton-Howard et al., 2021). Research on Gen Z language documents rapid morphological innovation and the fast movement of new items across platforms (Jabeen & Nawaz, 2025), and Juli et al. (2024) find semantic differences between millennial and Gen Z slang. Guntar et al. (2026) connect abbreviation use with language attitudes and group identity.

Research relevant to the present study falls into four strands. The first examines general language attitudes among English learners (Kurniasari & Mbato, 2018; Huwari, 2021; Wati, 2023; Yuan et al., 2023). The second describes slang and informal language among young people, including Indonesian youth language and slang on Twitter and other platforms (Smith-Hefner, 2007; Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014; Nuraeni & Pahamzah, 2021; Sabrina, 2021; Saputra et al., 2023). The third reports learners' perceptions of particular platforms for English learning, covering Instagram, TikTok, X, and social networking sites in general (Pitaloka et al., 2021; Anggraini et al., 2023; Suciani et al., 2023; Damaryanan & Subekti, 2024; Ilmita et al., 2025; Mulyana et al., 2025; Paramita & Sulistyani, 2026). The fourth links digital English use with informal digital learning, willingness to communicate, and learner emotion or self-efficacy (Toffoli & Sockett, 2015; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2019; Lee, Xie, & Lee, 2021; Zadorozhnyy & Lee, 2023). Reviews of social networking sites in English education (Zainuddin & Yunus, 2022; Tan & Yunus, 2023) and a meta-analysis of social media use and learning outcomes (Duha et al., 2026) report gains alongside problems such as distraction and uneven participation.

Few studies sit where these strands meet. Slang research often stops at describing forms and functions, while attitude research often addresses English in general or a platform as a whole. Hermansyah et al. (2025) examine attitudes toward English slang in Indonesian social media, yet the case of English Department students on X remains thin. These students are worth asking because they are also prospective language professionals, trained to notice register and appropriateness, and their exposure to English is sustained (Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014; Damaryanan & Subekti, 2024; Ilmita et al., 2025).

The study therefore asks three questions. What positive, negative, and neutral attitudes do English Department students express toward English slang on X? How do those attitudes correspond to the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of language attitudes? What instrumental and integrative motivations lie behind their decisions to use, avoid, or conditionally adopt slang?

The answers have two kinds of relevance. Sociolinguistically, they add evidence that young Indonesian users of English evaluate and adapt digital English according to audience and context. Pedagogically, they give a basis for teaching that recognises students' exposure to informal digital English while keeping academic English in view, and that treats slang as one part of a wider repertoire whose suitability depends on who is reading and why.

B. Methods

The study uses a qualitative design because the research questions concern the meanings, experiences, and explanations that students attach to slang, and these are difficult to capture through a fixed attitude scale. Qualitative inquiry suits work that explores how participants describe a social phenomenon and how patterns emerge from their accounts (Dawson, 2007). The same choice is common in research on online language and language attitudes, where participants' own explanations carry much of the analytical value.

Two perspectives frame the analysis. Baker's (1992) language attitudes framework is used to sort students' cognitive, affective, and conative responses and to read their instrumental and integrative motivations. Crystal's (2004) account of internet language is used to interpret the digital properties of slang, especially creativity, economy, informality, and the relation between written interaction and conversational practice. Together they allow the data to be read as attitudes toward language and as responses to what X makes easy or difficult.

Participants and research context

The research took place in the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Airlangga. The participants were 30 students from the 2022 cohort, 18 of them female and 12 male. All were users of X, with reported activity ranging from several days per week to daily use. The focus on English Department students was deliberate: their sustained academic exposure to English puts them in a position to notice differences between formal English, informal English, and digital slang.

The context shapes how the responses should be read. Participants were not asked whether slang is correct in a formal linguistic sense. They were asked to explain their perceptions and practices inside a social-media environment, so their answers are situated judgments. When a student said slang was acceptable in casual interaction, the statement was a register judgment about that setting. When a student avoided an unfamiliar item, the response reflected uncertainty about meaning, appropriateness, or cultural implication.

Data collection

Two techniques were used: an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was adapted from Hunaeda and Rahmat (2024) and modified for the topic of English slang on X. Its open format let participants name the slang they use, describe how they evaluate it, and give reasons for their choices. The interviews then gave them room to expand on written answers that were brief or general, which helped clarify the intentions and conditions behind those answers.

The semi-structured format was chosen for its flexibility. Rose, McKinley, and Baffoe-Djan (2020) note that semi-structured interviews keep enough consistency across participants while allowing the interviewer to follow up on what a participant raises. That flexibility mattered here because students did not define slang in the same way. Some associated it mainly with abbreviations, others with contemporary informal vocabulary, and others with expressions tied to particular online communities. The interviews were used partly to establish how each participant understood the object of the study.

Data analysis and trustworthiness

Questionnaire and interview data were analysed thematically. The process moved from familiarisation with the responses to identification of recurring ideas, grouping of related statements, development of themes, and interpretation through the theoretical framework. Dawson (2007) argues for identifying patterns that emerge from the data instead of forcing every response into predetermined categories. The three overarching themes reported below, positive, negative, and neutral or context-dependent, came out of recurring patterns in participants' evaluations.

The themes were then mapped onto the three dimensions of language attitude. Cognitive evidence included beliefs that slang makes communication efficient, relaxes the tone of an exchange, or causes misunderstanding. Affective evidence included comfort, enjoyment, irritation, and conditional acceptance. Conative evidence included decisions to use slang in casual settings, to look up meanings before using unfamiliar items, to avoid certain forms, or to adjust language to the interlocutor. Reading the themes through these dimensions keeps beliefs, feelings, and behaviour connected in the analysis.

Interpretive consistency rested on triangulating questionnaire and interview responses. A theme was retained when it appeared across participant accounts or was elaborated in detail during the interviews. The study makes no claim to statistical generalisability, since the sample covers one cohort in one department at one university. Its value lies in a detailed account of how a group of English learners handles slang in a specific digital environment.

C. Result and Discussion

Participant activity and the overall pattern

Thirty English Department students completed the questionnaire voluntarily, 18 female and 12 male. Most reported using X three to four days a week, and some used it daily. That level of exposure is relevant to the findings, since attitudes toward slang develop through repeated contact. Students meet the same expressions again and again, watch how other users respond to them, and learn which forms are understood inside which communities.

Thematic analysis produced three attitude patterns: positive, negative, and neutral or context-dependent. The positive theme was the most prominent, though it did not remove concern about communicative barriers. What the responses show is qualified acceptance. Slang was welcomed when it made an exchange more relaxed, expressive, or socially connected, and the same students rejected it when the audience, topic, or form made misunderstanding likely. Similar tension appears in the wider literature on social-media language, which reports both support for interaction and new difficulties for users (Reinhardt, 2019; Lambton-Howard et al., 2021; Barrot, 2022).

1. Positive attitudes

Students with positive attitudes described English slang on X as a resource for quick and informal communication. Slang let them express feelings fast, keep the tone casual, reduce stiffness, and make an exchange entertaining. These evaluations match Crystal's (2004) description of internet language as creative and economical. Participants treated abbreviated and informal items as functional choices fitted to the speed and interactivity of online writing.

The positive theme also had an emotional side. Participants said they felt comfortable, excited, drawn in, and entertained when they used or encountered slang. The emotional quality of digital interaction appears to be part of what makes informal English attractive to learners. Research on

informal digital learning of English reports a similar role for enjoyment in learners' digital engagement with the language (Lee, Xie, & Lee, 2021). The present study did not measure proficiency, so the participants' accounts indicate only that positive emotion encourages continued exposure and experimentation.

Social bonding was a third element. Students explained that slang made them feel connected, related, engaged, and included, even with people they did not know personally. The finding fits research on youth language and digital identity, where informal language marks belonging and creates closeness in interaction (Smith-Hefner, 2007; Saputra et al., 2023). On X this function is visible because users gather around topical or fandom-based communities in which shared vocabulary becomes a recognisable sign of participation.

Participants also linked slang with self-image. Some said that using English slang made them feel cool, trendy, or more confident, and helped them create a favourable impression. The language choice communicates what the user means and also how the user wants to be seen. Reinhardt (2020) describes social media as a mirror and a doorway through which learners see themselves and enter wider linguistic communities, and slang seems to work that way here, letting participants project an informal English-speaking persona.

A further perception concerned informal language development. Some students believed that contact with slang enriched their vocabulary and helped them adjust their communication with native speakers or with other users at ease in informal English. This matches work on informal digital learning, which values exposure to language beyond instructional materials (Toffoli & Sockett, 2015; Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2019). Anggraini et al. (2023) similarly report vocabulary gains among students who use X. The participants described the benefit as informal growth that sits alongside formal English instruction.

2. Negative attitudes

The negative theme centred on the communicative obstacles slang can create. Students reported feeling excluded when they did not understand an expression, particularly when it belonged to a specific community or rested on a cultural reference. X brings together users of different ages, experiences, and social groups, so assumptions about shared knowledge fail easily. A form that works inside one community does not always travel to another.

Miscommunication was the most direct concern. Participants noted that unfamiliar slang can be misread and that even users of the same generation do not share the same repertoire. The problem is wider than a generation gap. Slang changes quickly, moves across communities, and picks up local meanings along the way. Studies of youth slang report the same variation in form and function across context, group, and interactional purpose (Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014; Nuraeni & Pahamzah, 2021).

Some students described slang as irritating when it was overused, used inappropriately, or used to mock other people's opinions. Slang is not read as friendly by default; its social meaning depends on how it is deployed. The same abbreviation can shorten the distance between friends and cause offence or confusion when addressed to a stranger. The negative responses therefore show an implicit sense of pragmatic appropriateness.

Avoidance was the other reported behaviour. When students met a new item whose meaning they did not know, some preferred to leave it alone until they had checked it. Others stayed away from forms tied to particular cultural references because they were unsure what those references carried. Learners are clearly making judgments about uncertainty and risk instead of absorbing whatever appears on the timeline. This cautious behaviour can be read as pragmatic self-monitoring in a multilingual digital space.

One participant worried that heavy slang use could weaken grammar. The concern was not widespread in the dataset, yet it points to a tension between informal digital competence and formal language expectations. Crystal (2004) takes a more optimistic view of internet language, while the participant's worry points toward register differentiation. What the finding suggests is that students need occasions to distinguish informal digital fluency from formal academic accuracy.

3. Neutral and context-dependent attitudes

The neutral theme is the most revealing of the three because those students treated slang as an ordinary feature of contemporary online communication and judged each case on its context. A participant might accept slang in casual conversation and reject it in a formal situation. Another mirrored the style of the interlocutor, using slang when the other person used it and reducing it when the exchange turned formal.

This pattern can be read as audience design and register adaptation. The students show an awareness that effective language use involves recognising who is communicating, what the interaction is about, and what level of formality is expected, alongside knowing what a word means. Moving between informal and formal repertoires matters for English Department students in particular, since they take part both in everyday digital communication and in academic or professional discourse.

A neutral position of this kind is a differentiated attitude in its own right. Students recognise the social legitimacy of slang and at the same time set boundaries around it. The result is consistent with research showing that language attitudes and practices in multilingual settings can be positive across varieties while still varying by situation and social purpose (Putra & Tustiawati, 2024).

4. Instrumental and integrative motivations

The motivations participants gave add a further layer. Instrumental motivations included being seen as cool, appearing trendy, expanding informal vocabulary, expressing emotion efficiently, and growing more comfortable with casual English. These goals are self-oriented and practical, and they help explain why slang stays attractive even to students who know it is unsuitable in many settings. A short, familiar expression saves effort while supporting an image of fluency or current digital awareness.

Integrative motivations appeared when students described using slang to keep up with trends, follow the language of friends, and take part in communities such as Bookfess. Here the value of slang comes from belonging. The language choice aligns a user with a group and lets them join its shared practices, which is compatible with scholarship on youth language and digital identity (Smith-Hefner, 2007; Reinhardt, 2019). Guntar et al. (2026) similarly connect group identity with the use of abbreviated forms.

The two kinds of motivation coexist. A student may use the same item because it is quick to type, because it names an emotion precisely, because friends use it, and because it marks membership in a community. Motivation is layered, and learning, identity, and social interaction do not separate cleanly in digital language use. Informal English works at once as an object of learning, a resource for communication, and a marker of identity.

5. The three dimensions in combination

The cognitive findings show that students hold explicit beliefs about what slang does. Positive beliefs concern efficiency, informality, social bonding, self-presentation, and informal vocabulary growth. Negative beliefs concern misunderstanding, exclusion, irritation, and possible effects on formal grammar. Neutral beliefs emphasise how common slang is and how much depends on context. These correspond to Baker's (1992) cognitive component and tie students' attitudes to the communicative outcomes they expect.

The affective dimension adds emotional detail. Comfort, enjoyment, excitement, and attraction support use, while irritation and discomfort discourage it. Context-dependent feelings show that emotion here is partly relational, shifting with the audience, the suitability of the term, and the purpose of the exchange. Research on informal digital learning and second-language willingness to communicate reports the same importance of emotional experience (Lee, Xie, & Lee, 2021).

The conative dimension is visible in behaviour. Some students use slang freely in casual contexts, some search for the meaning of an unfamiliar form before adopting it, and some avoid forms when uncertainty is high. Others adapt their language to the person they are addressing. Attitudes here are not confined to internal opinion; they surface as concrete language choices, which is one of the clearer results of the study.

Across the three dimensions the participants show a practical form of digital register awareness. They work with a continuum of usefulness that depends on the social setting, and they place particular expressions along it. Such a pattern fits contemporary accounts of multilingual and digital language practice, in which speakers draw on flexible repertoires for different communicative tasks instead of organising every choice around a single standard norm (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021).

6. X as a space of affordances and constraints

The findings also point to a double structure in X as a communicative environment. The platform supports creativity, speed, visibility, and social participation, and these qualities make slang effective for concise, expressive writing. The breadth of the audience works in the other direction, since users cannot assume that everyone shares their vocabulary or cultural knowledge. That duality explains why participants reported strong positive evaluations and clear worries about misunderstanding at the same time.

The interpretation is consistent with wider work on social media and language learning. Reinhardt (2019) describes the capacity of social media to support identity, sociopragmatic awareness, and participation, while Barrot (2022) maps gains and difficulties across a large research base. Lambton-Howard et al. (2021) show that students and teachers experience social media as a meaningful social space and not as a neutral delivery technology. In such spaces linguistic choices are inseparable from audience, identity, and interactional norms.

For English Department students in Indonesia, X also provides contact with Englishes beyond textbook models. Users meet abbreviations, colloquialisms, memes, cultural references, code-mixing, and newly coined expressions. Paramita and Sulistyani (2026) report comparable perceptions of social interaction on X among EFL learners. The exposure broadens awareness of linguistic variation and can also present forms that are hard to interpret without cultural context, which identifies the interpretive work users need in order to navigate the platform.

7. Relation to previous Indonesian studies

Several Indonesian studies support this reading. Muhartoyo and Wijaya (2014), working with English Department students, found slang linked with efficiency and informal communication. Sabrina (2021) showed that Twitter users build English-Indonesian slang through code-mixing for social and interactional purposes. Saputra et al. (2023) documented slang among Indonesian youth across several platforms, and Pratiwi and Maghfira (2022) identified humour, intimacy, informality, and contemporary self-presentation as functions of English slang on TikTok. The present study extends these observations by taking language attitudes as its object instead of linguistic forms or reasons for use alone. Hermansyah et al. (2025) and Halim et al. (2023), who examine attitudes toward written English slang in Indonesian social media, provide the closest point of comparison.

The findings also sit well with Indonesian research on English learning through social media. Pitaloka et al. (2021) report that social media supports collaboration, communication, and resource sharing in English learning. Damaryanan and Subekti (2024) found that learners saw Instagram as a useful environment for speaking practice, Suciani et al. (2023) examined positive perceptions of TikTok in EFL learning, and Mulyana et al. (2025) connect Instagram use with learning motivation. Ilmita et al. (2025) show Indonesian EFL learners using Instagram actively for English-related learning and interaction. Digital platforms are part of the ecology in which learners meet and practise the language.

At the level of general language attitudes, Kurniasari and Mbato (2018), Wati (2023), and Yuan et al. (2023) report favourable orientations toward English grounded in academic, professional, and international value. The present participants associate English with opportunity in much the same way, and their responses add a register dimension. They value English slang because particular forms let them do particular kinds of digital social action.

Analysis and Discussion

Read against the three research questions, the data give a fairly consistent picture. The first question asked which attitudes students express, and the answer is all three at once, distributed across situations instead of across people. The second asked how the attitudes map onto Baker's (1992) dimensions, and the mapping holds: beliefs about efficiency and misunderstanding, feelings of comfort and irritation, and behaviour ranging from free use to verification and avoidance. The third asked about motivation, and the responses show instrumental and integrative reasons working together in the same choices.

The three themes can be treated as positions on a continuum. A student may appreciate slang for its speed and social warmth, hesitate when an expression is unfamiliar, and decide against it in a more formal exchange. That movement from acceptance to caution shows how closely attitude is bound to situational judgment. Baker's (1992) multidimensional model is useful here because the same participant can hold a positive belief about slang and still respond conditionally in behaviour. The data show students negotiating meaning according to audience, purpose, and perceived risk instead of holding one fixed opinion.

A second point is the distance between knowing a slang expression and choosing to use it. Several participants said they would search for the meaning of a new expression before using it, and others avoided items whose meaning or cultural reference was uncertain. Digital language competence clearly involves more than recognising vocabulary. Learners also need pragmatic and cultural knowledge to judge whether an expression will be understood, whether it suits the setting, and whether it will produce the effect they intend. Work on informal digital learning emphasises that online exposure extends contact with authentic language while the outcome depends on learners' engagement, emotions, self-efficacy, and interpretation of what they see (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2019; Lee, Xie, & Lee, 2021; Zadorozhnyy & Lee, 2023). The verification and avoidance strategies reported here can be seen as self-regulation in that informal setting.

The continuum also explains the apparent conflict between the positive and negative findings. Positive attitudes rest on efficiency, enjoyment, inclusion, and self-presentation; negative attitudes rest on ambiguity, exclusion, irritation, and register problems. Both can hold at once, because the same form creates intimacy among users who share the repertoire and distance among users who do not. Research on youth language and Indonesian sociability shows slang working as a resource for identity and social positioning in the same double way (Smith-Hefner, 2007; Sabrina, 2021). The communicative value of slang is relational: it depends on whether the participants share enough linguistic and cultural knowledge to read the form as intended.

This also clarifies why X is a productive site for studying language attitudes. Public posts combine heterogeneous audiences with highly localised communities. Students may move through a broad English-speaking environment while following specific communities whose lexical choices grow familiar through repetition. Their reported habit of adapting slang to the style of an interlocutor suggests they are already managing that tension through audience design. Social media scholarship in language education notes that platforms can support participation, identity work, and sociopragmatic awareness because users must make language choices in socially visible environments (Reinhardt, 2019, 2020; Barrot, 2022). The present findings add that awareness of audience also regulates whether informal English is adopted, modified, or withheld.

Pedagogical implications

The results have practical consequences for English teaching in higher education. Teachers can acknowledge students' exposure to digital English and frame classroom discussion of slang around register, audience, pragmatics, and meaning. Students can compare a slang expression with a more formal equivalent and work out when each one fits. Tasks of this kind keep academic English in place while building the ability to interpret authentic informal language.

Students' uncertainty about unfamiliar slang is itself an opening for digital and intercultural literacy. Learners can be guided to ask what a term means, where it comes from, who uses it, and what cultural assumptions it carries before adopting it. The behaviour already present in the data, looking up

an expression before using it, can be developed into an explicit strategy. Audience awareness can be taught the same way: because participants already change their slang use according to the interlocutor, teachers can turn that habit into a learning objective by asking students to write one message for a close friend, a lecturer, and a public audience, then explain their lexical and grammatical choices.

Digital language can also feed vocabulary work without displacing formal instruction. Students can collect unfamiliar expressions from X, verify meanings through credible sources, identify context and register, and then decide whether each item suits their own use. Research on social media and informal digital learning suggests that out-of-class engagement complements classroom learning when learners are supported in interpreting and reflecting on what they encounter (Lee, Lee, & Lee, 2019; Zainuddin & Yunus, 2022; Tan & Yunus, 2023). In practical terms, three questions cover most of what students need before adopting a new digital expression: what does it mean, who is likely to understand it, and where is it appropriate.

Limitations and directions for future research

The study has three main limitations. The participants were 30 English Department students from one cohort at Universitas Airlangga, so the findings describe a specific educational and social context. The data are self-reported questionnaire and interview responses, and they were not systematically compared with a corpus of the participants' actual posts on X. The design is qualitative and was not built to measure whether slang use improves or reduces proficiency, which limits what can be said about language development.

Future work can combine interviews with digital discourse data, compare students across universities, examine differences among online communities, or use mixed methods to relate attitudes to the frequency of slang use. Researchers might also investigate how students distinguish English slang from code-mixing, internet abbreviations, and memes. Longitudinal work would show whether repeated exposure changes attitudes toward slang, formal English, or digital language more broadly. Comparing X with Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, or forum-style communities would test whether the context-dependent attitude found here belongs to X or characterises young Indonesian users of English across digital environments.

D. Conclusion

This study examined how 30 English Department students at Universitas Airlangga evaluate English slang on X. Three patterns emerged: positive, negative, and neutral or context-dependent attitudes. Positive attitudes rested on efficiency, informality, enjoyment, social bonding, inclusion, self-image, and informal vocabulary development. Negative attitudes centred on misunderstanding, exclusion, irritation, inappropriate use, and concern about overuse. Neutral attitudes took the form of conditional acceptance according to interlocutor, context, and degree of formality.

The three dimensions of language attitude operated together. Students' beliefs shaped their feelings, and those feelings showed up in behaviour: using slang, checking new expressions, avoiding unfamiliar forms, or adjusting language to another user. The motivations behind these choices were instrumental and integrative at once. Students used slang to communicate efficiently and to build a desired self-image, and also to take part in social groups, follow trends, and align with friends or online communities.

English slang on X therefore works as a context-sensitive communicative resource. It supports interaction and informal engagement with English, and its effectiveness depends on shared knowledge, audience, cultural context, and pragmatic appropriateness. For English education the implication is to develop students' ability to recognise register, interpret digital language critically, and choose forms that fit the situation. The participants' attitudes reflect an emerging digital sociolinguistic awareness in which English is used flexibly across social, academic, and online contexts.

The study contributes to sociolinguistic and language-education research by bringing language attitudes, internet language, and learners' experience on X into a single account. Further research with

larger samples, direct observation of online discourse, and comparison across platforms would deepen understanding of how young users of English handle rapid linguistic change in digital environments.

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