

Between Worlds: A Study of Global Trends Shaping Local Linguistic Practices in English Terms on Social Media Used by Indonesian

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify changes in linguistic practices and cultural expressions influenced by globalization, as well as to explore the mechanisms of adaptation and transformation of language and culture in response to global interactions on social media. This research will answer the questions of how global trends influence local linguistic practices and cultural expressions, how the internet, social media, and instant messaging platforms contribute to the global spread of linguistic trends and cultural phenomena in English, and the impact of global media on local language use and cultural expressions. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method, collecting data through social media content analysis to understand the use of words that frequently appear on social media in the context of globalization. The results of this research are expected to provide an in-depth analysis of how global linguistic trends facilitated by social media have influenced and transformed local language practices, and demonstrate how local communities not only consume but also actively participate in shaping global cultural trends. This documentation will be a valuable resource for linguists and cultural historians interested in the evolution of language due to globalization, and will contribute to the academic discourse on globalization by providing empirical evidence of how global linguistic trends reshape local languages and cultural expressions, which is significant for academic fields such as linguistics, cultural studies, and globalization studies.

Keywords: *English Term, Language Practice, Social Media*

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1. Introduction

In the evolving era of globalization, the complexity and dynamics of interactions between diverse cultures and languages have become increasingly prominent. Globalization, which involves deep integration among global communities, not only changes the way we communicate but also significantly shapes cultural identities at the local level. These changes encompass the evolution of language and cultural transformation as a result of the exchange of values, ideas, and norms across nations and societies. According to Benabed & Boeru (2023), globalization is a process of integration and interconnection between various aspects of human life worldwide, including economy, politics, culture, and society. It occurs through the exchange of goods, services, technology, information, and ideas among nations and communities across the globe.

Furthermore, globalization as a multidimensional phenomenon, marks the increasing interconnectedness between nations and cultures around the world (Mushtaq et al., 2022; Hussain, 2022; Ko et al., 2025). Driven by advances in technology, international trade dynamics, and rising human mobility, globalization has become a major force behind transformations in language practices and cultural expressions at the local level. The development of information and communication technologies has served as a key catalyst in uniting global communities, enabling the exchange of ideas, values, and norms across geographical boundaries (Heeks, 2017; Sachiya et al., 2025; Foroutan & Tabibian, 2022). In this way, globalization creates virtual bridges that connect communities worldwide, opening the door for closer cultural collaboration.

Amid these dynamics, local communities are not only consumers but also active participants in shaping and influencing global trends, marking an important shift in the linguistic and cultural landscape that needs further exploration and understanding (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006; Hussain et al., 2023). Therefore, through a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of adaptation and transformation, we can grasp the significance of global trends in shaping local realities. Awareness of the active role of local communities in responding to the impact of globalization on language and culture also opens opportunities for richer dialogue and more productive collaboration across global communities.

This research arose from the need to understand how globalization influences linguistic practices and cultural expressions at the local level, particularly through social media. In an era of evolving globalization, interactions between different cultures and languages are increasingly complex and dynamic, changing the way we communicate and influencing local cultural identities. Thus, this study does not only explore changes in linguistic practices and cultural expressions but also invites reflection on how local communities can harness the dynamics of globalization to enrich and strengthen their own identities.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Linguistics and Globalization

Linguistics, according to Wirag & Zhang (2022), is the scientific study of language, covering its structure, use, and function in society. The purpose of linguistics is to understand how language is used and understood by humans, as well as how it evolves and changes over time. In the globalization era, linguistics plays a crucial role in examining the impact of global integration on language and communication (Bagea, 2023; Youngsun et al., 2024). The continuous development of information and communication technology also plays a key role in shaping the way we use language, with digital language and new communication practices emerging on online platforms. Thus, linguistics today is not only concerned with language structures but also with how language intersects with globalization, culture, and identity, providing deeper insights into the role of language in an ever-changing modern world (Valerio, 2022). Globalization influences language change by intensifying intercultural interactions, and through this perspective, we can capture a completer and more nuanced picture of intercultural dynamics in the ongoing globalization era.

At the local level, the effects of globalization are evident in significant changes in everyday language practices and how communities express themselves culturally. This process includes the absorption of global elements into local languages, the formation of new dialects, and the enrichment and transformation of local cultural expressions. Amid these dynamics, local communities are not merely consumers but also participants in shaping and contributing to global influence, marking a crucial shift in the linguistic and cultural landscape that requires further exploration (Shah & Asghar, 2023).

One example is the English slang term “slay”, which is commonly used by local communities to praise someone who looks very attractive or stylish. While not everyone may fully grasp its precise meaning, they understand that the term conveys impressions of elegance, beauty, and charm. Another example is the phenomenon of “selfie”, which has become an inseparable part of modern digital culture. This term refers to the practice of taking a self-portrait using a smartphone or digital camera, often captured in various settings, from everyday moments to special occasions. The selfie has become a popular medium for self-expression, sharing important life moments, or simply showcasing a lifestyle to friends or social media followers. As a result, the traditional phrase “taking a picture of oneself” has been almost entirely replaced by the single word “selfie.”

This study focuses on the central role of globalization in shaping and modifying how people communicate and express cultural identity in local settings, particularly through the use of viral English words on social media. By examining the changes and challenges faced by language and culture in the context of globalization, this study seeks to analyze how global influences create a foundation for linguistic change and cultural expression in local communities, especially in online interactions. Through

deeper understanding of these mechanisms of adaptation and transformation, we can appreciate the significance of global trends in shaping local realities.

The importance of this research lies not only in identifying the impact of globalization but also in providing valuable insights for public policy, cultural practitioners, and academics—particularly in managing language and culture within the ever-expanding scope of globalization. A deeper analysis of globalization’s impact on language and culture, especially in the use of English on social media, can serve as a foundation for developing more effective strategies to preserve linguistic diversity and cultural identity in the global era. This study is expected to contribute significantly to understanding the dynamic relationship between global phenomena and local realities in language and culture, as well as their implications for identity and communication in today’s digital society.

2.2 Previous Studies

Overall, this study seeks to expand methodology and findings by addressing certain gaps, as follows:

a. Gorter (2018) explored the application of linguistic landscapes in education, focusing on their use as materials for teaching English as a foreign language. This article highlights contributions from research conducted in school settings, emphasizing the participation of students and teachers in linguistic landscape projects both inside and outside the classroom. Gorter also shows that such studies not only broaden perspectives but also bring critical aspects, such as multilingualism and multimodality, that are relevant in educational contexts. In contrast, the present study differs by concentrating on the influence of language shaped by social media formats in local communities, rather than in formal educational environments.

b. Tankosić & Dovchin (2023) investigated the impact of social media on linguistic and communicative practices in post-socialist contexts, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Mongolia—regions rarely covered in translingual studies. They examined how linguistic resources influenced by social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube were relocated and adapted into local languages, including orthographic, morphosyntactic, and phonological adjustments. The study also highlighted the adaptation of linguistic terminology into Cyrillic alphabets for Serbian and Mongolian, as well as the application of grammatical features from Bosnian varieties. As a result, social media users manipulated original forms to reflect their local sociolinguistic practices, creating linguistic innovations and new meanings.

c. The third study, “Brand Linguistics: The Influence of Using Local Terminology Through Social Media in Marketing Products on Customers' Purchase Behavior” by Hashem et al. (2024), examined how multilingual users consider their audiences on semi-public social media platforms and how such perceptions influence their language choices in building and maintaining translocal communities. They employed the

“audience design” framework developed by Bell (1984), commonly used to understand style in spoken interaction.

d. Kamran & Mansoor (2017) wrote an article titled “Globalization and Language Use on Social Media in Pakistan”, which examined language use on social media by Pakistani students. They analyzed comments from students on official Facebook pages of public and private universities to understand the use of English and the patterns of social interaction, as well as their implications for language education policy. The study employed quantitative and statistical analyses to explore differences in English usage preferences between students from public and private universities, considering educational background, regional variation, and gender. The findings revealed the dominance of English usage and significant differences in preferences between students from the two types of universities. They also highlighted gender disparities in social media representation across provinces in Pakistan, raising issues of linguistic discrimination and challenges in achieving equal access to language policy in the context of globalization.

This study shares both similarities and differences with the aforementioned works. In general, all focus on analyzing linguistic trends in specific contexts and recognize the influence of globalization on language and communication. However, this study stands out because of its focus on the use of English within local communities through social media, while previous studies examined contexts such as education, international business, or communication in post-socialist societies. While earlier works may have broader or more specific scopes, this study is more narrowly centered on analyzing language use in social media within local communities. Although both employ qualitative approaches, the methodologies may differ depending on their objectives and scope, including case studies, discourse analysis, or qualitative interviews.

3. Method

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research is an approach that produces in-depth descriptions and understanding of social, cultural, or behavioral phenomena through the collection and analysis of narrative data. In this context, the qualitative method is used to explore the meaning, context, and impact of words frequently appearing on social media among local communities. The focus of this study is on the use of frequently occurring words on social media by local communities in the context of globalization. The research subjects include various words that often appear on social media and are adopted by local communities, as well as the implications of such usage in understanding changes in language and culture at the local level.

To collect data on the use of these words, several data collection techniques were applied, including: a) Social Media Content Analysis: Conducting content analysis of posts, comments, and other interactions on relevant social media platforms. This involves gathering textual data that reflects the use of specific words by social media

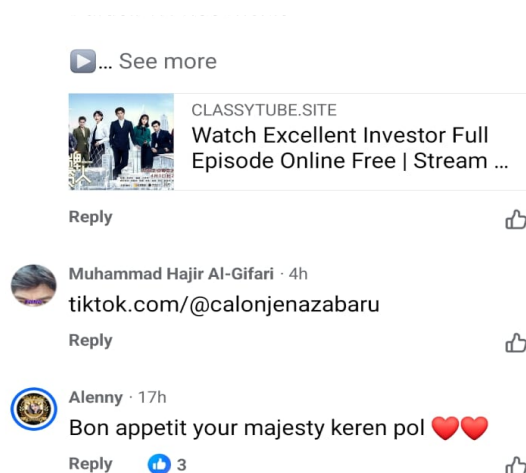
users. b) Interviews: Conducting interviews with members of local communities to gain insights into their use of words on social media. The interviews may include questions about commonly used words and the reasons behind their use.

The research instruments refer to the tools or methods used to collect data. In this study, the following instruments were utilized: a) List of Key Words: Developing a list of relevant words for the research, based on preliminary observation or existing literature. This list serves as a guide for identifying frequently used words on social media and the contexts in which they appear. b) Interview Schedule: If interviews are conducted, an interview schedule is used to organize the time and location of sessions with respondents. It includes details such as the date, time, place, and interview questions. In addition, screenshots may be used to support the analysis by providing concrete examples of how the words are employed in online interactions. The collected data is then refined and prepared for further analysis, which may involve cleaning incomplete or irrelevant data and addressing data quality issues.

4. Results and Discussion

Language use on social media often reflects creativity and innovation, where users adapt, modify, and reshape words to express identity and solidarity. These linguistic variations provide valuable insights into how globalization and local culture interact in shaping everyday communication.

Data 1



One of the findings from the social media data is the use of the word “**pol**” in the comment “*Bon appetit your majesty keren pol.*” The term *pol* originates from the English word *full*, which literally means “complete” or “entire.” However, in local usage it has undergone a shift in both form and meaning. Phonologically, the initial consonant /f/ in *full* is often replaced with /p/ in Indonesian informal speech, producing *pul*, which is further adapted orthographically as *pol*. Semantically, the meaning has also shifted from

“full” to an intensifier equivalent to “very” or “extremely.” Thus, the expression *keren pol* can be interpreted as “extremely cool.” This phenomenon illustrates how English vocabulary is localized and recontextualized in digital interactions. It demonstrates not only phonological and orthographic adaptation but also semantic innovation, reflecting the dynamic interplay between global linguistic influences and local cultural creativity in social media communication.

The use of “**pol**” in the expression “*keren pol*” reflects a common linguistic phenomenon in social media, where global terms are localized and reshaped to fit the phonological, orthographic, and cultural patterns of the local community. As noted by **Crystal (2001)**, globalization and digital communication accelerate the spread of English words into different linguistic environments, where they are then adapted according to local norms. This aligns with **Androutsopoulos (2015)**, who emphasizes that language use on social media often involves “**recontextualization and localization**”, in which borrowed words take on new forms and functions in local discourse.

In this case, the word *full* is reinterpreted as *pol*, with a shift in both pronunciation and spelling due to local phonological tendencies (replacement of /f/ with /p/) and orthographic creativity in informal online writing. According to **Kachru’s (1992) concept of World Englishes**, such practices represent how English is indigenized and incorporated into local linguistic repertoires, producing innovative forms that may differ significantly from the original meaning. Moreover, **Tagg & Seargeant (2014)** argue that online platforms encourage playful and creative linguistic practices, enabling users to develop new ways of expressing emphasis or emotion.

Data 2

The image shows a screenshot of social media comments. The first comment is from Lulu Attamimi Bihindi, 35m ago, saying 'Keyen say' with a thumbs up icon. The second comment is from Aslan R, 1h ago, featuring a colorful graphic with the word 'KEREN' in red and yellow letters, with a thumbs up icon. The third comment is from Chili Arfan Tahasa, 41m ago, saying 'Walaikumsalam besty,, Masya Dekornya' with three thumbs up icons and a thumbs up icon. The fourth comment is from Murni Daeng Maladja, 2h ago, saying 'Walaikum salam..' with two prayer hands icons and a thumbs up icon. The fifth comment is from Irna Pevita Irna, 2h ago, saying 'Up' with a thumbs up icon.

In the collected data, another linguistic adaptation observed is the use of the term “**besty**” in the comment “*Waalai kumsalam besty, Masya Dekornya.*” This word originates from the English term *bestie*, which means “best friend.” However, in local online interaction the spelling is modified into *besty*, replacing the ending *-ie* with *-y*. Such orthographic variation reflects the playful and creative tendencies of social media language, where users deliberately employ non-standard spellings to appear modern, informal, and friendly. As Crystal (2006) notes, digital communication encourages the emergence of new forms of English through user innovation. Androutsopoulos (2014) refers to this phenomenon as *vernacular creativity*, in which global words are localized and reshaped to express community identity. Tagg (2015) further highlights that these spelling shifts function as markers of intimacy and solidarity in online interaction. From Kachru’s (1992) perspective on *World Englishes*, “besty” can therefore be seen as an example of indigenization, where borrowed English vocabulary is adapted both visually and socially to fit local cultural expressions.

The use of “besty” also illustrates how globalization and digital connectivity accelerate the blending of linguistic resources. Social media provides a space where English terms circulate rapidly, but as they enter local contexts, they are reshaped to match cultural preferences and everyday usage. According to Blommaert (2010), this reflects the concept of *superdiversity*, where linguistic forms are constantly hybridized across social and cultural boundaries. In this sense, “besty” is not merely a borrowed term, but a locally adapted identity marker that strengthens a sense of belonging among peers. This transformation demonstrates how language in the digital era functions as a site of negotiation between global influence and local creativity.

Data 3



The screenshot displays three social media comments. The first comment is from Ritchie Chie, posted 1 day ago, with the text "Eps 1 already but still trailer why" and a "Reply" button. The second comment is from Glady Joy, also 1 day ago, with the text "Cloudelyn Buenaflor" and a "Reply" button. The third comment is from Cyadiana Christy, 1 day ago, with the text "Eda Mell hensem kan" and a "Reply" button. Each comment has a thumbs-up icon to its right. Below the second and third comments are links to "View 1 reply" and "View 2 replies" respectively.

In this finding, the use of the word “**hensem**” is a localized adaptation of the English word *handsome*. The spelling has been simplified and altered to fit local phonetic patterns and casual writing styles, making it easier and faster to type in online

interactions. This reflects a common phenomenon in digital communication where users modify borrowed words to align with local pronunciation habits or to create a sense of informality and familiarity. According to Crystal (2004), such linguistic modifications are part of “netspeak,” where language is shaped by the digital environment, resulting in new spellings, abbreviations, and creative expressions.

Furthermore, the transformation of *handsome* into “hensem” illustrates how global English terms are localized to carry cultural nuance and identity. In this context, “hensem” functions not only as a compliment but also as a marker of belonging to an online community that values playful, hybridized language. As Blommaert (2010) explains, language in the digital era operates across multiple layers of meaning, where borrowed terms undergo reinterpretation to suit local cultural and social dynamics. Thus, “hensem” embodies the intersection of global linguistic influence and local creativity in shaping communication practices.

The adaptation of “hensem” also demonstrates how language innovation on social media is driven by efficiency and identity performance. Shortened or phonetically altered forms like “hensem” reduce typing effort while simultaneously signaling informality, humor, or closeness among users. Androutsopoulos (2015) highlights that such linguistic creativity is a form of *stylization*, where speakers intentionally deviate from standard forms to express social belonging and shared cultural understanding. In this way, “hensem” does more than describe physical appearance; it indexes participation in a digital community where playful linguistic variations are both understood and appreciated.

The findings across the examples of “**pol**,” “**besty**,” and “**hensem**” reveal a broader pattern of linguistic adaptation on social media, where language users creatively modify existing words to suit digital interaction. The word “**pol**”, derived from “full,” shifts its meaning into an intensifier that emphasizes extremity (e.g., “keren pol” = “extremely cool”), showing semantic extension. Similarly, “**besty**”, adapted from “bestie” (best friend), represents phonological and orthographic play, emphasizing intimacy and closeness while reflecting how English borrowings are reshaped in local online contexts. Meanwhile, “**hensem**”, a colloquial spelling of “handsome,” illustrates how phonetic approximation and simplified spelling make language more accessible, humorous, and community-oriented. Together, these examples highlight how social media fosters the emergence of hybrid forms that blend local and global influences.

As experts such as Crystal (2006) argue, digital communication accelerates the process of language change by allowing users to experiment with forms in real time, while Androutsopoulos (2015) notes that these creative deviations function as *stylization*, signaling identity, solidarity, and belonging within digital communities. In this sense, the playful alterations of “**pol**,” “**besty**,” and “**hensem**” are not random; they are socially meaningful strategies that reflect both the dynamics of globalization and the local negotiation of linguistic identity. This demonstrates that social media is not only a

platform for interaction but also a powerful space for linguistic innovation, where words acquire new shapes, functions, and cultural values.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of “pol,” “besty,” and “hensem” illustrates how social media serves as a fertile ground for linguistic innovation, where words are reshaped through phonological play, semantic extension, and orthographic creativity. These linguistic shifts are not merely stylistic; they reflect deeper processes of identity construction, community bonding, and the negotiation of global and local influences. As Crystal (2006) emphasizes, digital communication accelerates language change, while Androutsopoulos (2015) highlights how playful deviations embody cultural belonging. Such transformations show how digital platforms function not only as channels of communication but also as dynamic laboratories of linguistic experimentation. They also reveal how users strategically manipulate language to assert individuality while simultaneously aligning with broader cultural trends. Thus, these examples demonstrate that online discourse is more than casual interaction—it is a site where globalization and local identity intersect, producing hybrid forms that redefine contemporary linguistic practices.

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