

A Case Study of Students' Perception on the Utilization of Social Media in English Language Learning

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Received:

Reviewed:

Accepted:

Abstract

This study aims to determine students' perception of social media to learn English. The research design used in this study was qualitative research based on a case study approach, and the data were collected through questionnaire, interview transcripts, and class observation. The participants of this study were 35 students of tenth-grade of one of high school in Magelang. The results of descriptive analysis showed that the most of the students had positive perception on the use of social media in Learning English. They had experienced in exploring the social media features and felt less-burdened learning English through social media because they can learn based on their preferences and likes. Moreover, social media allowed students to practice their English skills, particularly listening, writing, vocabulary, and pronunciation. YouTube and Instagram are the most widely used social media platforms for learning English in listening and writing skills. The data shows the positive perception of social media on the students' English Language learning due to its enjoyable and flexible use of social media among the students.

Keywords: English Language Learning; Instagram; social media; students' perception; YouTube.

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, social media has evolved from a means of electronic data exchange to an important platform for virtual social interactions, significantly impacting various aspects of life such as communication, data transmission, commerce and education (Rieger & Christoph, 2018; Bhatti et al., 2019; Amin et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this transformation, forcing education systems to adopt distance learning, thereby increasing students' reliance on social media for maintaining social connections and learning, especially English (Celik, Dindar, & Muukkonen, 2022).

Social media platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and WhatsApp have become essential tools for students, allowing them to maintain their social lives and improve their English language skills through multimedia content. While these platforms offer significant educational benefits, such as promoting modern ideas and providing flexibility in learning, they can also be a distraction, reducing face-to-face interactions and leading to excessive screen time. Educators therefore need to navigate these dual aspects in order to effectively integrate social media into the learning process (Muftah, 2022).

This study focuses on the perceptions of Grade X students in a senior high school in Magelang regarding the use of social media as a resource for learning English. By examining their preferences and usage patterns, the research aims to provide insights that can help teachers develop more engaging and effective teaching methods using social media. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for adapting teaching strategies to the digital age and ensuring that social media is used constructively in the classroom (Handayani et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Nature of Perception

The term perception has its roots in the Latin word *percipere*, meaning "to receive and act upon" or "to perceive." In the field of psychology, perception is often defined as "the initial process of organizing and interpreting sensory information in order to give meaning to the world." This initial step in social cognition is commonly considered the first step in perception. (Derryberry & Tucker, 1994). Smith (2008) posits that students' perceptions can be shaped by their experiences and anticipations, both in and outside of the classroom setting. Perception is the process by which individuals interpret the world around them, forming impressions based on their experiences and expectations. These impressions are not always accurate, as they are influenced by a multitude of factors. In Smith's (2008) definition, perception is defined as an "impression constructed when a spot and term are felt." This implies that learners perceive the world based on their emotional responses to the information they encounter. Therefore, perception can be described as an active process of understanding, analyzing, and interpreting based on past experiences. It is a dynamic and subjective phenomenon that is shaped by an individual's unique background, beliefs, and expectations.

2. Components of Perception

The perception of an object is influenced by stimuli and situations, as outlined in Schiffman & Kanuk's CAC model. It comprises three components: Affective (emotional aspects), Cognitive (intellectual aspects), and Conative (behavioral aspects).

- a. **Affective Component:** Includes sociological motives (curiosity, competency), attitudes (feelings toward objects or situations shaped by experience), and emotions (emotional reactions).

- b. Cognitive Component: Involves beliefs (perceptions of what is good or bad based on factual events and experiences), knowledge, expectations, thought patterns, and past experiences.
- c. Conative Component: Encompasses habits (regular actions done automatically) and intentions (efforts toward goals).

Each component plays a significant role in shaping how individuals perceive and interact with their environment.

3. The Nature of Social Media

As defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media encompasses Internet-based applications rooted in Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It serves as a versatile tool for interaction and communication across all demographics, fostering online communities where individuals can share knowledge, ideas, personal messages, and multimedia such as photos and videos (Barreto & Whitehair, 2017). These platforms, including WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, facilitate global communication and engagement through various formats, such as microblogging, podcasts, and social bookmarking. Social media not only enables passive content consumption but also active participation and relationship-building among users, whether with existing connections or new acquaintances (Lumentut & Lengkoan, 2021; Kandati & Tatipang, 2021). In essence, social media serves as a network of digital channels where users share content, express opinions, and interact within virtual communities, facilitating dynamic online conversations and interactions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

4. Types of Social Media

a. Social Networking Sites

- 1) Instagram: Focuses on image and video sharing, popular for educational content and English learning accounts.
- 2) YouTube: Enables global education through videos, supports autonomous learning and English learning resources.
- 3) Telegram: Widely used for daily social interactions and group discussions, beneficial for English writing practice and language skills.
- 4) TikTok: Video-based social media platform popular among youth, used for language learning through various creative content.
- 5) Twitter: Microblogging platform for short messages, supports English reading and writing skills through concise communication.

b. Blogs

Platforms like WordPress, Blogspot, and Blogger for personal or group online journals.

c. Content Generating and Sharing Sites

Platforms like YouTube, SlideShare for sharing videos and presentations, facilitating learning through user-generated content.

d. User Appraisal Sites

Sites like MouthShut and PagalGuy for product and service reviews, influencing consumer decision-making.

5. Models of Communication in Using Social Media

- a. One-way communication. It is linear and limited because it occurs in a straight line from sender to receiver and serves to inform, persuade or command.



Figure 2.1. One-way Communication Model

- b. Two-way communication. It always includes feedback from the receiver to the sender and lets the sender know the message has been received accurately.

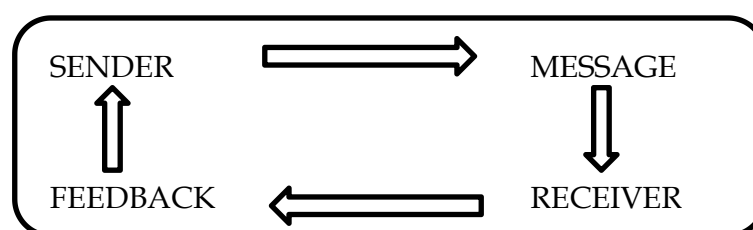


Figure 2.2. Two-way Communication Model

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative method was used in this study because it focused on what are the students' perception of the use of social media for English Language Learning. Sukmadinata (2016) stated that "qualitative research explains and investigates phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions of individuals or groups." In this study, a case study methodology has been chosen to gain a more profound understanding of the general phenomena observed in high school students, who will serve as the subject of the research. Consequently, the case study approach presented precise findings regarding students' perceptions of the utilization of social media as an English language learning tool. Data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gain comprehensive insights.

The study utilized purposive sampling, focusing on two tenth-grade classes. Questionnaires were distributed to all students, with nine students who had the highest social media engagement selected for interviews. Data were collected through closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure clarity and depth. Classroom and out-of-class observations were also conducted to provide contextual understanding.

Data validation was achieved using methodological triangulation, combining questionnaire results with interview data (Sugiyono, 2015; Risjord et al., 2001). Data were analyzed following Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) framework, which includes data collection, condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. This approach ensured a

rigorous analysis, leading to a well-validated understanding of students' perceptions of social media use in English language learning.

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the outcomes of the study of tenth-grade high school students' perceptions of using social media to improve their English. Conducted at a high school in Magelang, the study involved 35 students who completed questionnaires, and 9 selected interviewees who shared their perspectives. The data from questionnaires, interviews, and observations are discussed to address the primary research question: What are students' perceptions of using social media for learning English?

This is the result of the questionnaire about students' perception towards the use of social media in English Language Learning. The questionnaire consists of 35 statements based in three aspects of perception: cognition aspect, affection aspect, and conative aspect. The result of each aspect is shown in table 1.

Table 1

Students' Perception of Social Media Using in English Language Learning

Perception of Social Media	Mean Score
A. Cognition Aspect	
1. Knowledge of social media	3.31
2. View about social media	3.27
3. Expectation of social media	3.33
4. Experience to social media	3.19
Mean Score of Cognition Aspect	3.28
B. Affection Aspect	
1. Emotion towards social media	3.20
2. Motivation towards social media	3.20
3. Attitude towards social media	3.19
Mean Score of Affection Aspect	3.20
C. Conative Aspect	
1. Habit in the use of social media	3.11
2. Intention related to social media	3.21
Mean Score of Conative Aspect	3.16
Total Mean Score of Perception	3.21

In determining the questionnaire result, a range of scores and data criteria were used. The criteria will show how the participants perceive social media.

Table 2

Score Range and Data Criteria of the Questionnaire

Criteria	Score Range	Interpretation
Strongly Agree	3.00-4.00	Highly positive

Agree	2.00-2.99	Positive
Disagree	1.00-1.99	Negative
Strongly Disagree	0.99-1.00	Highly Negative

Adapted from: Mukminin and Hidayat (2013)

As shown in table 2, the assumption was if the result was within 0.99-1.99, the participants negatively perceived social media. In contrast, the result within 2.00-4.00 means that participants had positive perception towards social media.

1. Cognition Aspect

The questionnaire result showed the mean score of cognition aspect of 3.28 as it indicates the participants are knowledgeable about the use of social media in English Language Learning.

a. Knowledge of Social Media

Table 1 indicates that the mean score for the knowledge indicator was 3.28, suggesting that the participants had a high level of understanding regarding the use of social media for English language learning. This was evidenced by their ability to navigate the features and content available on social media platforms. All nine participants demonstrated an awareness of the potential of social media for both practical and theoretical English language learning. This was supported by the findings of the subsequent interview.

"...Instagram jadi tempat saya untuk practicenya. Contohnya, membuat caption dalam Bahasa Inggris di media sosial."

(Student 4)

"Karena saya follow beberapa akun pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, kadang tanpa dicari, saya melihat postingan penggunaan kalimat Bahasa Inggris sehari-hari yang benar di explore Instagram."

(Student 2)

b. Views about Social Media

Based on Table 1, the mean score of views indicator of 3.27 showed that the participants had positive views about the use of social media in English Language Learning. Moreover, the participants agreed that social media have complete material they need to learn English. Seven participants in interview session agreed using social media to learn English as it is accessible and interesting.

"Saya mendapati di Reels Instagram atau Short YouTube banyak lewat konten orang luar negeri berbahasa Inggris yang menarik. Atau di Twitter juga saya belajar susunan kalimat berbahasa Inggris dari hit-tweet."

(Student 6)

However, one of the participants resisted that sometimes he found it difficult to learn material from social media because it showed disorganized and brief material.

"Saya lebih sering mencari materi melalui website karena lebih panjang penjelasannya. Kalau media sosial pasti hanya menunjukkan ringkasannya seperti di video atau gambar."

(Student 7)

c. Expectation of Social Media

The questionnaire result in Table 1 with the mean score of expectation indicator of 3.33 indicates that the participants have positive expectation of social media in English Language Learning. Moreover, the interview revealed all of the 9 participants agreed that learning English from social media is beneficial and they wanted to get motivated to learn English more.

"Belajar dari sosmed itu enak karena tidak disuruh untuk belajar materi tertentu. Konten berbahasa Inggris apa saja yang lewat di fyp bisa nambah pengetahuan. Seperti cara mengucapkan kata berbahasa Inggris dari video orang luar negeri, lalu ada juga lirik lagu Bahasa Inggris yang bisa diucapkan sambil bernyanyi."

(Student 1)

d. Experience of Using Social Media

As it is shown in Table 1, the mean score of experience indicator of 3.19 indicates that the participants have positive experiences related to social media usage in English Language Learning. All of the 9 participants have experienced using social media to learn English. Nevertheless, they have different choice in using specific social media to learn English.

"Saya pernah follow menfess di Twitter yang khusus membahas seputar Bahasa Inggris. Disana bisa bebas bertanya dan menjawab dengan sesama user. Saya pernah bertanya arti kalimat Bahasa Inggris lalu dijawab oleh user lainnya dengan jawaban yang benar."

(Student 4)

"Kalau saya pernah punya kenalan dengan orang luar negeri dari game Mobile Legends. Kita sama-sama follow akun Instagram masing-masing. Sesekali dia membalas story saya dan saya bisa banyak belajar Bahasa Inggris saat berkomunikasi dengan dia via DM."

(Student 3)

2. Affection Aspect

According to the questionnaire result in Table 1, the participants have positive emotion and feeling towards the use of social media in English Language Learning, supported by the mean score of affection aspect of 3.20. The affection aspect deals with emotion, motivation, and attitude indicators.

a. Emotion towards Social Media

Table 1, which presented the results of the questionnaire, indicated that the mean score for the emotion indicator was 3.20. This suggests that the participants had a positive emotional response to the use of social media in English language learning. Following the interview, it became evident that eight of the nine participants enjoyed their experience of learning English through social media. As one of the participants stated:

"Saya suka menonton cuplikan film di YouTube Shorts. Senangnya karena ada subtitle di video jadi bisa tau apa artinya dan belajar kosakata baru Bahasa Inggris."

(Student 8)

Another participant showed the same positive emotion when she used social media in learning English.

"Kalau saya suka sekali lagu-lagunya Olivia Rodrigo. Jadi saya suka sekali cari video di YouTube yang khusus lirik saja agar bisa menyanyikannya. Ada juga yang mengupload versi terjemahan Bahasa Indonesia-nya jadi juga belajar vocabulary dari sana."

(Student 7)

b. Motivation towards Social Media

According to Table 1 that showed the questionnaire result, with the mean score of motivation indicator of 3.20, the participants have positive motivation towards social media using in English Language Learning. This motivation aspect deals with the participants' interest in using social media. After conducting the interview, it can be revealed that 8 of the 9 participants enjoyed their time learning English through social media.

"Saya lebih menikmati mengupload story atau postingan di Instagram dengan caption Bahasa Inggris karena terlihat lebih estetik. Jadi saya merasa tertarik untuk memfollow akun-akun quotes Bahasa Inggris dan beberapa akun pembelajaran lainnya yang mengajarkan kata-kata gaul dalam Bahasa Inggris."

(Student 3)

On the other hand, one of the participants claimed that he did not interest to learn English through social media because he rarely used social media.

"Saya jarang membuka sosmed karena lebih banyak menghabiskan waktu bermain game saat menggunakan handphone. Walaupun membuka sosmed, saya tidak begitu tertarik menonton konten berbahasa Inggris, lebih suka yang berbahasa Indonesia saja."

(Student 6)

c. Attitude towards Social Media

The results of the questionnaire indicated that the students exhibited a similar response with regard to the positive impact of social media on their English language skills. The mean score for the attitude indicator was 3.19 (Table 1). Six of the nine participants indicated that they were energized while learning English without feeling bored because social media offers a variety of learning models.

"Di Twitter banyak bacaan yang namanya Alternative Universe (AU) yang berbahasa Inggris. Ada yang berbahasa Inggris karena ditulis oleh pengguna luar negeri dan penulisannya bagus-bagus. Walaupun berbahasa Inggris, saya bisa jadi belajar kosakata baru dan penyusunan kalimat."

(Student 4)

3. Conative Aspect

The results of the questionnaire, as presented in Table 1, indicate that the participants have a positive attitude and intention towards the use of social media in English language learning. This is evidenced by the score of 3.16. The affection aspect of the questionnaire deals with habit and intention indicators.

a. *Habit in Using Social Media*

The questionnaire result showed that the participants have positive habit in using social media to their English language skills, with the mean score of habit indicator of 3.11 (Table 1). Besides questionnaire, the researcher also used interview to validate students' habit in using social media to learn English. 7 of the 9 participants agreed that social media provides process of learning that suitable with their habit learning.

"YouTube banyak video drilling kosakata Bahasa Inggris yang sulit. Saya suka menirukan video untuk melatih pelafalan Bahasa Inggris saya."

(Student 1)

b. *Intention in Using Social Media*

The results of the questionnaire indicate that the participants have a positive intention to use social media to enhance their English skills. The mean score for the intention indicator was 3.21 (Table 1). In the interview, six of the nine participants agreed that social media improves their English skills, both for practice and theory.

"Saya setuju menggunakan sosmed juga bisa untuk belajar Bahasa Inggris dan lebih bisa menyesuaikan kebutuhan dan kemampuan siswa. Selain itu bisa dilakukan kapan saja dan dimana saja sehingga tidak terbatas harus di sekolah."

(Student 2)

DISCUSSION

This study examined tenth-grade students' perceptions of utilizing social media, particularly YouTube and Instagram, for English language learning. These platforms were selected by students due to their widespread usage and extensive English-language content, a phenomenon that has been previously documented by researchers such as Al Arif (2019), Sharma (2019), and Aloraini & Cardoso (2018). These scholars have emphasized the role of social media in facilitating English exposure and meaningful language practice. Social media offers an interactive environment where students engage with native speakers, read English posts, and watch videos, which has a positive impact on their language development (Kozhevnikova, 2019). Given that English usage outside of school is limited in Indonesia (Lauder, 2008), social media provides a valuable supplement, offering flexible and enjoyable learning experiences that reduce anxiety and boost confidence (Anwas et al., 2020; Makodamayanti et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the study also identified challenges, including internet connectivity issues and privacy concerns. These findings align with those of Jalal (2012), who observed the risks associated with social media use. Despite these challenges, students reported that social media motivated them to practice English outside of the classroom. This informal language learning aligns with Combs & Ahmed's (1974) and Mohamed Al-Sabaawi & Dahlan's (2018) observations. Teachers can utilize social media as communication and engagement tools, enhancing interaction and providing authentic English resources (Faizi et al., 2013). By addressing the challenges, teachers can effectively employ social media to support English language learning and development.

CONCLUSION

The study's data analysis indicates that students have a comprehensive understanding of the use of social media for English language learning. They find platforms like YouTube and Instagram valuable for accessing diverse English content in videos, pictures, and text, which helps them practice their language skills. The students were already aware of the use of social media in English Language Learning through experiences outside the classroom. They were familiar with the use of specific social media to learn English skills, such as watching YouTube to learn pronunciation and daily conversation through native speaker videos. Despite some students who were less motivated to learn English using social media intentionally because they preferred to explore other content that was not fully focused on English Language Learning, the students felt less burdened when watching English content on social media. Furthermore, students continue to learn English unintentionally through English songs, movies, and news from celebrities they admire. They report generally positive experiences with social media. Despite of some distractions, students effectively use social media to improve listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills.

Additionally, the study recommends leveraging social media to enhance students' interest in learning English. Teachers can utilize these platforms to provide authentic English learning resources, such as videos of native speakers. For students, the study suggests exploring English content on social media tailored to their interests, which can enhance their motivation and complement formal education. Finally, the research offers a foundation for future studies. It encourages other researchers to conduct further studies on the content and impact of social media on English language learning, building on the insights provided by this study.

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