

A Study Of English Usage In Social Media By University Students (A Case Study Of English Department Students Of Tadulako University)

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Abstract: *The objective of this research is to find out how English department students of Tadulako University perceive the use of social media for learning English. This research is a convergent mixed method research focusing in case study design. The participants of this research were twenty active English department students selected using snowball technique. The data was collected through Google form questionnaires and a follow-up interview. The findings of this research revealed that, the students perceive learning English through social media positively. It created a stress-free environment with abundant resources to enhance all of their language skills. However network related problems, distracting advertisements and inappropriate contents still present some challenges.*

INTRODUCTION

Students in higher education, especially those majoring in English, are uniquely positioned to leverage social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Youtube to enhance their language skills. These platforms provide a dynamic environment where students can engage with native and non-native English speakers, access educational resources, and participate in discussions that challenge their linguistics competencies. Additionally, social media offers informal opportunities to practice reading, writing, listening, even speaking skills, allowing students to blend language learning with their daily digital habits.

At Tadulako University English Department, the students are no exception to this. Social media not only acts as a platform for social interaction but also serves as a digital classroom where students can experiment with language use, discover new vocabulary, and develop their communication skills. However, the way English is used in these online spaces often differs significantly from traditional academic standards. Many students adopt informal, abbreviated, or localized form of English that may influence their overall language development.

While social media has the potential to enhance language learning, it also poses challenges. The informal of most online communication may lead to incorporation of slang, grammatical errors, or inconsistent usage, which can affect student's academic or professional English proficiency.

Despite these complexities, the role of social media in shaping language use remains

underexplored, particularly in the context of non-native English-speaking students in Indonesia. This study focuses on the English Department students of Tadulako University to examine how they utilize English in their social media activities. It seeks to explore the patterns, motivations, and potential impacts of social media usage on their language learning journey.

By delving into these aspects, this research aims to provide insights into the ways social media can be harnessed to support English language education while addressing the challenges that arise in informal digital communication. The findings are expected to offer practical implications for educators, students, and policymakers to optimize the use of social media as a language-learning tool in the modern educational landscape.

The Socio-cultural Theory emphasizes the interplay of social, cultural, and psychological elements to explain and account for the development of learners. The implementation of this theory in language instruction has significantly impacted the area of second language acquisition (SLA) and applied linguistics. The vast research on this subject primarily examines the roles of social dialogue as an efficient communication mechanism that showcases the intricate relationships among students and their development in a second language (Garnes-Tarazona, 2018).

Perception is a biological process that takes place in the human's brain. It is a process that concerns about the entry of messages or information through five senses, namely sense of sight, sense of hearing, sense of smell, sense of taste, and sense of touch (Slameto, 2003). Perception is obtained by summarizing the information from a person and interpreting the information so that the person can respond to either positively or negatively of the information. Therefore, perception basically concerns the relationship between a person and his environment through the senses. After a person senses an object in its environment, then it is processed into the meaning of the object.

Social media is a form of information and communication technology tools used by people to communicate anytime. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.) the word social media is defined as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos). Similarly, social media are online platforms that enable users to generate and share content through virtual communities and social networks (Chen et al., 2017).

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) is a framework that builds on Shulman's (1986, 1987) description of PCK. According to Shulman (1986), PCK is the special teaching knowledge that instructors possess, he also proposed that, pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge (PCK) that represents the combination of content and pedagogy leads to an understanding of how specific topics, challenges, or issues are structured, depicted, and tailored to meet the varied interests and capabilities of learners, and how they are delivered is essential for successful teaching. The main concept of PCK is that, to effectively teach a specific subject a teacher must not only understand the content but also develop suitable instructional methods and skills that are appropriate for the learners.

According to Thompson & Mishra (2007, as cited in, Septiyanti et al, 2020, p. 166), TPACK is the interdependent, situated knowledge that is needed to integrate the use of digital tools and resources effectively in curriculum-based teaching.

There are several studies discussing the use of social media in learning English. Devi Novitasari (2022) conducted a research aimed to get information on how students perceives the use of social media in learning English, including the advantages, challenges, and the learning

process during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results show that students perceive that social media helps them in learning English due to its' effectivity. Janaty Mismara (2019) conducted a research focusing solely on how student perceive the usage of social media for learning English. The result show that social media facilitate, motivate, and helpful for students in English language learning. Tubagus Zam Zam Al Arif (2019) conducted a research aimed to examine the use of social media in English language learning. The result revealed that some social media applications especially Instagram and Facebook are mostly used by the students. Accordingly, the students spent more time in using social media for general purposes than English learning purposes. Nevertheless, they still showed positive attitudes towards the use of social media in English language learning. Dea Tresna Amalika and Septi Gumindari (2023) conducted a research that aimed to examine the use of social media in English language learning by the students of English Study Program at Jambi University. The results of their study indicate that the use of information technology, especially social media, can bring positive value if students can use these facilities for more positive things, for example, to increase knowledge, as a means of communication and also as a means of promoting something

METHOD

This research used convergent mixed method research focusing on the case study design. Convergent mixed methods is a type of mixed methods approach where the researcher integrates quantitative and qualitative data to deliver a thorough examination of the research issue (Creswell, 2017). In this approach, the researcher generally gathers both types of data simultaneously and subsequently combines the findings when interpreting the overall results. Also, Creswell (2009, as cited in Mohajan, 2018) stated that case study is defined as a research which explores a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals genuinely to get a depth-knowledge about the action that we want to explore. The researcher collected the data by distributing questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interview. The results of the questionnaires and interviews will be displayed descriptively to answer the research questions.

This research was conducted at English department of Tadulako University. The respondent of the research were 20 students from English Department of Tadulako University chosen by using snowball sampling. Furthermore in order to gather the data related for the research, there were two instruments that the researcher used which were questionnaire and interview. The data collection phase started with preparing the online questionnaire that was then distributed to students in the form of Google form link. The questionnaires will contain close-ended questions such as, multiple-choice and likert scale questions. Subsequently, 5 participants were selected for interviews, providing the researcher with deeper insight about students' perception on the usage of social media in learning English.

After collecting data from the questionnaire and interview, both data needed to be analyzed. The data from the questionnaires were put into a table and summarized in form of frequency and percentage. Furthermore, in order to analyze the likert scale questionnaire the researcher also need to calculate the data to find the mean score of each likert questions. Therefore, the researcher calculated the scoring system as follows:

The value distribution: Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1). With that, first the researcher needed to find out the interval level to determine the opinion of the participants. Therefore to find it, the researcher employed a formula:

$$\text{Interval level} = (\text{greatest value} - \text{smallest value}) / (\text{number of value})$$

Interval level = $(5 - 1) / 5 = 0.80$

With that result, the researcher measured opinions from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' as follows:

Table 1
Participants' Opinion Interval Level

No	Mean Interval	Opinion
1	1.00-1.80	Strongly disagree
2	1.81-2.60	Disagree
3	2.61-3.40	Neutral
4	3.41-4.20	Agree
5	4.21-5.00	Strongly agree

Furthermore, in order to find out the mean score of the likert questions the researcher employed the following formula:

$$\bar{x} = \sum (x_i * f_i) / n$$

Where (n) represent the number of respondents, (x_i) represent the response value, (f_i) represent the response frequency and ($\sum$) is the summation of the response value and frequency. After that, the researcher interpreted the data on the table.

Meanwhile, the data from interview was analyzed by using flow model by Miles and Huberman (1992). The model had some components to analyze, such as data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion. The first was data reduction which focusing in choosing which parts needed to be included in the interview transcript. The second stage was data display. In this study, the data from the interview was presented in the form of narration. The last was drawing and verifying conclusion. After displaying the data, the researcher created conclusion based on the research questions. Furthermore, the data had to be checked for their credibilty and accuracy. The researcher checked the validation of the data using triangulation strategy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As the researcher explained previously, the questionnaire (n=20) of this research were distributed to students from English department of Tadulako University which then was analyzed. Alongside questionnaire, interview (n=5) was also conducted towards students chosen from the total population of respondents. The following are the findings of the research:

Questionnaire

The questionnaires given is in the form of Google form that included single and multi-select multiple choice questions that was used to understand students' behavior in using social media. On top of that, Likert scale questionnaire was also used in order to find out students' perception in using social media to learn English. Some tables from the research are not included in the journal.

1. Student's behavior in using social media.

Table 2
Social Media Usage in a Day

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1.	1-3 Hours	4	20%
2.	4-6 Hours	11	55%
3.	7-9 Hours	3	15%
4.	More than 9 hours	2	10%
		20	100%

The first question asked the students about how many hours they spent on social media in general for a day. Table 2 showed that majority of the students which consisted of 11 students in total or (55%) of the population spend 4 to 6 hours in social media in a day.

Table 3
Time Spent on Social Media for Learning English in a Day

No.	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1.	1-3 Hours	17	85%
2.	4-6 Hours	2	10%
3.	7-9 Hours	0	0%
4.	I don't use social media for learning English.	1	5%
		20	100%

The third question asked about how many hours students spent on social media specifically for learning English. Table 4 showed that big portion of the student participant spent 1-3 hours learning English in social media while 2 students spent 4-6 hours and only 1 student express otherwise.

2. Student's Perception on Social Media Usage for Learning English

Table 4
Student's Feeling on Using Social Media for Learning English

Question Number	SD (1)		D (2)		N (3)		A (4)		SA (5)		Σ	$\bar{x}$
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		
1	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	11	55,00	8	40,00	87	4.35
2	0	0	0	0	6	30,00	11	55,00	3	15,00	77	3.85
3	0	0	1	5,00	7	35,00	10	50,00	2	10,00	73	3.65
4	0	0	0	0	5	25,00	11	55,00	4	20,00	79	3.95
5	0	0	1	5,00	5	25,00	10	50,00	4	20,00	77	3.85
6	0	0	0	0	2	10,00	6	30,00	12	60,00	96	4.80
7	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	10	50,00	9	45,00	88	4.40
8	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	10	50,00	9	45,00	88	4.40
9	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	10	50,00	9	45,00	88	4.40

In this part, the students were presented with statements regarding students' feeling in using social media for learning English.

The first statement talked about whether using social media to learn English is fun, mean result (4.35). The second statement was aimed to know whether learning English by incorporating social media can increase students' self-confidence to communicate using English, mean result (3.85). The third statement was intended to know whether students felt less anxious in participating in English classes by incorporating social media to learn English, mean result (3.65). The fourth statement talked about whether students became more independent to learn English, mean result (3.95). The fifth statement was intended to know whether social media created more relaxed and stress free learning experience for the students, mean result (3.85). The sixth statement was about whether social media provided a lot of resources for learning English, mean result (4.80). The seventh statement was about the easiness of using social media for learning English, mean result (4.40). The eighth statement was about the flexibility of social media that can be opened anytime and anywhere, mean result (4.40). The ninth and last statement was the easiness of using social media to communicate with other people, mean result (4.40).

Referring to table 1 in previous chapter, we can see that students perceive the usage of social media to learn English very positively, which evident in the mean result of each statement presented. For reference, mean interval 3.41-4.20 (agree) and mean interval 4.21-5.00 (strongly agree).

Table 5
Language Development

Question Number	SD (1)		D (2)		N (3)		A (4)		SA (5)		Σ	$\bar{x}$
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		
1	0	0	1	5,00	1	5,00	10	50,00	8	40,00	85	4.25
2	0	0	0	0	2	10,00	12	60,00	6	30,00	84	4.20
3	0	0	1	5,00	7	35,00	9	45,00	3	15,00	74	3.70
4	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	15	75,00	4	20,00	83	4.15
5	0	0	1	5,00	8	40,00	10	50,00	1	5,00	71	3.55
6	0	0	0	0	1	5,00	7	35,00	12	60,00	91	4.55
7	0	0	1	5,00	3	15,00	12	60,00	4	20,00	79	3.95

In this part, the questionnaire presented the students with all English skills and component that were utilized in social media, such as the main language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the sub-skills of said main skills (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation).

The first statement talked about whether social media gave students the opportunity to use and improve their listening skills, mean result (4.25). The second statement was about whether social media gave the student the opportunity to use and improve their speaking skills, mean result (4.20). The third statement talked about whether social media gave students the opportunity to use and improve their reading skills, mean result (3.70). The fourth statement talked about whether social media gave students the opportunity to use and improve their writing skills, mean result (4.15). The fifth statement talked about whether social media allow the students to acquire new vocabulary, mean result (3.55). The sixth statement talked about whether social media helped the students to improve their grammar knowledge, mean result (4.55). The seventh statement talked about whether social media helped in increasing the students' knowledge in pronunciation, (3.95)

Once again we can see from the mean result of each statement that the students felt that using social media helped them in improving their English skills.

Table 6
The Challenges of Using Social Media for Learning English

Question Number	SD (1)		D (2)		N (3)		A (4)		SA (5)		Σ	$\bar{x}$
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		
1	0	0	1	5,00	1	5,00	9	45,00	9	45,00	86	4.30
2	0	0	0	0	2	10,00	8	40,00	10	50,00	88	4.40
3	0	0	1	5,00	9	45,00	7	35,00	3	15,00	72	3.60
4	2	10	3	15,00	9	45,00	3	15,00	3	15,00	62	3.10
5	0	0	0	0	5	25,00	10	50,00	5	25,00	80	4.00

In this part, the researcher presented the student participants with statements about common problem that they might encounter or felt when using social media.

The first statement talked about the existence of inappropriate content in social media, mean result (4.30). The second statement talked about many distractions when it comes to learning English using social media, mean result (4.40). The third statement talked about whether social media affect the student's mental and health, (3.60). The fourth statement talked about the technical problems of learning English with social media, mean result (3.10). The last or fifth statement talked about the possibility of personal data misuse in social media, mean result (4.00)

From the result of the mean from each statement we can see that, although social media present great potential as a learning media, it also present some challenges which is evident in the mean result. Also as we can see fourth statement's mean result is 3.10, in which reffering from table 1 is included in neutral opinion. It means that we can conclude it as the students sometimes encounter such problem when using social media.

Interview

To get more comprehensive data from the questionnaire, the researcher did interview on students to find out their feeling about learning English using social media. In this section the researcher will address the informants as ST 1 to 5. Some response from informants were not included in the journal.

The first question asked by the researcher to the informants was, what were their reasons to use social media as a medium for learning English.

ST1: "because social media is easier to use and also more casual unlike in a regular class"

ST3: "because it's easy, interesting and easy to understand"

ST5: "because it's easier to get the information that you want to learn English"

From all the statements presented for the first question, it can be concluded that, the reasons as to why the informants used social media to learn English was because of how easy and convenient it was.

On the second question, the researcher asked the informants to explain how they learnt English with the social media they chose in the questionnaire.

ST3: "From Facebook, there are usually videos of people explaining basic English lessons and all"

ST4: "On Instagram I usually follow English accounts for example, accounts that post every day about new vocabulary"

ST5: "I myself use Youtube a lot, on Youtube I often watch vlogs of westerners so, at the same time I can practice listening and speaking while watching"

From all the statements presented for the second question, it can be concluded that, the informants used social media mainly as another way to learn English outside of regular class.

The third question asked by the researcher to the informants was the benefits they felt from

learning English with social media.

ST2: "What I feel for myself is that I am becoming more confident meeting friends who I am already familiar on WhatsApp"

ST3: "the reels videos that appear on Instagram or Facebook reminds us about the material we forgot so it's just like reminding us of the basic material that we usually learn"

ST4: "The benefit in my opinion is that my English improved more through social media"

From all the statements presented for the third question, it can be concluded that, social media presented easily accessible content that can help students learn English. It also helped them in reinforcing and retaining previously learned knowledge and giving a boost of confidence when it came to social interaction in English.

The fourth question asked by the researcher to the informants was, their experience in learning English on social media.

ST1: "So far the experience has been positive because, most of my English skills have improved more since I used social media compared to learning normally"

ST4: "if you want to say it's very useful, it actually is very useful but, I think it is more like we are learning independently. If there are friends or an environment maybe like an English community, I think that's more cool way to learn English"

ST5: "the experience is quite good because like I said what we want to find or what we want to learn is easy to find on social media"

From all the statements presented for the fourth question, it can be concluded that, the informants felt positive experience when using social media in English language learning. An interesting point is stated by ST4 where they stated that social media was useful in learning English but, felt that the experience would be better if there were peers to allow interactive learning.

The fifth or last question asked by the researcher to the informants was the obstacles they faced when using social media as a medium for learning English.

ST3: "If there is no network, it cannot be accessed"

ST4: "The only thing in mind is that, we need to have data or Wi-Fi"

ST5: "Um, the obstacle is usually that there are a lot of advertisements on social media. If we use social media, we are usually easily distracted"

From all the statements presented for the fifth question, it can be concluded that, the students experienced no major obstacles when using social media for learning, except the need for data or Wi-Fi. The lack of internet access can hinder the learning process. The other obstacles are excessive advertisements and distractions as these interruptions might result in difficulties to stay focused on learning.

This study attempted to explore the use of social media for learning English based on students perception. It was found in the study that students spend a lot of time using social media and that it has become a daily habit among them. It is supported by Altam (2020) that students have positive perception of the use of social media for learning English. This perception is similar to what has been explained by some researchers (Zam Zam Al Arif, 2019), (Sharma, 2019), and (Aloraini & Cardoso, 2018) who expressed that social media provides them with English exposure which enables students to keep practicing their English skills.

Social media allows students to access English content in various forms such as text, songs, films, videos and even games. These various contents can be easily accessed by using any gadgets. This makes social media very flexible to be used by different individuals with different needs, potency and desires (Anwas et al., 2020). Moreover, as social media provides virtual

interaction, it reduces students' anxiety because of the enjoyable experiences provided by the media (Makodamayanti et al., 2020). As a result, students become confident to learn and practice their English anytime and anywhere.

Social media also have challenges that students faced in this study. Students have problems related to the internet connection and privacy concerns. Shing (2018) stated that privacy concerns have become the most concerning thing while students use social media because they still do not know what their individual's information is used for.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research showed that the students have a positive perception on the use of social media for learning English. They stated that social media provides an endless supply of English content which enables them to keep learning and practicing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The usage of Social media also helped them to improve and retain their vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar knowledge. On top of that, the students also express how easy and convenient it is to use social media in English learning. Furthermore, as students can learn English from many ways in social media, they can choose English contents that they like and find things that are not taught by their teacher in the classroom. Social media usage also creates a stress-free environment for students so that the students are comfortable, and motivated to learn English outside of regular classes. Even though social media usage in English learning presents the students with all its benefit, they also encounter some challenges in the use of it such as, internet connection problem, distracting advertisements and some inappropriate content. Despite the challenges it presented, Tadulako University English Department students' usage of social media for learning English is perceived positively as it proves to be helpful in their language learning process and improvement.

After conducting the research and getting the information about how the students perceived learning English using social media, the researcher would like to suggest English teacher and lecturers to explore and utilize social media. Especially, the social media applications that mentioned by the students (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, X and WhatsApp) for teaching and learning process in the classroom. However, before including social media, the lecturer must be equipped with the knowledge necessary about social media and spend the time to prepare students in using social media for learning. Next suggestion is addressed for students who are the user of social media. The researcher hoped that students to be more mindful and wise in using social media not only for entertainment but also for learning. Lastly, the researcher would like to suggest further research to explore more about the impact of social media on specific English skills and how to minimize potential challenges or problems arise from the usage of social media for English learning.

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