

Students' Perspectives of Social Media As Medium of Learning English

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Abstract: This major aim of this study is to seek for better understanding of students' perceptions towards using social media for learning English. This study also attempts to identify the most frequently used social media in English learning. The participants of this study were 78 students of State Polytechnic of Bengkalis who had used social media as English learning medium. The data were collected through questionnaire distributed by using google forms. The results of this study showed that the students had positive attitudes towards the utilization of social media for learning English. The finding of the study also revealed that the most frequent social media used for learning English is YouTube and WhatsApp as the most frequent media used for general purposes. It can be concluded that using social media in English learning has positive impact for students.

Keywords: English Learning, Perspectives, Social Media

1. Introduction

Today, the advances of technology had caused a huge transformation in the fields of communication and education. Technology has been used as a tool of learning from elementary to higher education. The employment of technology offers the opportunity for the students to explore and find out the learning material, discover new ways of learning English and practice their English language skills [1]. In addition, integrating technology in the classroom can attract and cultivate students' attention and their positive attitudes in learning classroom and also make best use of the process of language teaching and learning [2]. It also provides the opportunities for students to practice English in real context of language use and interact with the native speaker. Moreover, technology also useful for teachers as resources of teaching materials such as video, interactive platforms, motion pictures in the classroom to enhance English language learning [3].

As a part of technology, social networking sites growth rapidly and had successful in attracting the younger generation's attention who born in the digital era [4]. The interactive features and multidimensional characteristics of social network sites provides users to express and share their opinions, ideas, beliefs, and activities freely and quickly with and to other people around the world [5]. The social network sites also affect learning especially English language learning since language is interactive nature. Using social network sites in learning language increases significantly because the process of teaching and learning can be done independently [3],[6]. Moreover, the employment of social networking sites for language learning and teaching as well as for cultivating learners' language skills [7]. They also allowing the users to access more interactive, personalized, and autonomous learning experience while also used to advance new ways of learning [8]. Many social media have been used as learning tools such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Classroom, and other platforms especially in learning English.

The purpose of this study was to understand students' perceptions towards using social networking sites for learning English as well as to identify the social networking sites that are frequently used in learning English by students at State Polytechnic of Bengkalis. Moreover, the results of this study are hoped to improve the process of teaching and learning English for students as well as to motivate students to learn English.

2. Methods

This research employed quantitative research which utilized survey design. Quantitative research was method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to examine a population or a specific sample, collecting data using research instruments, analyzing the data by quantitative or statistical and to describe and test the hypothesis that determined [9]. Survey design was used to gather a particular topic of information from a group or amount of people [10]. This research had been conducted at State Polytechnic of Bengkalis in 2021/2020 academic year. The questionnaires were distributed by google forms to seventy-eight students who had used social media as tool of learning English. This questionnaire consisted of ten questions which seven closed questions and three open questions. Data and the answers then are classified according to the topic and are analyzed using qualitative and quantitative method in three steps: data managing, data interpreting and transcript analyses. In managing the data, the data were classified into the topic in the questionnaire and the data were interpreted and classified into some categories regarding to the topic of questionnaire.

3. Result and Discussion

The questionnaires were distributed online to the third semester of students in Bengkalis State Polytechnic who had accessed social media for learning English. The results showed that there were 61% male respondents and 39% female respondents who had participated in this research (Figure 1)

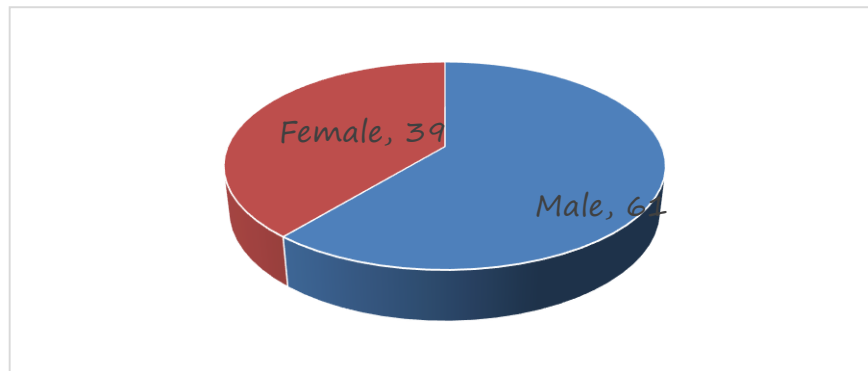


Figure 1. Comparison of Respondents

The result revealed that there are many types of social media use by students for general purposes that the most communal and prevalent ones are WhatsApp and Instagram as shown in Figure 2. WhatsApp are used by 96% respondents while Instagram are used by 92% respondents. It also was found that the students use YouTube which chosen by 79% respondents, TikTok, and Telegram use by 68% respondents and other social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Discord, and Line are used only 60%, 47%, 3%, and 1% respectively by the respondents. The students had different preferences of social media related to learn English. The most common social media use for learning English is YouTube which chosen by 86% respondents, Instagram is used by 56% respondents. The others social networks used for learning English are TikTok, WhatsApp, Twitter, Telegram, and Facebook which got percentage of 43%, 23%, 22%, 19%, 17% respectively. Game, Google, and Spotify only used by less than 5% of respondents. This result is not in line with the research conducted by Ismail [8] that WhatsApp and Instagram are the most popular social media use by the students in learning. The result shows that the students prefer to use YouTube than WhatsApp in learning English. However, this result is supported by Arif [3] who find Instagram as the most common social network use which also find in this research.

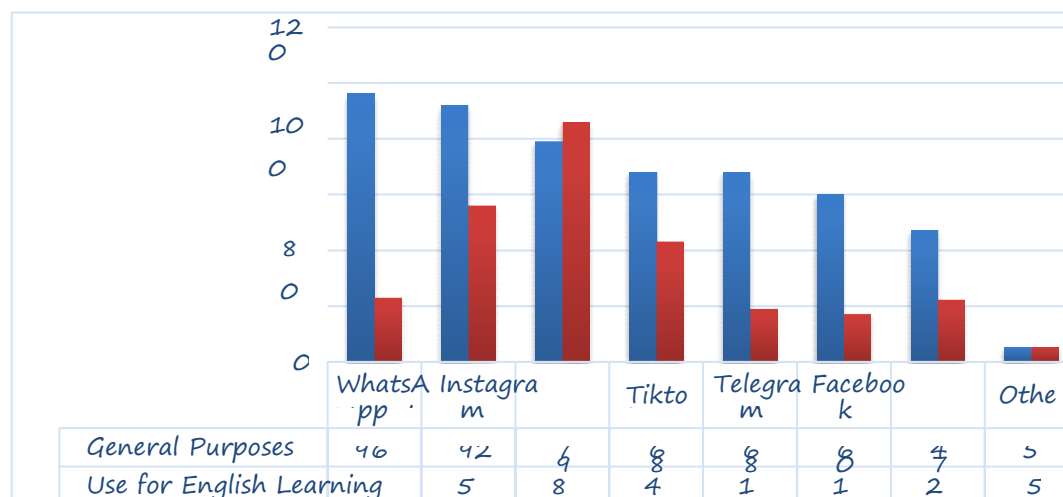


Figure 2. Comparison of Social Media Use in Common and Learn English.

The result also exposed the reasons of using social media. There are several reasons why the students access social media such as finding information or news, communicating with family or friends, studying, motivating themselves, filling the free time, and looking for entertainment and lifestyles. According to the students, they use social media for finding information or news which have chosen by 87% respondents and 86% respondents used it for communication with their family and friends. Another reason of using social media is for studying which have percentage 75%

meanwhile there are 70% respondents use it for leisure time and 65% for motivating themselves.

The data analysis displayed the frequency of the students in using social media for general purposes and for learning English. 38% of respondents reported that they spent 1-3 hours in a day for general purposes or non-learning purposes, 32% spent 4-6 hours, 18% spent 7-9%, 13% spent more than 9 hours, and 3% spent less than an hour for general purposes. The frequency of using social media for learning English were less than the frequency for general purposes. Many respondents (53%) claimed that they spent 1-3 hours a day to use social media for English learning purposes. Then, 41% respondents reported that they spent less than 1 hour a day, 4% spent 4-6 hours, and 3% of respondent claimed that they spent 7-9 hours a day for learning English by using social media. This study has similar result with the study of Arif [3] that the students tend to spend more hours in using social media for general purposes than using social media for English learning. The comparison of frequency using social media for general purposes and learning English purposes can be seen in Figure 3.

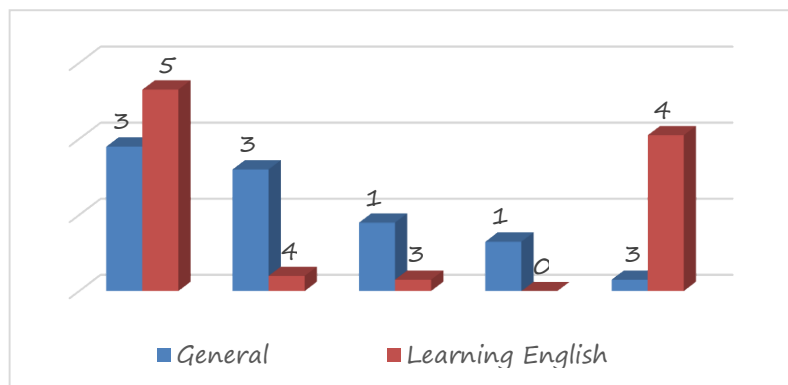


Figure 3. Percentages of Social Media Use Frequencies

Relating to learn English, social media are very useful in improving their English skills because they are handy and easy to access. In social media, the students were able to learn receptive skills and productive skills. The results of this study presented that the most English skills the students tend to study were reading and speaking skills which chosen by 67% and 57% respondent respectively. Others skills such as listening selected by 51% respondents and writing chooses by 11% respondents. Moreover, the micro skills; grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling, also selected by the students to be learnt in social media. The most micro skill chosen by 59% respondents was vocabulary, then 52% respondents wanted to learn pronunciation, 30% respondents selected grammar, and 27% respondents chose spelling. It can be seen in Figure 4 below.

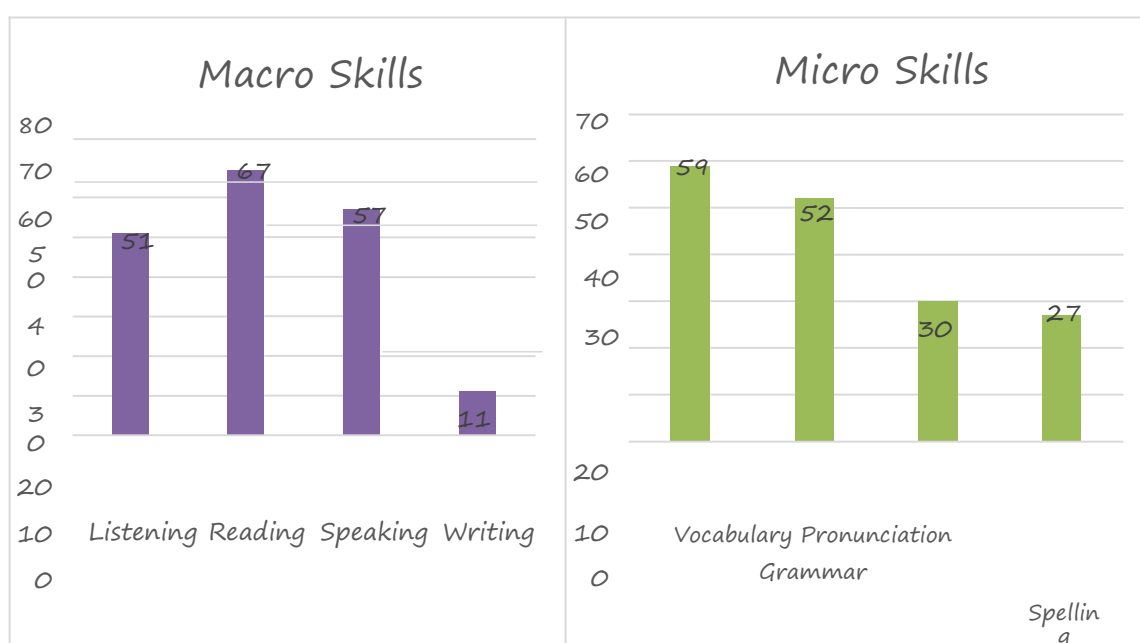


Figure 4. English Macro and Micro Skills in Social Media Learning

The results exposed the students' perception towards the use of social media for learning English. The majority of respondents (84%) stated that social media are effective for learning English. They stated that using social media makes English learning more enjoyable that responded by 82% students. Then, 67% of respondents perceived that learning English in social media is easy to understand and they could access it every time and everywhere (65%). Furthermore, more than half of respondents expresses positive responses that using social media for learning English is useful, practical, and cheap (53%). It is shown in Table 1 below. These results were in line with several studies which supported the use of social media in teaching learning process especially in English learning. They stated that the utilization of social media in learning has more advantages which can improve both students capability and motivations [11],[3],[12],[13],[14].

However, some of respondents (16%) stated that social media is ineffective for learning English. They perceived that learning English using social media cannot be practiced since most of social media contents for English learning are theoretical not practical (10%) and 8% students claimed that using social media for English learning not useful since they cannot interact directly with the teachers or instructors. It is in line with the research conducted by AlShoaibi and Shukri [4] which stated that the female students against using social media outside the classroom for learning English since the teachers have to presented when learning because they can correct their mistakes and know which is right and which is wrong unlike social media. It means that the students need to interact with the teachers when learn English to make sure they do not make mistakes.

Table 1. Students Perspectives of Social Media

Perspectives using social media	Numbers of Students	Percentage
Effective	65	84
Enjoyable learning	64	82
Easy to understand and accessible	52	67
Useful, practical, and cheap	41	53
Ineffective	12	16
Unpractical and cannot interact with the teachers	8	10

4. Conclusions

Based on the research result, the present study reveals that learning English by using social media is more fascinating to the students since the utilization of sophisticated technology becomes accessible. The students are willing to learn and growth their period in using social media for academic purposes such as learning English. They are more attracted and pleased practicing and upgrading their English competencies quality. The study also presents that the most frequent used of social media for English learning is YouTube. The employment of social media that is managed positively will have a positive impact on the students. Technology is presented to support and help the students' opportunity to learn and do more not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom.

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