Teaching English Through Social Media: Teachers' Perceptions

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Abstract. The use of social media in human's life is undeniable, including in teaching. Nowadays, some of the social media applications which are commonly used for social relations are now be applied in teaching language skills, especially in teaching English. For this purpose, this study aims to explore the use of social media in teaching English based on the teachers and students' perceptions. This research applied a qualitative research design taking 50 teachers of English in the universities in Makassar. The data of this research were collected by employing a survey of Google Form and analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The result of the research shows that the English teachers in the universities in Makassar gave their positive perceptions about the use of social media in teaching English. Some of the answers of the informants gave some strategies to be used to take the advantage from the use of social media. It can be seen that some of the social media application such as Instagram and Facebook can be applied in teaching English skills. Findings from this study are worthy of reading for English language teaching practitioners in their effort to create interactive teaching and learning activities in the class.

Keyword: Social media, Facebook, Instagram, Online Learning, English Language Teaching

INTRODUCTION

The need for teaching English is still the spotlight of many researchers and is also a topic of discussion, especially in its efforts to develop the quality of teaching English. As it is known that research conducted in the development of English language teaching has been reviewed from various aspects, both regarding the implementation of methods, teaching materials, evaluation of English teaching, and the development of English language learning media. However, the results have not been promising. Facts in the field show that students or students learning English still find difficulties in using English. In other words, their skills in using English are still relatively minimal and of course there is still a need for improvement so that they are more maximal in their achievement. Alter and Adkin (2006, p. 37) in their study found difficulties in writing caused by a lack of skills while Samian and Dastjerdi (2012, p.61) found that there were difficulties faced by students in listening in the context of

English. There are still many other skills that prove difficult for students, for example in grammar (Vasquez, 2008; Maros, Hua, & Salehuddin, 2007), in writing (Darus & Ching, 2009), and in reading (Floris & Divina, 2009).

The main objective of learning English as a foreign language which is termed TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) is to be able to communicate using the target language optimally. Mastering a new language in this case English is not an easy job. For this reason, one important aspect that needs to be considered is the aspect of teaching English in the classroom. One of them is the teaching material used. According to researchers, communicative material will make it easier for students to absorb subject matter. By looking at the facts above, the researchers consider the need for a new breakthrough in an effort to improve mastery of English. One of them is by integrating various communication media. As we know today, communication media is not only in the form of print media, but also in the form of online media. We can see online media, one of which is in the form of social media, which allows netizens to communicate using networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others.

Today the world of online communication has also penetrated the world of education. In fact, because of its increasing progress, the use of online communication has become the interest of researchers (Locher, 2010; Stapa & Shaari, 2012). According to researchers, the digital era which has become increasingly prevalent needs to be optimized so that its existence does not interfere with learning. On the other hand, it needs to be empowered in order to provide good benefits for learning.

One form of online communication can be seen in the use of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and so on. Baruah (2012, p. 1) states a number of uses of social media, namely as a tool for "sharing ideas", "bridging communication gaps" and as "a source of information." In addition, social media provides simple ways to disseminate information and obtaining arguments. In essence, the existence of social media makes communication easier. Idris and Ghani (2012) show that posts on Facebook encourage active participation, interaction, and knowledge construction. Social media has enabled customers to express their feelings about products or services they have purchased (Rodriguez, Peterson, and Krishnan, 2012). Social media also serves as a platform where users can jointly investigate content, share experiences, and build relationships for different purposes, for example, for social purposes or education (Jiao, Gang, & Yang, 2015).

According to researchers, this form of social media network can be used as learning material. For that purpose, this research is directed at developing an English learning model through the use of these social media networks. From the results of the researchers' observations, it can be seen that Instagram social media has many accounts based on English teaching. On Facebook, netizens also post frequently in English. All of these can be used as materials or materials for learning English. For

example, for vocabulary teaching, researchers sometimes use Instagram posts that show synonyms or antonyms, which are easier to access than opening an English dictionary. For this reason, researchers assume that it will be very relevant if social media is developed as a learning aid, namely by designing a model and interactive teaching material through the use of these social media networks.

With the above considerations, the researcher intends to develop a teaching model that utilizes these social media networks. Researchers see great and good potential in utilizing posts on these social media networks in developing English language teaching. There are a number of English language skills that can be developed by utilizing these social media networks. Vocabulary teaching can take advantage of posting on Instagram accounts such as @englishwithnab, @ englishcards39, and others. English-language video posts via Facebook that are created with creative animations can be an interesting source of learning for English learners. Therefore, the researchers assume that through this study, an English learning model can bedesigned by utilizing these social media networks. Thus, social media is not only a vehicle for informal communication but also a source of learning.

RELATED LITERATURE

Social Media and its Function

Baruah (2012) states that social media is "the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into an interactive dialogue" (p. 1). Social media can be seen in the form of magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, videos, ratings and social bookmarking.

Social media has had a lot of influence in human life, especially in the field of education. Since its introduction, social media has been integrated in classrooms and implemented for learning purposes in various ways (Gikas & Grant, 2013; Mao, 2014). In fact, Seaman & Tinti-Kane (2013) reported in their survey that there was an increase in using social media tools in the classroom with the majority identifying blogs and wikis as their primary social media learning tools. According to Greenhow & Lewin (2016), social media has the potential to bridge formal and informal learning through digital culture. Greenhow & Lewin (2016) say that social media helps students manage group work, generate ideas, communicate with peers and teachers, share information, resources and links, document and communicate progress, share project results such as assessment presentations and evaluations. According to Sobaih, Moustafa, Ghandforoush, & Khan (2016), social media encourages students to communicate, collaborate, participate, and create deep learning through interaction.

Related studies conducted by Mason & Rennie (2007) and Ajjan & Hartshorne (2008) show that the use of social media in teaching can encourage participation and

critical thinking from students. Grosseck (2009, p. 479) suggests that social media serves as a tool for preparing and collecting didactic materials, evaluating and analyzing progress made by students, composing informative and formative presentations, time management, planning schedules and calendars of activities, project development. in collaboration, digital storytelling, student eportfolios etc. Mazman & Usluel (2010) also say that learning sites and social networks in particular have allowed for more interaction, collaboration, information and sharing of resources.

Other research related to the use of social media in education shows that integrating social media in teaching and learning environments can produce new forms of inquiry, communication, collaboration, identity work, or have positive cognitive, social, and emotional impacts (Gao, Luo. , & Zhang, 2012; Greenhow, Burton & Robelia, 2011; Greenhow & Robelia, 2009; Pimmer, Linxen, & Grohbiel, 2012). DiVall & Kirwin (2012) in their study found that social media in learning provides increased peer support and communication about content. In addition, social media can increase the effectiveness of language learning between cultures (Mills, 2011) and increase the positive effect on efforts to express digital identity and literacy, especially for marginalized groups (Manca & Ranieri, 2013). Furthermore, Tess (2013, p. 60) said that social media technology can change the way students communicate, collaborate, and learn. For example, Ghani (2015) in his study of Facebook in teaching found that reading, writing and discussion activities could be carried out through Facebook and in fact Facebook helped them in writing research reports.

Facebook

Of all forms of social media, Facebook is the dominant choice for communication chosen by netizens. According to Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr (2010), the Facebook social networking site developed by Mark Zuckerberg (2004) is the most dominant social networking site. A study conducted by a number of researchers (Hargittai, 2007; Ellison, Steinf eld, C., & Lampe, 2007), for example, found that 94% of their students were Facebook users who spent an average of 10-30 minutes on the site and had 150-- 200 friends. Noyes (2015) also argues that Facebook is considered the most used social networking site among all because of its increasing active membership.

The benefits of Facebook in learning have also been expressed by a number of experts. Faizi, El Afia, & Chiheb (2014) said that Facebook is highly recommended for foreign language learning in distance, mixed, or face-to-face learning. According to Blattner & Fiori (2009), Facebook can be used to improve students' English performance, increase motivation and trigger authentic language interactions. Kasuma (2017) further reveals four characteristics of English language activities on Facebook that students need and like, namely teacher-led activities, teacher attendance, group structure, and discussion topics or content. Other findings

suggest that Facebook can function effectively in studying novels. Through Facebook students can expand their knowledge of literary novels and students can understand what is around the novel (Mariappan, Abu, & Omar, 2018).

Instagram

Instagram is a social media tool introduced in 2010. Perhaps because of its recent introduction to the field, Instagram has not received much research attention in terms of what it can offer in the learning / teaching process. The web version of Instagram has very limited capabilities and can be used only for limited viewing purposes (Al-Ali, 2014).

A related study conducted by Handayani (2016) shows that Instagram has a beneficial effect in improving students' English skills. Handayani, for example, said that Instagram can be used in all English skills. In speaking, teachers can promote activities to develop and increase their motivation to speak English better by capturing Instagram stories. In reading activities, the teacher can invite students to take photos of their favorite books and write a short review of 1-5 sentences in the caption. In listening activities, the teacher can post videos of English speakers. Videos can include a song, a conversation, a film fragment and an English quote. Students are guided directly to watch and listen to videos. After that, they have to answer the teacher's questions regarding the video content. In writing activities, the teacher can post interesting photos and ask students to write descriptive information in comments. These photos can help students give ideas about what to write (2016).

Perception

The definitions of perception are taken from some experts. According to Angell (2015), a perception is the consciousness sense. In other words, perception is the way people think of something in their surroundings. A perception is formed starting from the eyes, then the eyes catch stimuli and it produces physiological process to bring out perceptions. As stated by Haire (1956) as cited by Gibson, Ivancevich, & Donnelly (1973), perception is a process of recognizing information and it is compared with previous memory which is stored in person's brain. A perception refers to the students' subjective based on their experiences. People may have different perceptions. It depends on their physiological process such as needs and motivation. A perception cannot be decided whether it is right or wrong. Each person has his or her right to have their perceptions as long as it can be proved with the facts. Perception is the way stimuli are chosen so that they can be meaningful (Altman, 1985). The way perception is described shows that stimuli have important role in building the perception. According to Sharma (2015), our sense organs will be stimulated by different stimuli. Our senses organs receive those stimuli and they are converted into sensations. Perception is defined as the process of interpretation of stimulus. These sensations are transmitted to the parts of brain then it will be interpreted. Perception involves two processes, they are sensation and

interpretation. Perception also requires past experience because people can identify something easily if they have seen it earlier compare with people who have not seen it before. Referring to this research, teachers and students may have different perceptions toward the use of social media in teaching English.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive-qualitative research design. Denzin and Lincoln state that qualitative research involves interpretive and naturalistic approaches (2000). In this study, the researchers described naturalistic settings as classroom interactions involving the teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. The data obtained were interpreted to answer the research questions.

This qualitative research was conducted at some universities in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia in 2021. The subject of the research is English lecturers English Department of the chosen universities. The English lecturers were chosen because of their competence and working experience in teaching.

To collect data, the researchers distributed a questionnaire by using a Google Form. The main questions are to reveal the teachers' opinion about the use of social media in their life and the possibilities of using social media in learning English. This covers the advantages and disadvantages of using social media in teaching English and the strategies in using social media in teaching English. To analyze data, some of the steps, adopted from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) were employed, namely: (1) data collection, (2) data condensation, (3) data display, and (4) conclusion drawing and verification. After getting the data from the Google form, the data were then described descriptively. The data were described and analyzed qualitatively concerning with the use of social media among the students in the university wither as communication tool or as learning tools. The researchers then displayed the data and verified the research by making conclusion of data findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part illustrate the perceptions of the teachers in terms of the use of Social Media in teaching English.

The use of Social Media by the English teachers

The teachers showed their responses regarding the use of Social media that can be seen in the following table:

No	The use of Social Media	Yes	No
1	Using in daily life		
2	Using in teaching ENglish		

Based on the responses, English teachers have been using Social Media to communicate in their daily life. The whole respondents said thaty they have been

using social media as the way to communicate in their daily life. The same case when they were asked about the use of that social media as a tool of teaching. Based on the data, it was shown that the teachers also make use of social media as a tool of teaching English.

The Kinds of Social Media used for English Teaching

The teachers also show their response regarding the kinds of social media that they have been used as a tool of teaching English that can be seen in the following table:

No	Kinds of Social Media	Frequency
1	Facebook	11
2	Instagram	12
3	Telegram	2
4	Youtube	2
5	WhatsApp	17
6	Twitter	2

Based on the above tavle, it can be seen that teachers mostly used WhatsApp as a tool of teaching English. In the second number, Facebook and Instagram were uused more frequnetly than the others. Other tools such as Youtube, Telegram, and Twitter were mentioned but not become the priority as the tool in teaching English.

Skills in Teaching English that used Social Media

No	Skills in English	Frequency
1	Speaking	14
2	Reading	11
3	Listening	5
4	Writing	12

Based on the above table, it can be seen that among the four skills in English, listening skill is the least skill taught by using the social media application. The other three skills, speaking, reading, and wiring are proved to be mostly taught by the teachers using the social media application.

Activities of using Social media in ELT

The following answers show the teachers' perception on the activities that can be done in order to use Facebook and Instagram in teaching English:

> *Take posts in the FB group (Facebook) on the topic and make it a topic of discussion. Students post pictures on IG and write captions in English and post IG posts to write theme-based paragraphs/essays. Take a video on instagram/youtube then ask students to speak using the same expression and intonation as well as how to speak the video. This I call the imitation*

method in speaking. Sending teaching materials that will be discussed in class before the lecture schedule, asking students to submit assignments through social media, attendance through social media, asking and answering questions through social media.Taking IG posts about new vocabulary accounts taught in class Ask students to write stories on their social media accounts. Discuss the results of reading through comments in the WA group in writing or through Telling IG stories. Take posts in the FB group (Facebook) on the topic and make it a topic of discussion. Take videos on IG (Instagram) in English for speaking and writing. Make Ig story' to spread

Therefore, it can be seen that Facebook and Instagram contain a lot of activities that can be explored in order to be used in teaching. The video posts in facebook and nstagram can be used to teach speaking skills. The contents which are interesting can motivate the students' speaking skills. In addition, some accounts in Facebook and Instagram contain good materials for teaching.

Based on the interview, the teachers also gave positive pereptoons that can be seen as follows:

Extract 1:

Kalau menurut saya, banyak hal yang meratik yang bisa dimanfaatkan dalam kedua medsos ini dalam proses belajar mengajar. Dari sudut pandang yang diajar, mereka itukan familiar dengan media sosial, mereka itu kan penikmat, pengguna, setiap hari menggunakan, bahkan lebih mengerti fitur-fitur yang ada dalam instagram, misalnya, jadi kalau mereka buka tiap hari, otomatis mereka itu lebih familoiar. Mungkin itu nyang bisa membantu penggunaan media sosial (Respondent 1)

In my opinion, there are many useful things that can be used in these two social medias in the teaching and learning process. From the point of view of being taught, they are familiar with social media, they are connoisseurs, users, use it every day, even better understand the features on Instagram, for example, so if they open it every day, automatically they are more familiar. Maybe that can help the use of social media (Respondent 1)

Extract 2:

Sekarang banyak grup-grup atau akun-akun pembelajaran yang bisa mereka follow atau join, dan kalau di foolow kan tdk perlu biaya, free, jadi mereka tinggal ketik atau search akun atau grup pembelajaran seperti apa yang mereka mau nanti kan bisa muncul pilihan, mereka bisa memilih sesuai kebutuhan (Respondent 2)

Now there are many learning groups or accounts that they can follow or join, and if it's fooled, it doesn't cost anything, it's free, so they just type or search for what kind of account or learning group they want. can choose as needed (Respondent 2)

Extract 3:

kita kan dalam situasipandemimau tidak mau sistem pembelajarannya kan berubah yang tadinyadi kelas offline, lebih banyak tatap muka dan dosen sekarang harus lebih banyak di rumah, nah salah satu sourcenya, sumber pembelajarannya menurut saya yang bisa membantu mereka yang mereka mampu buka, mereka mampu akses setiap hari yaitu media msosial (Respondent 3)

We are in a pandemic situation, like it or not, the learning system has changed, which was previously in offline classes, more face-to-face meetings and more lecturers now have to stay at home, now one of the sources, in my opinion, is learning resources that can help those who they can open, they can access it anytime. day, namely social media (Respondent 3)

Extract 4:

Jadi, manfaat yang bisa dirasakan oleh peserta didik dalam penggunaan sosial media dalam pengajaran bahasa inggris itu banyak hal yang bisa kita rasakan, yang pertama
,umgkin kemudahan akses platform sehingga pemanfaatan IT sangat maksimaltidak ada lagi yang paham tentang IT jadi semua bisa melek teknologi baik pengajar maupun si pembelajar. Nah untuk menjawab tantangan ini, Cyber networking inisangat bermafaat dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris sehingga pembelajara itu akan lebih menyenangkan, fun dan tidak sulit lagi. Namun untukpendidikan karakter mungkin belum sepenuyhnya bisa tersentuh terkait dengan pendidikan karakter yang akan kita sampaikan pada peserta didik kita (Respondent 4)

So, the benefits that can be felt by students in using social media in teaching English are many things that we can feel, first, it is possible to have easy access to various platforms so that the use of IT is maximized. the learner. Now to answer this challenge, Cyber networking is very useful in learning English so that learning will be more fun, fun and not difficult anymore. However, for character education, it may not be fully touched related to character education that we will convey to our students (Respondent 4)

Based on the above interview extracts, it can be seen that teachers have positive perceptions on the use of Faxebook and Instagram. The above findings show that the use of social media has potentials to be used in learning English. All of the students had been using social media in their daily life and in fact, they employed all kind of the social media such as facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and many others. Students in fact had realized that social media brings a lot of benefits in learning English and found that some posts of the social media are potential in larning English skills., especially the productive skills of writing and reading. Therefore, students had suggested some activities from the social media which can be used to learn English.

The above findings are related to some studies conducted by Mason & Rennie (2007) and Ajjan & Hartshorne (2008) show that the use of social media in teaching can encourage participation and critical thinking from students. Grosseck (2009, p. 479) suggests that social media serves as a tool for preparing and collecting didactic materials, evaluating and analyzing progress made by students, composing informative and formative presentations, time management, planning schedules and calendars of activities, project development. In collaboration, digital storytelling, student eportfolios etc. Mazman & Usluel (2010) also say that learning sites and social networks in particular have allowed for more interaction, collaboration, information and sharing of resources.

Other research related to the use of social media in education shows that integrating social media in teaching and learning environments can produce new forms of inquiry, communication, collaboration, identity work, or have positive cognitive, social, and emotional impacts (Gao, Luo. , & Zhang, 2012; Greenhow, Burton & Robelia, 2011; Greenhow & Robelia, 2009; Pimmer, Linxen, & Grohbiel, 2012). DiVall & Kirwin (2012) in their study found that social media in learning provides increased peer support and communication about content. In addition, social media can increase the effectiveness of language learning between cultures (Mills, 2011) and increase the positive effect on efforts to express digital identity and literacy, especially for marginalized groups (Manca & Ranieri, 2013). Furthermore, Tess (2013, p. 60) said that social media technology can change the way students communicate, collaborate, and learn. For example, Ghani (2015) in his study of Facebook in teaching found that reading, writing and discussion activities could be carried out through Facebook and in fact Facebook helped them in writing research reports.

CONCLUSION

The result of the research shows that the English teachers in the universities in Makassar gave their positive perceptions about the use of social media in teaching English. Some of the answers of the informants gave some strategies to be used to take the advantage from the use of social media. It can be seen that some of the social media application such as Instagram and Facebook can be applied in teaching

English skills.

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