



The use of social media as a means of improving English skills

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ABSTRACT

Background: Each user has their smartphone to do communication. The user tends to use social media to communicate each other. Now in pandemic of COVID 19, the teachers do mostly communication to the students and/or to the expatriate teacher are using English.

Purpose: This study is aim to reveal on teacher perspective on what extent that the social media help them to enrich the English skills.

Design and methods: This study is conducted by using narrative inquiry method. The narrative inquiry method aims to reveal certain topic referring to stories and/or experiences. There are 9 participants who works as teacher at international schools at Tangerang. The participants' selection is using purposive sampling strategy as knowing the participants will give their stories to only their close friend. The data is validated by triangulation of data source technique. The triangulation of data source technique is done by crosschecking the data among participants' responses.

Results: This study revealed that social websites and the content of media give more impact to the improvement of English skills of the teachers. This research recommends to investigate a certain categories social media on specific skills and/or to investigate a certain platform in promoting the English learning process.

Keywords: social media categories; teacher's perspective on social media usage; English enrichment for teachers; narrative inquiry method

Introduction

Social media is tools to interact with others without physical contact (van Dijck, 2013). To do interaction, people needs device to be connected each other. Many users of social media has their smartphone to do communication (Barakati, 2013; Ismail et al., 2013). Using the smartphone, the users need only give message to their friends and the message can be accessed by the time the users click share, submit or send button on their application. The physical contact occurs only the users and the users' smartphones (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016).

The social media need an internet connection to connect among the users. The internet is like an invisible wire that connect many devices. The popularity of the social media platform will affect the number of the users. To optimize the social media, the user tends to use social media to communicate each other.

The social media provide a way to communicate either with texts, images, or images and text along among the users, sometimes videos. For example, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and any kind messengers. The user types a text as his thoughts, take photos or videos represent their condition. At the time the user sends them public, other users will be able to see the posts.

The posts sent by the user is using a language that can be understand by others. Thus, every user always thinks in what language their thoughts will be addressed to others.

As a teacher working at international schools, English become a must to be mastered. The teachers do communication to the students and/or to the expatriate teacher are using English.

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The teachers also have to literate in using social media. As COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching is being converted using social media (Lathifah et al., 2020; LEE, 2020).

The communication occurs among teachers and the students is using the text and video call. The text and the utterance of the teachers should be clear so the students can comprehend the lesson very well.

The relevance studies show Facebook can boost up the writing skills of the students (Triasmara et al., 2020). Next, Instagram also help students to give the students more confident to speak English (Sesriyani & Sukmawati, 2019). Then, YouTube affects the motivation to study language more challenging (Kamhar & Lestari, 2019). Those three studies have similar subject (the students) to conduct the researches. The results are also showing significantly affect the language skills of the students.

Based on the explanation above, this study is aim to reveal on teacher perspective on what extent to that the social media help them to enrich the English skills. The research assumption is not only the students need the English skill to be enriched. the teachers also have right to enrich it by themselves with their own way.

Methods

This study is conducted by using narrative inquiry method. The narrative inquiry method is a part of the qualitative research (Hollway & Jefferson, 2006). The narrative inquiry method aims to reveal certain topic referring to stories and/or experiences (Oliveira, 2005; Wengraf, 2001). The topic is about social media use in teacher perspective.

The narrative inquiry procedures in this research start with the problems how to improve English skills from teachers who are forced to speak English daily at schools. Another interesting topic is most of them are familiar with social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook as means of communication. Next, the researcher is gathering stories from the participants how do they experience in using Social Media and try to analyses the correlation with the participants' English skills.

There are 9 participants who works as teacher at international schools at Tangerang. The participants' selection is using purposive sampling strategy as knowing the participants will give their stories to only their close friend. To give value on this research, the participants are selected only known as teacher in (Collaboration Institution Unit) SPK's schools. As large-scale social restriction (PSBB) employs in Indonesia, gathering the data (stories) from teachers is using WhatsApp messenger (Sya & Helmanto, 2020). The teachers are asked some questions non-formally. The chats run as like friend chat which delivers scrambled question alike an unstructured interview.

The objective of using unstructured interview to gather more data from respondents. The respondents share more when they are in comfort (Wengraf, 2001). The unstructured interview also gives broader perspective on the topic.

In keeping with the purpose of narrative approach, the major questions are also set but the questions are addressed in comfort way. The major questions are 1) comments on social media, 2) comments on how to improve their English, 3) features of social media that they are aware most. The data collection, then, are categorized into analyses and interpretations. Those two is to help in generating the findings.

The data is validated by triangulation of data source technique. The triangulation of data source technique is done by crosschecking the data among participants' responses. To give more validation, some documents from article and books related to the findings are crosschecked.

The findings are presented by retelling the generalization of participants' experience. retelling here means is using a story structure so that the experience become make sense and meaningful.

Results and Discussion

Result

The participants are the teachers from SPK schools that different major educational background. 44% teachers are majoring English and the rest are from communication, chemistry, management and French education.

The social media categories coverage used by teacher shown as table 1.

Table 1. Social Media Used by the Participants

Social Media Categories	Coverage (person)
Collaboration Project	-
Blog/Microblog	-
Content	4
Social Websites	5
Virtual Game World	-
Virtual Life World	-

All of the teachers are solitaire. The teachers are not joining any collaboration project. The teachers are busy preparing the lesson materials.

All of the teachers are not using blog. The teachers are focusing their productivity to create something for their work.

44% of the teachers use content platform such as YouTube and Netflix. Both platform serve videos and movies in English. The teachers get more focus on listening what the native speaker saying on the videos.

56% of the teachers tend to use social websites such as Instagram and Twitter. Most of social websites use is Instagram. The teachers think Instagram connecting many friends from other countries.

The participants' responses of social media in improving English as shown on figure 1.

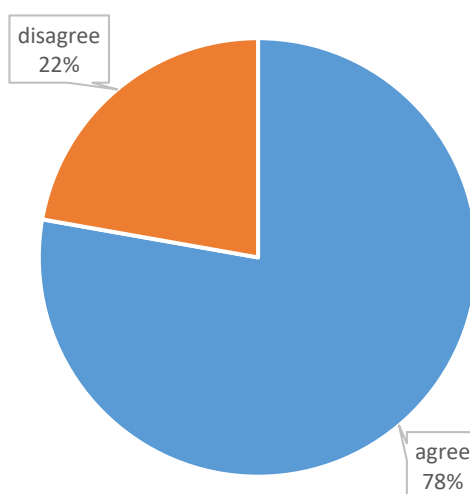


Figure 1 Social Media Improving English Skills

Discussion

Social Media

Social media is an application that based on Web 2.0. Web 2.0 gives speed and give access to smartphone (Hassan & Sutherland, 2017). The technology web 2.0 makes Facebook, twitter, Instagram, YouTube now can be accessed on people hand.

Facebook, twitter, Instagram are some examples of social media platform. The platform needs a profile of a user to identify the account from other users. The identification includes the username, real name (optional), profile photo, date of birth and other bios. All of the identification is to distinguished on account to another.

The platform has different beneficial to the users. Facebook, twitter, and Instagram is a platform that gives the users to share ideas, photos, and videos that might be helpful in learning process.

The Facebook has page that can be customized by the user to put specific page. On the page, the user can promote himself into categories, such as cause, events, or community. The page feature can turn into a specific material that the student can access it by their phone.

Differently with the Facebook, twitter has single account that can be managed by single user. Twitter can serve the trending topic globally. The teacher can use twitter to know what current issue all over the world.

The current issue can be used by the teacher as an idea to lesson material.

Instagram can also promote the students to perform. The limitation of video uploading Instagram only 60 seconds. The teacher can ask the students to do performance, i.e. recite short poem. The students need to upload the video and share the link to the teacher.

Social Media Classification

Social media has many forms. They are e-magazine, e-forum, blog, podcast, wiki, photos, and so on. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) categorized social media into 6 categories, namely: 1) collaboration project, 2) blog and microblog, 3) content, 4) social websites, 5) virtual game world, and 6) virtual social world.

Collaboration project allows the user to add, edit, and remove the contents on the website, i.e. Wikipedia. Blog and microblog give access to the user to free express their thoughts and/or ideas such as critics on a hot issue occurring in their region.

Content gives the users access to post any things and can be consumed by other users. i.e. YouTube. Social websites allow the users are connected by putting some personal information, share the photo of their activities and etc. i.e Facebook.

Virtual game world allow user to play game together. The users are represented by avatar. The user can interact each other like in a real life. i.e. PUBG mobile

Virtual social world allow user interact like virtual game world. The difference of the virtual social world to virtual game world is there is no quest or mission. So every user can normally live like a normal living.

Learning Using Social Media

Social media that can be used for learning are 4 categories, namely collaboration project, blog, content and social websites. Those 4 categories can deliver all subjects include English.

The teacher as the person who in charge in giving and delivering materials to students can use all four categories to enhance their students learning process. To make it happen, the teacher has to start a lesson material production. The teacher can do collaboration project among teachers to make thematic materials. The teacher can address the process of learning process into a blog. Then, the teacher create the contents related to the materials. The content

can be a picture, text, video or any supported thing to give best learning experience to the students. Last, the communication is using the social websites.

English Skills for Teachers

The teachers are actually outstanding person to deliver the material to the students (Asmadawati, 2014; Garrett, 2014; Sya & Helmanto, 2020). However, the teachers face different students every day, they have to increase the communication skills. The communication skills depend on the capabilities of the teacher in using language (English) daily.

As part of the SPK schools' teacher, the students are already good in English. As the students' English increasing, the teachers have to meet the students' level or higher. The teachers also have to know the current issues as the students also connected to social media at home and the students are used to surf internet in English. Therefore, the teachers have to boost up themselves to learn English more for themselves and the students' sake.

The teacher can study English from the content uploaded on YouTube. The video can be downloaded by using third-party application so that the teacher can play it at leisure time.

Based on findings, 22% percent tend to use other way to improve their English. The ways are listening to music in English and studying English in a class. No doubt studying is better to study English. The participants can have a teacher to confirm the participants' understanding.

Listening to music is also a good way to improve English. Either listening to a music, studying or using social media, all of them are preferred by the participants' favor. everyone agrees on learning something that they like most will be valuable impact to himself or herself.

Actually, English skills is increasing by the frequency of the teacher using the language in daily life. It is agreeable that the most of the teachers are aware of social media beneficial.

Unfortunately, the teachers are not fully optimizing the social media. Mostly the teachers use content social media and social websites. Those two are texts, images and videos based posts.

Indeed, the posts are very helpful to the users. As an example, videos on YouTube give specific materials of common English from the users. The users video-record a certain materials and post it into the user's channel. The other users can access the video everywhere and watch it. It is in line with the teacher's comments on code 1 below.

"...One of the best reasons to learn English on YouTube is that most of the lessons are short, but convey a lot of information in easy-to-understand ways. There's no chance of you losing your focus..." [code 1.

Liona 27 years old]

YouTube is a platform providing many useful videos for boosting up English skills. The users can choose the videos and it can be the boring one and/or the entertaining one. The videos are free picked by the users. The users control the picked videos based on their want.

YouTube also give accessibility to the users. When the users have limited time. The users can click download or watch later icon below the videos. the downloaded videos can be watched later when the users have their leisure time. It is supported by the participant's comment that he used the feature described on code 2.

"...There are so many YouTube Channels that explain about common English and It can be downloaded, so I don't need internet if i want to repeat the material..." [code 2. Rizky 30 years old]

Another beneficial of using YouTube is some of the other users are English native speaker. The native speaker can give a good model to be followed how to speak like him/her. The other participant's feeling is shown on code 3.

"...Easy to get and to understand. We can hear from the native speakers..." [code 3. Yosodiningrat 35 years old]

Not only YouTube, Netflix is also providing videos but in a movie format. It is in line with other comment shown in code 4.

"...It contains a lots of movie series with some foreign language. Nickelodeon as sample provide kinds of television series without sub text, it is improving my English especially for listening..." [code 4. Novitasari 26 years old]

Netflix is a platform for streaming movies. The users need to register themselves by a valid email. Netflix can be accessed into several devices which are smartphone, smartTV, and HDTV. The users can access all the contents of the movies by setting up the plan of membership. Each membership has a certain subscription price.

The participant can learn English by viewing the movies with the subtitles on. But for certain skills as shown on code 4, the participant tends to view the Nickelodeon channels. As nickelodeon provide cartoons such as SpongeBob Square-pants, the movies provide no subtitles. Thus, the participant is enforced to listen utterance in English while viewing the amusing videos.

The social websites are also helpful in improving English such as Instagram and Twitter. As previous and related studies shown in introduction section, the Instagram is turned into lesson such as writing skills. The writing skills improved in Instagram is writing a photo caption (Gunantar & Transinata, 2019; Maulina et al., 2018).

The teachers also tend to share the photos of themselves and write its post with caption. Writing caption needs to be based on the facts, to give information, to identify the people, to recognize the moment, and to be in line with the tone of the image (LaRocque, 2003).

The participants send a photo or a video as feed post with following procedures. The users can use the gallery or take photo or videos directly. Then, the users need to give effects and filter on the photo or videos to make the video looks better. The user can tag other users to make them notified and had the photo or video that the users posted. Not only tagging a people, the user can mention the other users on the caption of the photo or video.

The figure 2 is a post from one of the participant. She did writing caption in English. She posted of a photo of a graduation book that is memorable. In the below of the picture, she wrote how she found the book and questioned to herself how the students of her condition now.

The caption of her meets one of the effective criteria of caption writing. However, the teacher is not focus enough to write the letter 'I' into capital one. It means the grammatical of their writing is not as main concern of the teacher.

Another Instagram feature is direct message (DM). DM is like a private message that can be accessed only by the sender and receiver. The participants use direct message to communicate with others that both of them are agreeing to have personal chat. Based on the frequency of using DM to other user from other countries, the participants are confident enough to speak English.

Also the participants are enforced to speak English as the participant mostly have friends accustomed to speak English. This condition is as shown as code 5 and 6 below.

“...I use my social media to communicate, it is not necessarily functioned to improve my English. However, I tend to speak in English on my Social Media to reach wider target of society since some of my friends did not speak Bahasa...” [code 5. Dewanti 25 year old]

“...because in Instagram I have many friends from another country...”
[Code 6. Mutiasari 26 year old]

Another social website used is Twitter. Twitter user needs a registration at the first. Twitter is talking everything happening and where the people talk about it. Twitter is used by tweeting a thought, replying a tweet, retweeting and/or DM. twitter is designed to adjusting the users interest. It means that the tweet on the users' timeline only specific topic that the users want to.

Tweeting is sharing ideas and thought. The participants need to be sure on what the thought is going to be shared. The participants feel more improvement in English when using the twitter. It is shown as code 7 below.

“...we express our ideas and thoughts more actively rather than YouTube and IG...” [code 7. Azzahra, 24 years old]

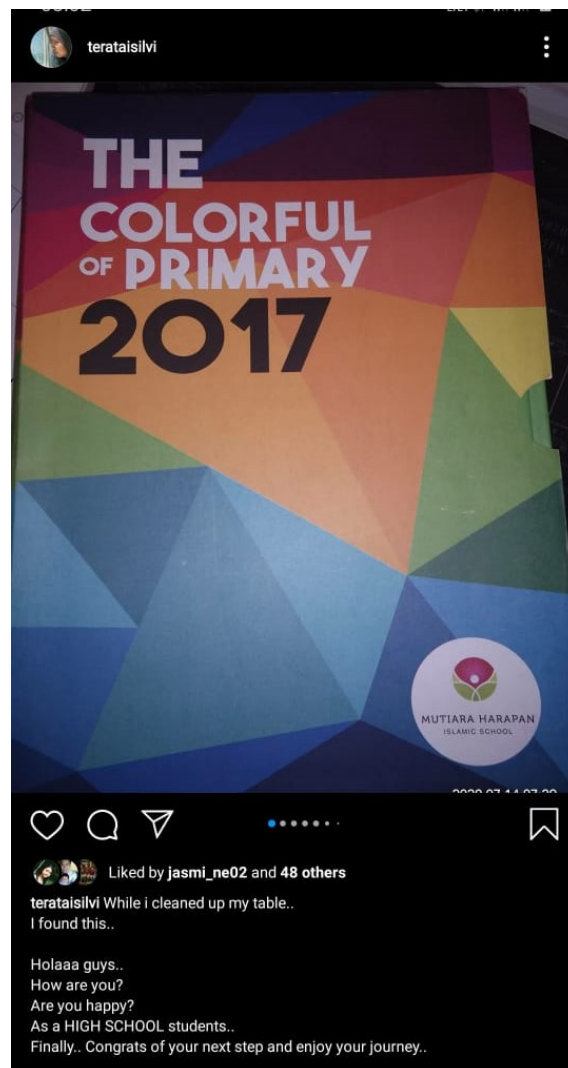


Figure 2 English in Writing Caption of Instagram

The teachers type their thoughts in English is like making a sentence. The teachers can comment on everything that they like or dislike. The teachers are also reading the other Twitter users. Thus the teachers read on his/her timeline on what other users think about.

Conclusion

Social media has six categories that can be used to improve someone language skills. 2 of the 6 social media categories are enough to prove that social media give impact to the users especially English skills improvement. Social websites and the content of media give more impact to the improvement of English skills of the teachers.

Not all the users are using the social media in their daily life. The teachers in leisure time choose one of the platform that they are preferable most. Indirectly what the teachers have done improving the English skills

The teachers are not using collaboration project, blog and/or microblog, virtual game world and virtual life world as the teachers notice the other platform is not accustomed to them. The teachers take their time for preparing the lesson for the students for the next meeting.

Also the teachers are like a normal people, they live a normal life like a social interaction with physical contact. In the pandemic of COVID-19, they have make friends and do physical contact but to specific person and really close to him/her. The teachers are supported by the schools that give regulation for the teachers to teach online. Thus, the teachers can spend most of the time using gadget and try to be accustomed to other categories of social media.

The improvement depends on the teacher's needs. It can be writing, reading, speaking, and/or listening skills. This research has limitation to what extent how the teachers improving the English skills. Therefore, this research recommends to investigate a certain categories social media on specific skills and/or to investigate a certain platform in promoting the English learning process.

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