Collaborative Language Learning in the Cloud: A Study of Students' Experiences and Perceptions on Group Collaboration

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Abstract - Many studies emphasize that collaboration will continue to be essential for learning and working in the 21st century. Information and Communication Technology (ICT), including social media, creates new possibilities for digital-native students, allowing them to participate, interact, and collaborate to complete learning tasks, thereby facilitating the learning process and the learning experience. This study seeks to report on the collaboration of English language learners. Using qualitative and quantitative data to discuss the experiences and students' satisfaction of using social media to enhance a collaborative learning environment in the teaching of foreign language cases. The result indicated that overall students performed positive perception on group collaboration that embedded through social media. This study contributes to an understanding of how students perceived collaboration and how they collaborate on learning task by utilize social media.

Keywords: Collaboration, social media, English as a Foreign Language

1. Introduction

The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 virus has forced schools and universities to remain closed temporarily. To deal with this challenging situation, an emergency online learning has proposed. The urgent need for saving the community is the main concern. During this situation, it is essential to not only develop innovative learning approach to maintain the effective virtual interaction between teacher and students, but also to provide a solution how can the teacher motivate the learners (Oh et al., 2020). Thus, to encourage students' motivation, teacher might create circumstances that enforce and influence students to engage in the learning activity (Nehme, 2010). Social media, one of the famous platform has become powerful learning tools to enhance students' motivation since they are already familiar with social media (Erarslan, 2019; Oh et al., 2020). Hence, with the rapid development of the use of technological tools for educational platform, educators are seek and explore many platform to create a diverse learning experience for their students.

The term of social media can be defined as tools which may be used to store and deliver information and content disseminated through social interactions or networks (Thompson, 2015). Social media is considered as a medium of communication as well as being a powerful learning media in the 21st century. A plethora studies explains that social media have become the global trends in educational technologies where good opportunity is found in formal and informal learning spaces (e.g. Aloraini, 2018; Kassens-Noor, 2012) .

Choosing social media as a technological tool for educational platform has several benefits. Faizi et al. (2013) mentioned social media offers many educational advantages. Those advantages are divided into three main things, such as, social media can be used as a platform for communicate, engage, and collaborate. Research has shown that the success of any learning experience depends on many things, one of which is teacher and students' effective communication. Effective communication between teachers and students can be reached by using social media as a technological tool for educational platform, because social media platforms provide features which could help teachers and students interact both directly and indirectly. Thus, teachers and students can always be connected and minimize the possibility of misunderstandings between the two.

In recent year, the study on the implementation of social media as teaching tools has gained more popularity. Among social media platforms, literature have discussed the pedagogical potential of Instagram as a learning tool. For instance, Erarslan (2019) concluded that the use of social media as an educational platform is beneficial since it enables interaction, collaboration, and cooperation in a formal learning experience for the students. Besides, the result also proved that Instagram contributes to the increasing students' social presents and motivation. In addition, many research also

explored students' perceptions on the pedagogical use of Instagram. Sari and Wahyudin (2019), for example, investigated students' attitudes toward the implementation of Instagram in the General English class, and the result revealed that the learning was perceived positively by the students because of its easiness and enjoyableness.

Razmerita and Kirchner (2015) highlight the importance of collaboration as an attribute in the 21st century learning and working. Research mention that an online or e-collaboration learning positively affect students' performance in problem-solving group activity (see Tseng et al., 2009). In relation between the use of social media and collaboration, many studies reported that the utilization of social media in learning supports collaboration and collaborative work (such as Al-Rahmi & Zeki, 2017; Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014; Razmerita & Kirchner, 2014).

From above mentioned reason, this study seeks to explore English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students' experience and satisfaction with YouTube and Instagram as a tool for learning collaboration. Thus, this study aims to explore students' experience and perspective of collaborative work by answering main research questions: What are students' perceptions regarding their experience when YouTube and Instagram is integrated into language learning courses? And what factors that they face in the use of those social media as learning tools?

2. Method

The research drew upon quantitative and qualitative data to uncover students' experiences and perceptions of the use of Social Media, particularly YouTube and Instagram, as learning tools. Therefore, in initial investigation, a web-based survey was conducted to recognize participants' demographic information and to explore students' experiences in using YouTube for learning. The questionnaire consisted of 4-point Likert-scale, starting from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was distributed to 85 students in two ESP classes. And a total of 57 valid answer were collected, this accounts for an 67.06% response rate of the total number of students. The summarized participants' demographic information is presented in Table 1. In this study, the participants were from a group of ESP students who previously participated in an online survey asking about their perception in using social media for learning in higher education. To provide general depiction of participants' experiences on the use of YouTube and Instagram as learning tools, the Mean, Standard Deviation, and Percentage are reported.

Informed by the findings of quantitative stage, in the qualitative phase, we designed 5 open-ended questions. The data from open-ended questions and interviews then imported to NVivo 12 Software for coding purposes. The participants in this stage were chosen purposively. Given assignment to work on group, they were asked to use social media, particularly YouTube and Instagram. These students, who took YouTube or Instagram as their platform, were then interviewed to shed more light on the use of those platform as learning platforms.

3. Results and Discussion
3.1. Close-ended questions

To elaborate the result of the study, the descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation, are reported. In addition, we also calculated the proportion of each item. Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, and proportions in each scale.

Table 2 The Mean, Standard Deviation, and items' proportion

Item	Mean	SD	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social Media has made it easier to do group assignments.	3.03	.82	8.8%	5.3%	59.7%	26.3%
I want to use social media more often to improve communication and learning, especially English.	2.98	.58	3.5%	7%	77.2%	12.3%
The use of social media in submitting assignments has improved my communication skills during class.	2.96	.49	0%	14%	75.4%	10.5%

From the Table 2, the item that produced the average score furthest from the neutral response, 2.5, indicated the strongest opinion. Meanwhile, the item that closest to 2.5 performed the weakest. The result indicated that the students gave their strong endorsement to item "Social Media has made it easier to do group assignments" ($M = 3.03$). In addition, the participants were homogenous in responding questions "The use of social media in submitting assignments has improved my communication skills during class" (SD= .49).

3.2. Open-ended questions and Focus Group Discussion
Students' experience in using social media as e-collaboration tools

The first open questions asked students' experiences in using social media to collaborate with their peers in a group work. Overall, 56 references or 99.11% of coverage students' statement were coded as positive statements, and only 4 negative statements were coded. Among all the positive statement regarding to their experiences in using social media for group collaboration, one student mention:

> "Subjectively, I quite like the use of social media as a means of group work because I am an introvert person, I don't really like meeting a lot of people, I don't really like going out of the house if I don't really need to. Besides, I also have a little difficulty working in groups, I prefer like working individually, in which I think it is much easier to work individually. But I think that working in groups though implement social media has changed my believed regarding group work. I enjoyed work with my groups." (Student A, Female, 18yo)

Student A claimed that social media helped her to have better group collaboration compared to the traditional group discussion. Other student supported her perspective:

> "With social media, I can get to know my peers and start connecting with them, that I have never met in person due to this online school. Other than that, (using social media) can facilitate the communication with my groups easily. Besides that (social media) also makes it easier to learn to work in groups online." (Student B, Female, 19yo)

Experiencing online learning, many students claimed that the use of social media in classroom provided an activity that made them interact with friends. In contrast, only few students performed a negative statement. One student stated:
> "I feel lack of social interaction, I prefer to have face to face collaboration. I would understand better if we worked directly." (Student C, Male, 19yo)

The benefits and barriers in using social media

From the result of NVivo 12 software analysis on students' perspective regarding the benefit of social media, the first most mentioned benefit of social media was "fast" with 22 references coded. Student D (Female, 19yo) believed that by using social media, she can discuss with their peers faster, "(it is) Faster and simpler, can be done anywhere even when I am outside."

The second most mentioned benefit was summarized by the term "easy" with 18 references coded using this term. Student F (Male, 19yo) stated that, "Working on group work by using social media, for me is easy, instant, and effortless." Other benefit coded were "its simplicity", "familiarity", and "increase creativity with 10, 3, and 2 references coded respectively. For these students, the benefit of the use YouTube and Instagram not only because of its simplicity, but also because of their familiarity with social media. One student emphasized, "It is fun because I am familiar with the use of social media." (Student G, Female, 18yo). They also convinced that using social media, it promotes students' creativity, "First, we can express ourselves more. Second, the benefit that I feel is that we can learn how to edit videos to upload it on social media (YouTube)." (Student H, Female, 21yo).

Regardless all the benefit, students also mentioned the barrier in using social media. There were four themes coded from the open-ended questions and interviews: internet connection and lack of skills. There were 54 references (81.05% covered) coded with the term "internet connection." Student I (Female, 20yo) gave her token, "In my opinion, the main problem is the internet network. Because when I faced it (network problem), it took a long time to reconnect, and it is annoying." In addition, "lack of skill" also mentioned as the barrier of the use social media with 2 references found. One student stated, "I don't know much about YouTube. Although I often see videos on YouTube, but I never use its other features." (Student J, Female, 20yo). In contrast, there were 3 references that mentioned as "no barrier". On of student pointed out that, "I don't see any barrier. So far, it is good."

The main purpose of this study to explore students' experiences and satisfaction on students' collaboration using social media, particularly YouTube and Instagram. The result of both quantitively and qualitatively showed that using social media as complementary tools perceived positively by the participants.

This result supported previous studies mentioned the positive perception of using social media in learning (such as Lailiyah & Setiyaningsih, 2020; Moghavvemi et al., 2018; Orús et al., 2016; Sari & Wahyudin, 2019). And the use of social media is beneficial for group collaboration (Al-Rahmi et al., 2014; Othman, 2017). The result also pointed out that by using social media, students learnt from each other interactively. This is in line with Ahmed's (2020) and Hung and Chou's (2015) study that EFL students who seeking to learn a second language will greatly benefit from using social media platforms to interact freely with others.

4. Conclusion
To conclude, the main aim of this research is to draw the students' experiences and satisfaction on social media use through collaborative learning. The result provides strong support that students perceived positively on the use of social media in the class. In terms of the benefit, students believed that social media were easy to use. Meanwhile, the majority of the participants mentioned internet connection as the main barrier in implementing social media for collaborative learning.

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