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SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LECTURER ALTERNATE LEARNING ENGLISH IN A PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to describe the use of some social media networks as alternate adaptive learning of English, especially for English Education Study Program students. The Corona Virus (Covid-19) spread has had severe implications for the life sector, including education. Educational institutions should organize long-distance learning (PJJ – *Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh*) as a government effort to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia. Lecturers, the leading academic actors in the University, must think creatively and innovatively to design PJJ to achieve learning objectives properly and optimally. This is relatively easy for lecturers and students, considering they are used to some of it. Given that not all educational institutions have an integrated learning platform; lecturers can adapt the function of social media as a medium for long distances learning (PJJ – *Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh*) during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study is based on a qualitative descriptive approach. Based on the research, lecturers and students used four relevant and familiar social media networks: Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp and Tiktok. These four types of social media networks have characteristics that support the achievement of the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) through long-distance learning with their respective strengths and weaknesses.

Keywords: social media, long distance learning, qualitative descriptive approach

INTRODUCTION

In Era 4.0, where lecturers and students are very close and familiar with technology, PJJ is not a barrier in conducting learning activities because lecturers and students in the 21st century have qualified digital literacy skills that enable them to use a variety of technology characteristics appropriately to meet the needs of everyday life. Siemens (2006), via Connectivism Theory, explains that digital learners can learn from any location using digital tools. One feature of digital technology often used is social media such as Instagram, YouTube, Whatsapp, Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, Blogging, etc. This variety of social media is very familiar for modern society to communicate and interact in cyberspace, which helps lecturers and students to learn through social media networks. This is in line with Kamhar, M. Y., & Lestari, E. (2019), who stated that the

choice of learning media must be closely related to lecturers and students. In addition, social media has many benefits as a learning teaching medium, including interacting and sharing more comprehensive information. In implementing PJJ, the variety of social media can be adapted as learning resources and media for teachers and students.

Social media provide communication services orally and in writing with various features and characteristics. In addition, some features on social media can be used to upload images, videos and music. This feature is very supportive of learning, including English subjects. Four skills are taught in English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing and these four skills can be achieved through social media-based learning.



Based on the description above, this article tries to examine how social media can be used as a source and adaptive media for learning English by referring to several scientific papers and supporting books. The author describes several media questions, including Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Tiktok, which can be used to support PJJ in English subjects along with learning syntax.

Using social media as a medium and source of learning is not new in the world of education. Several studies have proven that social media can be an effective and productive learning media source. Lecturers and students are easy to operate because they are familiar with the features offered. Thus, social media networks can be used as an option for long-distance learning media by adapting the function of several advanced features that support learning, including English subjects.

1. Learning English

English as an international language is taught from elementary to university level. This subject has priority in various study programs. Richards (2001) explains that four primary skills are taught in English language learning; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Harmer (2001) mentions that these four skills are fundamental to be mastered by English learners in addition to other language components such as vocabulary, language structure (grammar), and pronunciation.

Lecturers must have technological competence to integrate technology into learning. Thus, language skills and components in education must be combined with technology to achieve language learning objectives properly. Along with government policies on long-distance learning, lecturers must be able to choose the right and supportive learning media. Both lecturers and students must have and understand the media to be used. With this consideration, social media can be an option as a long-distance learning medium because it is very familiar to lecturers and students in the 21st century.

2. Social Media in Learning English

Social media is defined as an internet-based application that uses Web 2.0 technology and functions to exchange user-generated content (Kaplan, A. M., &

Haenlein, M., 2010: 60). In general, social media is an online virtual platform or place where individuals can interact, communicate, and even collaborate without being limited by space and time. There are several social media, including Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, Blogging, YouTube, Facebook, Tiktok, etc. In this article, the writer will describe four types of social media eligible for long-distance learning (PJJ) in English subjects: Instagram, Whatsapp, YouTube, and Tiktok.

The following is an overview of the four social media features that can be used in learning:

a) Instagram

Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them. The name "Instagram" is a combination of "instant camera" and "telegram". Instagram was founded in 2010 by Stanford graduates Kevin Systorm and Mike Krieger; in this platform, users can upload photographs and short videos a maximum of 15 seconds long (Elisa Serafinelli; 2018) The exciting things about Instagram are users can edit their photos, and add filters and frames to each photo. Besides, Instagram allows users to send photos or videos in public or private and give some likes and comments to anyone's photos or videos.

Instagram has many features for uploading photos or videos with captions or short descriptions of pictures/images. The descriptions are written in the box below the images called the caption. Students can upload more than 1 picture in one upload, called collage photos, and they can upload a 1-minute video called a reels video. Besides, Instagram has other features in common with YouTube and Tiktok called Instagram Live. They can interact with some followers in their Instagram Live streaming. Another feature that can be used for learning English is uploading photos or videos with some captions. This feature is suitable for writing activities where

students are asked to upload pictures or videos and provide a caption in English. Shazali & Shamsuddin (2019) revealed that students' writing skills could be improved by using Instagram as a learning medium. More than 2000 characters can be written as a caption. Of course, this amount is sufficient as a medium for students to practice writing in English.

Students will feel challenged and motivated to upload their best photos or videos and provide some captions in English by choosing a suitable theme or topic. Furthermore, the lecturers can give feedback after all students have finished uploading their pictures. The lecturers can give some comments in the comment box. In addition, Instagram also provides a live streaming feature which can facilitate students' listening and speaking skills. Students are asked to speak according to the specified topic; other students can listen and ask questions in the live comments box. This interaction will significantly train students' speaking skills. The lecturers must continue facilitating the learning process by providing reinforcement and feedback.

b) WhatsApp

Whatsapp is an internationally available freeware, cross-platform centralized instant messaging and voice-over-IP service owned by American company Meta Platforms (Jeff Horwits: 2020). WhatsApp Inc. was founded in 2008 by two guys who combined 20 years doing geeky stuff at Yahoo! Inc. before starting WhatsApp; Brian Acton and Jan Koum. WhatsApp is an ad-free mobile messaging app that allows users to exchange text and media messages through their internet data plan or Wi-fi. WhatsApp is a cross-platform instant messaging application that allows iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Windows phones, and Nokia smartphones. Users can exchange text, images, video, audio messages, files, stickers, and group chat for free, and they do not have to pay for SMS.

It is effortless to use WhatsApp. Once users have downloaded WhatsApp, they can quickly start a chat with a friend, change their status, manage the chat conversation, update, and other. There are no hidden costs in using WhatsApp, and no need to log in / out. Since nowadays everyone has a smartphone, they easily install WhatsApp Messenger because WhatsApp is much safer as it has end-to-end encryption, making it more secure. WhatsApp is a fundamental tool for lecturers and students in long-distance learning who only have smartphones without support for modern internet-based communication tools like Zoom or Google Meet. Through this user-friendly app and familiar interface, lecturers and students can run online classes through WhatsApp to meet their teaching goals and help students meet their learning goals. Unlike traditional classroom learning, which is often one-way and reactive, WhatsApp is more dynamic and proactive. Students can not only listen to, but they can also watch and learn from their lecturers from their safety of their homes; they can also access some resources and materials in real-time to assessments at home under the supervision of a parent, submit them to the lecturers, and even discuss through WhatsApp group.

WhatsApp could be a teaching-learning media to increase students' vocabulary and writing skills. The social media lecturers and students use WhatsApp Group (WAG). This media is suitable for long-distance learning in the Covid-19 pandemic and is considered adequate. Through Whatsapp Group, lecturers and students can interact and discuss orally and in writing. They can speak English and send them as a voice notes (audio) on Whatsapp Group. They can also write a short conversation in English. This Whatsapp Group could make students train their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in learning English. As with Instagram, the Whatsapp Group feature can support learning English. Lecturers can send texts,

videos, and audio which are very helpful in improving students' four English skills.

c) YouTube

YouTube is a free video-sharing website that makes it easy to watch online videos. Users can even create and upload their own videos to share with others. YouTube originally started in 2005 and now one of the most popular sites on the web, with more than 7 billion hours of video every month. This type of social media is perfect for practising students' listening and speaking skills. Almurashi (2016) mentions that YouTube, as a source of teaching materials, is very effective for learning English. Through YouTube, students can practice their listening skills; of course, many videos with native English speakers can be used as sources for student learning. The lecturers provides clear directions and instructions or choose an eligible video as a reference. This avoids selecting video content that does not follow the learning objectives and has difficulty.

YouTube is a visual aid, and research has shown that some students learn better with visual aids. Students who learn visually see what is being taught, which helps them understand the coursework better. More than that, YouTube can also be used as a learning resource. Many video content talks about the language component; grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and others. Of course, this will enrich knowledge and deepen student's understanding. Lecturers' directions and explanations are also needed as control and reference for students in choosing material through YouTube and other social media. YouTube has proved to be an effective educational tool as it connects academicians, educators, and researchers worldwide and provides engaging, knowledgeable content, adding a new dimension to education by making it innovative and creative.

YouTube also has YouTube EDU for EDU, Schools, and Teachers. One is YouTube for Teachers, which allows educators to prepare everything from

classroom playlists to a collaborative platform for teachers, lecturers, or educators. YouTube teachers provide classroom playlists based on grade level and course work, allowing teachers or educators to incorporate video into their curriculum. The web offers training resources enabling teachers to learn new ways to watch a video in the classroom. Teachers can join an active community of educators and stay updated on progress with YouTube EDU. Teachers, educators, and lecturers can become a YouTube EDU partner by creating a YouTube channel, uploading high-quality educational content, applying for the YouTube Partner Program, and nominating the channel to be added to YouTube EDU. They are ready to become involved in the YouTube EDU community.

d) Tiktok

Tiktok, the sound of a ticking clock, represents the video platform's short-video. Tiktok is a social media platform for creating, sharing, and discovering short-videos. Users use Tiktok application as an outlet to express users through singing, dancing, comedy, lip-syncing, and education, and it allows users to create educational content and share them across a community. Tiktok's main selling point is that it features video and image recognition, 3D stickers, various filters, video shooting and editing tools, and now users can post 3 minutes video, share the videos worldwide, and have them go viral when done FYP (For You Page). There are several exciting features that Tiktok offers to users, including uploading photos or videos, Tiktok Live (live streaming), and being able to join specific communities in a group. These features are very suitable and needed in learning English online.

Lecturers can also use Tiktok to create short videos on specific subjects that students can watch. This is great for explaining concepts. Users can create a short and to-the-point video that can be watched multiple times so students can

revisit the guidelines when working on the task. Tiktok can help students identify project ideas, collaborate during the learning process, a document that process, or curate and share any products or results of their project. As a philosophy, it promotes real-world skills and technological competency.

Tiktok could improve students' writing skills. In learning to write, the teacher posts or reports a case according to the topic and asks students to provide written responses in the comments column. This is very appropriate for use in exposition texts and discussion texts at the secondary or college level. Students can interactively discuss in writing in the comments column to provide feedback. This activity can be done openly, not privately, so that teachers and students can find out and assess student activity during learning, both writing skills and other language components (Ahmed, 2016).

In addition to English skills, Tiktok can be used to practice listening skills. Lecturers can use the live streaming feature on Tiktok and directly interact orally using English phrases. Thus, students will be trained in English listening skills. Lecturers can also teach a mini-lesson to teach grammar or use Tiktok as a quick review of each day's lesson. Micro videos lend themselves well to the digital portfolios-an ongoing collection of learning 'moments' and articles from the learning process. Video and project-based learning (PBL) classrooms might be a match made in pedagogical technology. Tiktok can help students identify project ideas, collaborate during the learning process, the document that process, or curate and share any products or results of their project.

Each of these four social media networks described above has its strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, lecturers can adjust which social media is appropriate for learning English to train students' language skills. In addition, the lecturer's role is very much needed in increasing students' motivation and readiness for social media-based online

learning. Also, the control and direction of the teacher in sorting and selecting content are essential in following the learning objectives.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a qualitative descriptive study where the researcher describes how social media can be used as an adaptive learning medium in English subjects. Four types of social media were studied: Instagram, WhatsApp, Youtube, and Tiktok. Social media was chosen because it is the most relevant and widely used among lecturers and students. The data is obtained by examining the features of these social media, which has the possibility that it can be used as a medium for learning English in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Long-distance learning (PJJ – *Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh*) is an alternative for implementing teaching and learning activities today in several countries, including Indonesia, especially for English Education Program students. The readiness and willingness of lectures and students are the main factors for the success of PJJ in university. Social media can be used as learning media, considering that not all educational institutions have an integrated learning platform. Four social media are appropriate and familiar to lecturers and students: Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Tiktok. The ease and habits of lecturers and students in using a variety of social media are why it can be used as an option. The primary function of social media as a communication tool can be adapted to learning, including English subjects. Social media network features can be used in teaching and learning activities, such as discussing through chat services and uploading photos, videos, audio, and live shows.

Four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) can be achieved through the service features on social media. Without curating the efficiency and effectiveness of learning, the four social media can be chosen as adaptive learning media for learning English.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research, it could be concluded that the lecturers and students are



accustomed to using social media in their everyday activity. In the case of long-distance learning, both the teachers and the students used four relevant and familiar social media networks in English teaching and learning process, namely Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp and Tiktok. These four types of social media networks have characteristics that support the achievement of the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) through long-distance learning activities.

Teachers are suggested to maximize the use of social media to enhance the learning process. Students need to use their social media accounts more wisely as their English learning media. Similar studies in the same field need to be conducted to give more insights into the long-distance learning activities.

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