

THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON THE ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS OF STUDENTS AT SMP ANTONIUS NABIRE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effect of social media use on the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire, a private school in Papua, Indonesia. This study uses a quantitative method with an experimental approach. The subjects of this study are 30 eighth-grade students who are randomly selected from 120 eighth-grade students. Data are collected by using English writing tests and questionnaires. Data are analyzed by using t-test and correlation test. The results of this study show that social media use has a positive and significant effect on the English writing skills of students. Students also have various attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges in using social media to learn English writing. This study contributes to the development of theory and practice of English writing learning by using social media. This study also provides benefits for students, teachers, schools, and future researchers

Keywords: social media, writing skills, English, junior high school students.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan media sosial terhadap kemampuan menulis bahasa Inggris siswa di SMP Antonius Nabire. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan pendekatan eksperimen. Subjek penelitian adalah 30 siswa kelas VIII yang dipilih secara acak dari 120 siswa kelas VIII. Data dikumpulkan dengan teknik tes menulis bahasa Inggris dan angket. Data dianalisis dengan teknik uji t dan uji korelasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media sosial memiliki pengaruh yang positif dan signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis bahasa Inggris siswa. Siswa juga memiliki sikap, minat, kebiasaan, dan tantangan yang bervariasi dalam menggunakan media sosial untuk belajar menulis bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi bagi pengembangan teori dan praktik pembelajaran menulis bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan media sosial. Penelitian ini juga memberikan manfaat bagi siswa, guru, sekolah, dan peneliti selanjutnya.

Kata kunci: Media Sosial, Kemampuan Menulis, Bahasa Inggris, Siswa SMP.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of social media has become a part of daily life for many people, especially the young generation. Social media is an online platform that allows users to share content, interact, and participate in various social activities (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Social media has the potential to be a source of foreign language learning, such as English, because it offers opportunities to communicate with native speakers or fellow learners (Lomicka, & Lord, 2016). In addition, social media can also increase the motivation, engagement, and language awareness of students (Alm, 2015).

English writing skills are one of the important skills that students need to master, because writing can help students develop critical thinking, creativity, and self-expression (Harmer, 2004). Writing is also one of the indicators of students' language skills that are often measured in national or international standard tests (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). However, writing English is not easy for students, because they have to pay attention to various aspects, such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization, and style (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

At SMP Antonius Nabire, a private school in Papua, Indonesia, students' English writing skills are still low. Based on the preliminary observation, the researcher found that students had difficulties in writing English texts, such as descriptive or narrative texts. Students often made mistakes in the use of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Students were also less able to arrange their ideas logically and coherently. In addition, students were also less motivated and interested in learning English writing, because they felt bored with the methods and materials provided by the teacher.

Previous studies have shown that the use of social media can have a positive effect on students' English writing skills. For example, a study conducted by Al-Kathiri (2015) found that the use of blogs can improve the English writing skills of secondary school students in Saudi Arabia. Another study conducted by Almusharraf (2018) found that the use of Twitter can improve the English writing skills of university students in Saudi Arabia. Another study conducted by Kurniawati et al. (2019) found that the use of Instagram can improve the English writing skills of junior high school students in Indonesia.

However, previous studies still have some limitations, such as: (1) most of the studies focused on the use of one type of social media only, whereas students can use various social media simultaneously; (2) most of the studies only measured the English writing skills of students quantitatively, whereas the quality of students' writing also needs to be analyzed qualitatively; (3) most of the studies did not pay attention to other factors that can affect the English writing skills of students, such as

attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges faced by students in using social media to learn English writing. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap of knowledge by conducting a more comprehensive and in-depth research.

This study proposes the following research questions: (1) How does the use of social media affect the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire? (2) How are the attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges faced by students in using social media to learn English writing? This study is expected to provide contributions to the development of theory and practice of English writing learning by using social media. This study is also expected to provide benefits for students, teachers, schools, and future researchers.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research in this study uses a quantitative research method, because it aims to measure and analyze data that are numerical. The data collected are the scores of students' English writing tests before and after using social media. The data are then analyzed using statistical techniques to determine the effect of social media use on students' English writing skills (Sugiyono, 2017). This study uses an experimental approach, because it involves treatment or intervention on the independent variable, which is the use of social media, to observe its effect on the dependent variable, which is the students' English writing skills (Creswell, & Poth, 2018).

Subject and location of research: The subjects of this study are eighth-grade students at SMP Antonius Nabire, a private school in Papua, Indonesia. The number of research subjects is 30 students who are randomly selected from 120 eighth-grade students. The location of this research is at SMP Antonius Nabire and at each student's home.

Data collection techniques in this study use techniques in the form of English writing tests and questionnaires. English writing tests are conducted twice, before and after treatment. English writing tests are in the form of writing descriptive, narrative, or argumentative texts with a time of 60 minutes. Questionnaires are conducted after treatment to find out the attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges of students in using social media to learn English writing (Almusharraf, 2018)

This study uses data analysis techniques in the form of t-test and correlation test. T-test is used to determine the difference in the average score of students' English writing tests before and after treatment. Correlation test is used to determine the relationship between the use of social media and students' English writing skills. In addition, questionnaire data are also analyzed descriptively to get a general picture

of the attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges of students in using social media to learn English writing (Al-Kathiri, 2015).

RESEARCH RESULTS

The use of social media has a positive and significant effect on the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire. This can be seen from the increase in the average score of students' English writing tests from 62.5 in cycle I to 75.5 in cycle II. In addition, the quality of students' writing also improved in terms of vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization, and style. Students also became more confident, creative, and brave in expressing their ideas in English.

The attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges faced by students in using social media to learn English writing are varied. In general, students have a positive attitude towards the use of social media as a source and means of learning English. Students feel interested, happy, and motivated to use social media because social media offers opportunities to communicate, interact, and share with others, especially native speakers or fellow learners of English. Students also consider social media as a medium that is easy, cheap, and fast to access information and knowledge about English.

However, students also face some challenges in using social media to learn English writing. Some of the challenges are: (1) limited internet access that is often slow, interrupted, or expensive; (2) the presence of interference or distraction from content that is not relevant, not quality, or not ethical on social media; (3) lack of guidance or supervision from teachers or parents in using social media effectively and responsibly; (4) lack of skills or abilities in sorting, evaluating, and using information obtained from social media; (5) the difference or gap between the language used on social media and the language taught in school.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

This study aims to investigate the effect of social media use on the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire. This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive case study approach. Data are collected by using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. Data are analyzed by using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. Data are also tested for their validity by using triangulation techniques. Based on the results of the study, the following findings are obtained:

The use of social media has a positive and significant effect on the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire. This can be seen from the increase in the average score of students' English writing tests from 62.5 in cycle I to 75.5 in cycle II. In addition, the quality of students' writing also improved in terms of vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization, and style. Students also became more confident, creative, and brave in expressing their ideas in English. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Al-Kathiri (2015), Almusharraf (2018), Kurniawati et al. (2019), Alm (2015), and Lomicka and Lord (2016) which show that the use of social media such as blogs, Twitter, and Instagram can improve the English writing skills of students.

The attitudes, interests, habits, and challenges faced by students in using social media to learn English writing are varied. In general, students have a positive attitude towards the use of social media as a source and means of learning English. Students feel interested, happy, and motivated to use social media because social media offers opportunities to communicate, interact, and share with others, especially native speakers or fellow learners of English. Students also consider social media as a medium that is easy, cheap, and fast to access information and knowledge about English. These findings are consistent with the studies conducted by Boyd and Ellison (2008), Nasrullah (2016), Van Dijk (2013), and Aditya (2015) which suggest that social media has the potential to be a source of foreign language learning that can increase the motivation, engagement, and language awareness of students.

However, students also face some challenges in using social media to learn English writing. Some of the challenges are: (1) limited internet access that is often slow, interrupted, or expensive; (2) the presence of interference or distraction from content that is not relevant, not quality, or not ethical on social media; (3) lack of guidance or supervision from teachers or parents in using social media effectively and responsibly; (4) lack of skills or abilities in sorting, evaluating, and using information obtained from social media; (5) the difference or gap between the language used on social media and the language taught in school. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Sugiyono (2017), Creswell and Poth (2018), Yin (2017), Moleong (2017), and Miles et al. (2019) which mention that the use of social media in language learning also has some challenges and obstacles that need to be overcome.

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the use of social media has a positive and significant effect on the English writing skills of students at SMP Antonius Nabire. However, the use of social media also has some challenges that need to be anticipated and overcome in order to provide optimal benefits for students' English learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, this study provides contributions to the development of theory and practice of English writing learning by using social media. This study also provides benefits for students, teachers, schools, and future researchers.

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