

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English is crucial for international communication and career development, serving as a key competency for university students (Sun & Wang, 2024). With the rapid growth of digital technology, social media has become one of the most widely used platforms for communication and information exchange, especially among Indonesian university students. The study highlights that social media platforms are increasingly integrated into Indonesian students' lives (Ratri & Aviyanti, 2025). Thus, the increasing use of social media among Indonesian university students demonstrates its growing relevance as a potential space for language exposure and learning.

Social media provides abundant exposure to authentic English input, opportunities for interaction, and flexible access to language resources that go beyond classroom limitations. According to Barrot (2022), the interactive nature of social media allows students to practice English in real-world contexts, transcending traditional classroom boundaries to accommodate a variety of learning styles and needs. Furthermore, social media can bridge formal and informal learning environments, supporting learning networks and social interactions that enhance language acquisition (Manca, 2020).

However, the integration of social media as a tool in the English language learning process presents various challenges that require consideration. According to (Nanquil, 2020) these platforms offer many opportunities for language input, but they also expose learners to potential drawbacks, such as incorrect grammar, spelling mistakes, and informal language patterns that can hinder proper language acquisition. Meanwhile research by Khan et al. (2023) highlights additional challenges, including distractions and conflicting information, which can affect the focus and effectiveness of student learning. These limitations raise important questions about optimizing social media platforms for effective English language learning.

Previous studies such as Maryam et al., (2025), stated that social media positively influences English vocabulary development among young learners. It highlights improvements primarily in informal slang and Urdu-English hybrid expressions, and reported enhancements in formal vocabulary. Additionally, the study suggests that social media can serve as a versatile language learning aid, contributing to communication skills and cultural awareness, although it may promote informal language use over formal academic language. Another study by Khan et al. (2023) has highlighted the benefits of authentic content, increased motivation, and opportunities to practice English with diverse users. However, challenges also exist, such as exposure to informal language, inaccurate grammar, distractions, and a lack of structured guidance.

A study conducted by Ridzuan & Halim (2025) examined the role of social media in enhancing English language proficiency among university students at a public university in Pahang, Malaysia. The findings showed that social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook support English learning by offering authentic language exposure, interactive features, and flexible access through mobile devices. Students developed their English skills by watching short videos, writing captions, participating in online discussions, and interacting with user-generated content, which facilitated the practice of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in informal learning environments. However, the study primarily focused on measuring the relationship between social media use and English proficiency outcomes using a quantitative approach, with limited exploration of how specific platform features and learning processes contribute to students' English learning experiences. Moreover, the study did not examine students' lived experiences or the contextual factors shaping social media use in English learning, particularly within the Indonesian higher education context. Therefore, further qualitative, process-oriented research is needed to investigate how social media facilitates English learning process.

Although previous studies have demonstrated various benefits of social media for English language learning, these findings primarily focus on what improvements students gain, such as increased vocabulary, better reading

comprehension, or exposure to authentic language. However, far less attention has been given to how social media actually facilitates these learning outcomes. Limited research has explored the mechanisms behind students' engagement with social media, such as how interactive features, user-generated content, or online communication practices support their learning process.

To address this gap, in this study draws on the Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) framework, which emphasizes key principles such as mobility, interactivity, and personalization. Examining students' social media use through these indicators enables a deeper exploration of how mobile-based platforms enable language learning processes, rather than merely identifying the outcomes.

B. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the phenomena observed, the research question in this study is:

1. What types of social media platforms are used by students for English language learning?
2. How does social media facilitate students to support their English learning process?

C. Operational Definitions

1. Social Media

Social media is an internet-based communication tool that allows users to create, share, and interact in various forms, such as text, images, video, and audio. In the context of this study, social media functions as a learning-support tool that facilitates students' English language learning processes.

2. Assist

Assist refers to any support provided. In this study, assist refers to any support provided by social media platforms that facilitates students' English language learning through mobile devices.

3. English Language Learning Process

Learning process is the acquisition of English knowledge and skills, systematically through various experiences, observations, and interactions with

the environment. In this study, it involves students utilizing social media features such as posts, comments, direct messages, and multimedia content to help their English learning process such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. The learning process refers to a series of activities that facilitate students' acquisition and practice of English language skills through social media platforms.

D. Aims of the Study

This research aims to identify the types of social media platforms used by students for English language learning and to investigate how these social media platforms facilitate and support their learning process.

E. Significances of the Study

1. Practical Significance

This research provides teachers and learners with a clearer understanding of how social media facilitates and supports students' English learning process. This knowledge can be applied to design more effective teaching strategies, learning activities, and instructional materials that integrate social media in meaningful and supportive ways.

2. Empirical Significance

This research provides empirical data on how social media functions as a tool that supports the English language learning process. By collecting and analyzing data on students' learning experiences using social media platforms, this study provides insights into how to best utilize social media to support English language learning. This empirical foundation can serve as a reference for future studies, support comparative research in similar contexts, and guide educators in making informed decisions regarding the integration of social media into language education.