A Study of Students' Perception on The Use Facebook Group in Improving Writing

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Abstract

This study attempts to know the students' perception on a Facebook group in improving writing skill on the tenth grade of SMA 5 Kendari that focus on enhancing students writing performance level and the brainstorm ideas at the pre-writing stage. Also, to find out how Facebook influence the students' affective domain. The researcher employed mix method design with questionnaire as instrument to collect data from 36 students. The data was analyzed by calculating the frequency distribution of Likert scale. The result reveals there was positive perception among students about applying Facebook Group in improving writing. Particularly, Respondent (89.7%) spell – check feature helps students to avoid the error spelling and (91.6) student feel motivated when they got “like” from their friends. It is suggested that future research to investigate the teacher and students' problem in applying Facebook. In addition, the future study researcher may investigate the use Facebook Group in another skill of English. Lastly, the future study may investigation the use other SNS not only Facebook but it can be Path, Twitter, or Instagram.

Keywords: *Facebook Group, Perception, Writing*

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1. Introduction

Applying social network in nowadays it is not only for communication tool but now it can use for development of language learning. Facebook, Twitter, Path, My Space, and Friendster are the example of social networks that have many users. Interestingly, the biggest amount of Facebook user are not from US but they are coming from South-East Asia, which is Indonesia in 2012 got the second place for the biggest amount of Facebook's user in the world with 7.434.580 users.

Integrating Facebook as a new media in learning language can help student develop their ability in language proficiency; they are speaking, writing, reading and listening. It happens because the feature of Facebook is very interesting and informative, for example, the student can send some images, sharing links, even posting video. Furthermore, Facebook as social network sites can be accessed by students' computer or even by students' phone.

Talking about English proficiency, writing is one of uneasy aspect in learning language. As Kaasim R. (2009) noted writing is the toughest phase in learning second language (as cited in Ahmad.Pg 1). Many students sometimes finding difficulties during writing process because they struggle in developing ideas in the classroom, they feel afraid to make some grammatical errors, and they feel afraid with the teacher and friends' feedback about their work. Apart from the problems that come from students, the difficulty in writing is also come from the teacher methodology in teaching writing. In addition, Whiteman (1981) stated that the reason why students are not success in writing because the teacher only focus on teach the students grammar, spelling, and punctuation rather than engaging students into writing process (as cited in Amri, 2014, Pg.1).

There have been some studies shows that the use of Facebook in developing writing gives positive effects on student's motivation, attitude, and achievement (Yunus&Salehi, 2012; Gamble & Wilkins 2012; Hartono 2007; Suthiwartnaruept&Wasanasomsithi 2012; Simpson 2012, Marwan 2015). Specifically, Hartono (2007) reported that there was an improvement on students writing competence after applying Facebook. Meanwhile, Marwan

(2015) found, there was similar result with Hartono (2007) that Facebook enhance students writing skill.

However, from those previous studies, the researcher found that Hartono (2007) and Marwan (2015) only focus on the student writing achievement. Then, there is no explanation deeply about Facebook particularly in how Facebook works in help student in writing process. Therefore, this study attempts to know the students' perception on a Facebook group in improving writing skill on the tenth grade of SMA 5 Kendari that focus on enhancing students writing performance level and the brainstorm ideas at the pre-writing stage. Also, to find out how Facebook influence the students' affective domain particularly in student's motivation and attitude.

2. Literature Review

Social Constructivism

Facebook is very important tool for communication and social interaction. It has explained in the theory of Social Constructivism that introduced by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978) states that learning and improvement are a collaborative activity which is the children are cognitively improved in the context of socialization and education. The processes of learning among children are happen by social environment (as cited in Amri. 2014. Pg 19). By seeing the theory, we can see that the students are able improve their cognitive when they are interacting to the other student. SNS technology supports this collaborative learning to provide a bigger opportunity the before.

Perception

According to Lindsay & Norman (1977) perception is the progression which the human understand and organize sensation to create a meaningful experience of the world (As cited in Picken. Pg 52). While, Davidoff,LL (1988) defines perception as a process organizing and combining the information of our sense and developed such a way in order we can realize with our environment, including our self (As cited in Wilson,Pg 186). So that perception can be defines as a skill how someone perceive and understand about something by using human sense

Meanwhile, structural factors are come from nature of physical stimulus and the effect of nerves that make the nervous system ensue in the individual nervous system. Also, Perception is human's experience about an object, event, or a connection that appear from concluding information and integrating a message. In other words, perception is giving a meaning to sensory stimuli so that the human can get new knowledge (Desidarato (1976) in Kristanto, H (2010) Pg 9). Moreover, perception can define as the process sensory cues and appropriate with past experience which is organized to present a structured and meaningful picture in the particular circumstances.

Perception as someone's thought cannot appear in sudden, but there is a process. As Sobur in Lianawati (2014) stated that there are three main steps of the process of perception. They are:

1. Selection is the process of getting stimulus from the environment sensory, can be many or few.
2. Interpretation is the organizational process of information gaining meaning to the people or things and influenced by some factors, like past experience, value system of dutifully, motivation, personality and intelligence. It also based on human's ability to categorize accepted information and the process to simplify the complex information.
3. The interpretational perception that interpreted in behavior reaction.

In education setting exploring student perception has been done which is the perception that coming from the student can be used as teacher's consideration to create a new teaching methodology based on what student think and wants. In exploring student's perception, the questionnaire should be providing some content that represent students understand.

Social Network Sites (SNS) and Facebook

Barleet – Bragg explained social network as a scope of application that increasing group communication and shared spaces for working together, community connections, and a collection of information interaction in web-based environment (as cited in Yunus&Salehi, 2012.Pg 88). In addition, Rozina & Nuraihan (2003), defines that technology can improve students' chance for working together and active involvement. It also gives them more chance to get involve as everybody can give their ideas without to waiting for their turn (as cited in Ahmad.2011.Pg 2). It clear that applying social networking in education setting allow teacher to engage and encourage EFL in teaching and learning process and it can be undertaken by teacher in one time and place.

Facebook is a Web 2.0 application that provides a large of online community. As noted by Crook,C., Cummings J., Fisher T., Greber, R., Harrison, C., Lewin, C., Logan, K., Luckin R., Oliver ,M., &Shaples, M. (2008) define facebook is Web 2.0 that a set of Internet service and practice that give a great chance to get involve in various societies of knowledge development and knowledge sharing (as cited in Suthiwartnaruept&Wasanasomsithi. 2012.Pg195).

The advantages of Integrating Facebook Group into EFL Classroom

Integrating Facebook Group into EFL writing class can be more helpful for the teacher and the students. In student's side, Facebook group can help them to be more active in learning and enhancing their writing skill. Also, for the teacher Facebook Group can make them closer with their students and improve their teaching skill.

Melor&Yunus (2012) defines some advantages integrating Facebook Group into EFL writing class, they are:

1. Most of the students are digital native; it means that SNS engage the student by presenting material in a way that is familiar and comfortable for them. Facebook is used by million people and most of the students already get used to with it. Searching and sharing information it's something common thay do in their Facebook account.
2. Student can get enough input from SNS, it make them can develop their writing skill. In Facebook the teacher's note can be seen with chronological order. The student does not to worry if their miss some explanation that the teacher give in the classroom. By using Facebook Group the teacher already posting some material that they use in the classroom so the student can just check the teacher's chronology.
3. Student will have larger audience when they use social networking. Facebook is has million users and it allow student to communicate with other especially the student can communicate with the teacher and other friends. This is really helpful for the student who gave difficulties to get involve.
4. Social networking service allow for multimedia service. Facebook is not just media to write or read posting but Facebook allow the user to share picture, videos, link and so on.
5. The student will have responsibility for their works because they have a large audience when they use Facebook. It might be allow them and their works and leads to self-directed learning.

6. Student can read all the comment from other users and the comment directly and individually on them. It can maximize feedback and have communication with the teacher.

Disadvantages of Integrating Facebook Group into EFL Classroom

The use of E-Learning especially Facebook not only give such easiness in teaching and learning process but the use of Facebook has some challenges that might can be disadvantages for both the teacher and the student.

Melor&Yunus (2012) defines some disadvantages of integrating Facebook Group into EFL writing class, they are:

1. The relationship between the teacher and the student can somehow be tricky. Teachers need to realize that even though the environment is virtual; their identity should not be hidden. It's fact that some of Facebook users are use fake account.
2. For the teacher it will take some time to create, edit and digital learning material. Its fact that for some teacher it will be frustrating and time-consuming during searching material through online. Moreover, the student will find a lot of information with unclear quality and accuracy of the content.
3. The learner must have computer and internet access. Talking about computer and internet access, for some learner it will be hard for them if there is no computer or internet connection and also there are some student and teacher that might be they do not know how to access computer and internet.
4. Some learners are more prefer to traditional book-centered approach because some of the students are difficult to read material through online.
5. Students will prefer to playing online games and chatting on-line rather that doing their writing
6. Writing task online with guide the student to "copy-paste" from online than thinking.

Writing

Writing is the important skills in foreign language that really difficult to be mastered by the students. In addition, Kasim R (2009) defines writing is the toughest stage in learning second language (As cited in Ahmad.Pg 1). Further, in the Oxford dictionary defines writing as activity or ability of making words arranged coherently and creating text. It clears that, writing is happens because writing is a process which is the information that students got is putted on the written text.

In order to teach writing effectively the teacher must be familiar with method, strategies, and media for help them in teaching writing. In teaching writing the teacher can use writing stage in the process of writing. Every student can go well with process of writing to the students' abilities and needs. Tricia Hedge (1988) divided the process of writing:

Firstly, the starting stage is *pre-writing*. In this stage the teacher give the topic or give the students opportunity to choose the topic. The students have to think the purpose and the audience of their writing in order to adapt the choice of language.

The second stage is writing. Usually drafts are use, to reevaluates the writer want and goals. In this process, writers are re-arranging, re-planning and revising what has been written far to make the result of their work is explicit.

The last is editing. The writers are focus here, in the post writing post, on accuracy in language item. The good writer is can check the accessibility of future readers, whether is as clear as it should be (As citedin Stefanovicova (2011).Pg 18).

3. Methodology

The Design of this study was word mixed method design. According to Cresswel (2012) mixed method research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single or series study to understand a research problem. The population of the study was the tenth grade students of natural science at the Senior High School 5 Kendari who are registered in academic year of 2015/2016. The total populations are 208 students which are divided into five classes. The technique of sampling used in this research was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was chosen because of researcher's consideration (i.e the sample are on moderate level, which is not on high or low level of knowledge, the sample who would be taken are those who have Facebook account, the sample already exposed by Facebook and those who familiar with Facebook) then by seeing the criteria X MIA 2 was chosen as the sample of this study.

4. Result

The first part of the questionnaire was employed to explore the percentages of Facebook use. The aimed of this part was to know whether the respondents were familiar with Facebook or not. Based on the data, 36 of respondents (100%) has Facebook Account. 33 out of 36 respondents (91.6%) already use Facebook for under 5 years. Then, 21 out of 36 respondents (58.3%) access Facebook spend 4 times a week and 31 out 36 respondents (81.6%) spend 4 times to access Facebook a day which showed the respondents are familiar with Facebook. This data is useful for the researcher to give information that all respondents are familiar with Facebook, in other word; the respondents are familiar with the features of Facebook. It supported by Yunus and Salehi (2012) Most of the students are digital native; it means that SNS engage the student by presenting material in a way that is familiar and comfortable for them (Pg 44). Therefore, Facebook is used by million people and most of the students already get used to with it. Searching and sharing information it's something common they do in their Faceook account.

Next, part 2 of the questionnaire were employed to find out the respondents' perceived of Facebook Group in improving writing. The findings were separated into two large data percentages of respondents' selection, cumulative agree represent for "strongly agree" and "agree" and cumulative disagree represent for "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree" as shown in table below

Respondents' perceived of Facebook Group in Improving Writing

No	Item	Cumulative Agree	Cumulative Disagree
4	Brainstorming on FB group helps me to construct my ideas before the actual writing	86.1 %	13.9 %
5	I find & learn new vocabulary from reading the comment of my friends on the FB Group	88.9 %	11.1 %
6	The spell-check feature helps me reduce spelling errors	88.9 %	11.1 %
7	Ideas or opinion posted by my peers on FB group help me in develop my idea before writing	88.8 %	11.1 %
8	I feel easier to complete my	86.1 %	13.9 %

	essay after participating in FB Group discussion		

From table 5.1 it is inferred that more than 80 % of respondent generally have positive respond that Facebook Group does help respondents in their writing process. It can be seen that Facebook Group helps in the brainstorming process, in organizing their thoughts before the actual writing, learning new vocabulary from reading comments, reducing error spelling via spell-check feature, helping to get better idea through ideas and opinion that posted by their friends, and respondents feel easier in completing their essay. The highest cumulative percentage is item number 5 and item number 6:

Item 5 *“I find & learn new vocabulary from reading the comment of my friends on the FB Group”* with 88.9 %. It supported by respondent’s perceive *“I can develop an idea to write something interesting by posting it on Facebook Group and my friends can give a comment directly”* (respondent 22). It supported by Kabilan (2010) that Facebook Group gives opportunities for students to practice and enhance their writing skills. Studies show that the students feel they should to respond to their peers’ post in giving comment (As cited in Hani et al. 2014. Pg 29). Many students sometimes finding difficulties during writing process because they struggle in developing ideas in the classroom, they feel afraid to make some grammatical errors, and they feel afraid with the teacher and friends’ feedback about their work. Facebook Group gives a space for the students to post their ideas, sharing information, give some feedback for their friend, and having communication both teacher and friend. It’s clear that Facebook Group can help students who have problem with self-confidence and taking feedback from teacher and other students.

Item 6 *“The spell-check feature helps me reduce spelling errors”* with 88.9 %. It supported by Respondents’ perceive *“Spell – check feature help me to determine what I want to write”*. (Respondent 16). When the respondents are not sure of the spelling of a word, then, they were type it in the comment space, red line will appear when the spelling incorrect and they only right-click it and the correct spelling will appear. It is clear that this feature is really helpful which they cannot find it by writing in paper.

This result was different with the previous studies, as like, Yunus&Salehi (2012) in Malaysia found that Facebook Group is an effective tool in brainstorming ideas before the actual writing. Meanwhile, Hani et al (2014) in Jordania found that students can develop their vocabulary by getting some feedbacks from fellow in group members. Which means, the present study with the previous study by Hani (2014) were similar but the present study found the spell – check feature of Facebook Group help student to made spelling error. In conclusion Facebook Group as media that could help student in pre – stage of writing because the students could learn and find new vocabulary from their friends comment. Also, spell – check feature was help students to avoid spelling error.

According to Stelter in Suthiwartnareupt et al (2012) that *“Facebook is one of the most popular social networking sites which allow users to post information, chat with others, and collaborative within the system (Pg 195)”*. It supported by finding in item 7 *“Ideas or opinion posted by my peers on FB group help me in develop my idea before writing”* as supported by respondents 19 *“My friends’ comment and post help me in develop my ideas before writing”*. Moreover, Facebook is writeable webpage that allow the users can read and write. According to Keller (2009) This technology gives a new environment for writing

activities which are more engaging and more connecting to the other user (As cited in Ahmad. 2011.Pg 4).

From item 4 and 8 got same percentages with 86.1 % respondents perceive that Brainstorming through Facebook Group help them before the actual writing and they feel easier to complete essay after participation. Haman & Wilson (2002) in Munoz (2009) that the learners have a good performance when they are participated in a web-chanced than giving the learners a traditional teaching (As cited in Budiardi&Anggreani, 2013. Pg 34).

Lastly, item 9 – 11 were employed to find out whether Facebook Group can influence respondents' affective domain. For more details, the researcher already prepared a table to presenting the cumulative agree and disagree for this item.

Students' perceived of Facebook Group effect on their affective domain

No	Item	Cumulative Agree	Cumulative Disagree
9	I feel comfortable posting my ideas or opinions on Facebook group	83.3 %	16.7 %
10	feel motivated by my friends "liking" my ideas or comments	91.6 %	8.4 %
11	I prefer discussion issues or topics on Facebook Group instead of the classroom session	63.9 %	36.1 %

The cumulative percentages for this item can be seen item number 10 which is 91.6 % of respondents are agreeing that they feel motivated when they got "like" from the other respondents. This result was shown similar finding with Yunus and Salehi (2012) investigation where the respondents generally feel motivated by their friends "like". It is proven by respondent's reason on open ended questionnaire, *"Yes, it increase my motivation because when I got "like" from my friends it give me more confident feeling to write on Facebook even in another media"*(Respondent 27).

Talking about confidence,the item 9 was employed to explore it. Based on finding in close – ended question has shown the percentages for this item which is 83.3% respondents are agreeing with it.*"Yes, when I'm posting my work in Facebook, I know that my friends are seeing my ideas. So, it makes my motivation always increase because I want to show my best to my friends"*(Respondent 23). As supported by Kabilan (2010) that Facabook Group gives opportunities for students to practice and enhance their writing skills. Studies show that the students feel they should to respond to their peers' post in giving comment (As cited in Hani et al. 2014.Pg 29). As supported respondent 10 *"I feel motivated when my friends are giving a comment to my ideas"*. Item number 11 got 63.9 % respond from the respondents, it really different with the previous study which is this item only got more than 50 % from Yunus and Salehi's study (2012) and Hani et al' study (2014).

Even though the respondents' respond were positive but the use Facebook Group has a few weaknesses. For example, the learner must have computer and internet access. Talking

about computer and internet access, for some learners it will be hard for them if there is no computer or internet connection and also there are some students and teacher that might be they do not know how to access computer and internet (Yunus&Salehi. 2012.Pg 45). The result of this study was found 58.4 % respondents disagree which is they do not feel Facebook Group increase their affective domain. As respondent 33 said “not really, because there are other Facebook user that give a useless post even impair”. Yunus and Salehi (2012) pointed out that the student will find a lot of information with unclear quality and accuracy of the content (Pg.45).

Out from the weaknesses of Facebook, the previous study has proven that Facebook can help student in learning language especially writing section. It supported by Kabilan (2010) that Facebook Group gives opportunities for students to practice and enhance their writing skills. Studies show that the students feel they should to respond to their peers’ post in giving comment (As cited in Hani et al. 2014.Pg 29).

Based on the researcher observation, there was a different students’ behavior before and after using Facebook Group. Previously, the teacher did not use any media in teaching English particularly in writing section. When learning process begun the amount student who actively participate only the student whose desk in the front side of class. Meanwhile, the students whose desks in the back side were preferred receive material passively. Moreover, the teacher was not realize it because the teacher only asked the students who active in the class.

Conversely, after using Facebook Group the teacher was easier to encourage the passive students because in Facebook Group the teacher could interact with them by tag their name to answer the questions. Inevitably, the students have to respond some question from their teacher and their friends. As Vgotsky (1978) said through Social Constructivism that social interaction more knowledgeable or in other word, learning and improvement are a collaborative activity which is the children are cognitively improved in the context of socialization and education. The processes of learning among children are happening by social environment (as cited in Amri, C. 2014.Pg 19).

5. Conclusion

Based on the result of this present study, it can be stated that more than 80 % students’ perceptions were positive which means that agree that (89.7 %) Facebook Group effectively helps them in writing process particularly in pre-writing stage. Additionally, (88.6 %) the respondents are agree that feature in Facebook help them to create a good writing, like, spell – check and “like” sign and they agree that their friends comment help them in develop their ideas and they learn and find new vocabulary by seeing their friends’ comment. In addition, “like” sign influence their motivation to keep active in Facebook Group. As supported by Cloete, Villiers, &Roadt (2009) that Facebook has help pedagogical potential, because it offer a chance for students to share knowledge and individual activities (As Cited in Ahmad,2011,Pg 5).

In conclusion, Facebook Group is an effective media for teacher to use it in pre stage of writing and for the students, Facebook Group encourage them to get involve during learning process. Also, this study explains that feature “like” in Facebook enhancing student motivation in learning process.

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