CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL NETWORKING USAGE AND WRITING PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY ON INFORMATICS ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN ITN MALANG

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ABSTRACT: The massive development of digital technology has lead to immense usage of social networking all over the world. Recent years, many studies have been conducted over the impact of social networking towards students' academic performance in many competencies, most of which indicated negative impact. Therefore, this study aims at knowing the relationship of social networking usage and writing performance of Informatics Engineering Students who tend to have more exposure to internet and social networking sites in National Institute of Technology (ITN) Malang as a case study. The study sampled 70 Informatics Engineering students by using questionnaires and writing test assessment using Oshima and Hogue's scoring rubric. The result indicates that the students' length of time used for accesing social networking sites has no correlation with their English writing performance.

Keywords: Informatics Engineering, social networking usage, writing

1. Introduction

Technology has grown immensely and has brought major changes in human's life all over the world. In Indonesia, statistics showed that internet user has exceeded 50% of total population and has a great possibility to grow at fast rate (CNN Indonesia, 2016). The statistic also indicated that the biggest profession accessing internet is students, with the most accessed content is social networking, mainly Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. The social networking usage by students develop fast recently as the result of easy access to internet devices such as smart phones, iphones, black berry, tablets, ipad and laptops (Iorliam and Egena, 2014). By using those gadgets, students log in to social networking sites as their important everyday routine. Many of them blaming their social networking sites for their decrease in academic performance, on the other hand there also a number of students claiming social networking sites help them increase their grades and financial support.

In accordance with the massive growth of social networking with its pros and contras, academic practitioners start investigating the benefits of those social networking toward their students (Al-Rahmi, and Othman, 2016). As human cannot avoid technology growth, instead of arguing about the possible risks of adolescent social networking, it is more important to consider the benefits of these sites as well (Graham, 2014). Social networking provides a number of opportunities to individuals and also power to create, collaborate and share ideas and information in a more open manner, all of which are important facets to foster student development (Osharive, 2015). To sum up, it has been widely acknowledged by academic researchers that social networking and students are relatively connected and affect each other.

Several studies have been done in Indonesia regarding social networking and grades however none of them concerned students of Informatics Engineering. The students of Informatics Engineering in National Institute of Technology (ITN) Malang have the most exposure to the internet related to their field of study compared to students from other departments. They work with computer programming, offices, network, and databases in which the instructions mostly written in English. They are also required to be able to browse international references during

their study to support them in some Programming subjects such as web design and softwares. Consequently, the requirement of English especially written English proficiency is higher than those of other departments. In addition, due to the high exposure to the internet and the support of hi-tech facilities of Informatics Engineering department in ITN Malang, the students have higher skills in using internet include social networking.

The writer assumed that Informatics engineering students' high exposure to the internet correlates with their English especially writing skill. Therefore, this study aims at finding the correlation of their exposure to internet specifically social networking sites, in this case is represented by the length of time used in accessing social networking sites with their English writing performance.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

There are a number of studies conducted in proofing the relationship between social networking and students' academic achievement. One research by (Hasnain et.al, 2015) showed that social networking usage and academic performance are fairly correlated. The more students spend time on social networking the worse is their academic achievement, at a low level of significance. In other words, the use of social networking has an inverse relationship with the students' academic performance. Whether (Belal, 2014) has proven that social networking influences writing and speaking skill of tertiary students level. The findings also highlight that social networking help students to improve their writing and speaking as they are able to learn new vocabulary from their friends in social networking sites and later they use those new words in their formal writing at the college. As a consequence, social networking gradually enhances their writing and speaking skills. The research by Belal was conducted in Bangladesh that may have different result while conducted in another country.

This research objective is to investigate the relation of social networking length of usage per day on writing performance of Informatics Engineering students in ITN Malang. Previous studies in Indonesia have not explored every medium of social networking and their relation on Informatics Engineering student's writing performance. In fact, writing skill becomes one important skill for university students nowadays. In ITN Malang, the students are required to write reports, papers, or even international journals to support them foster their critical thinking, their next studies, or career in their next job field. Therefore this emergent situation arouse us to know the student's social networking usage and the correlation to their English writing improvement.

Aiming to understand the correlation, the following hypotheses were developed:

Alternate Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant correlation between the length of time spent on social networking and the writing performance of Informatics Engineering students in ITN Malang.
Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no correlation between the length of time spent on social networking and the writing performance of Informatics Engineering students in ITN Malang.

3. Method

Quantitative method is employed in this study as the data contained numerical analysis. Data was gained with the help of questionnaires and writing test result of an argumentative essay, and processed by SPSS to generate interpretable results. Total 70 students of Informatics Engineering on the third semester were sampled as they were enrolled academic writing matriculation held on August 2017. A total of 70 surveys were distributed from which 60 complete responses were received. Out of these 60 responses, 52 respondents (86%) were males. The questionnaire consisted of three optional questions to know the number of social

media used and length of social networking usage per day. Other 9 questions were reinforcement questions by using 5-point Likert-type scale with anchors 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree.

4. Finding

To study the relation of the usage of social networking and students writing performance, there are 2 variables that can identify the correlation, those are length of time used by the students to access social networking sites per day and writing test result.

4.1 Length of Time Used for Accessing Social Networking Sites

The surveys showed an interesting fact that almost all of the students have more than three social networking sites. Most of them said that Facebook and Instagram are two important sites. The students also reported the number of hours they spent on social networks per day as 6 students (10%) spent an hour, 15 students (25%) spent two hours per day, 18 students (30%) spent three hours, and the rest of 21 students (35%) used more than three hours. There was no respondent who spent zero hour on working with their social networking per day. The consumption level of more than three hours per day is the highest (see Table 1).

Table 1. Time spent on Social Networking Sites per day

Length of time used per day	Number of Students
< 1 hour	0
1 hour	6
2 hours	16
3 hours	18
< 3 hours	20

4.2 Writing Test Result

Writing test was assessed using scoring rubric proposed by (Oshima and Hogue, 2007) consists of *format* (5 points), *punctuation and mechanic* (5 points), *content* (20 points), *organization* (35 points), and *grammar and sentence structure* (35 points) with total 100 points as its maximum score.

All the students were asked to write an argumentative essay about certain topics following an essay's structural pattern in the writing class. The essays then assessed by the writing teacher using Oshima and Hogue's scoring rubric. Based on the assessment, the writing performance varies from the lowest of 60 with only two students, to the highest 80 (see Table 2).
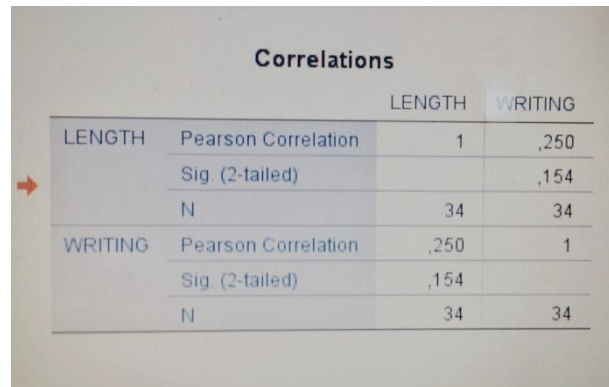
Table 2. Writing score range

Writing score	Number of Students
80	6
75	24
70	20
65	8
60	2
Below 60	0

Table 2 shows that student's writing score ranges in 80, 75, 70, 65, and 60 points, with the most of them are in 70 and 75 points. This range indicated that in average, students of Informatics Engineering have high proficiency in written English.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation

This research used SPSS to process the data gained from the questionnaire and writing test result. Variable one is the length of time used by the students in accessing social networking sites per day. Variable two is the writing test result which range from 60 to 80 point. The two variables then analyzed using description means and regression via SPSS 21.

Correlations

		LENGTH	WRITING
LENGTH	Pearson Correlation	1	,250
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,154
	N	34	34
WRITING	Pearson Correlation	,250	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,154	
	N	34	34

Figure 1. Correlation result

As shown in Figure 1 correlation result, the 2 tailed Significance value is 0.154. The value is more than 0.05 as the value of significant point. This value shows a very low correlation significance, therefore it can be concluded as "has no correlation". According to the hypothesis, this value means that Null Hypothesis Ho is accepted, and Alternate Hypothesis Ha is rejected. In other words, there is no correlation between the two variables of social networking sites length of usage and writing performance on Informatics Engineering students in ITN Malang. The more students spend time on social networking their writing performance will not be affected.

5. Discussion

The research's result indicated that there is no correlation between the two variables of social networking sites length of usage and writing performance on Informatics Engineering students in ITN Malang. However the correlation result has the opposite value with the reinforcement questions' result in the questionnaire in which 80% respondents (48 students) said that social networking sites help them improving their spoken and written English, as the result of finding new vocabulary and online foreigner friends to chat using English, more courage to write out their feeling on their posts and browse academic references in English.

This opposite result happens for some reasons, one of which is that 50% of respondents (30 students) said that the social networking sites they used were in Bahasa Indonesia. Consequently, the length of time they spent with their social networking sites gave no advantage to their English unless they are asked to use those sites in English. Another reason is that in average the Informatics Engineering students already have high proficiency in English, therefore the length of time used to access social networking sites does not give a significant impact to their English writing.

6. Conclusion

Some conclusions drawn based on this research's result are:

1) The high usage of social networking by Informatics Engineering students has no correlation with their writing performance.

2) Regarding the fact that 58 out of 60 Informatics Engineering students are attached to more than one social networking, it is recommended to make use of the sites well to support the academic purposes in relation with English proficiency. If the social networking sites are used in a positive manner, it will aid students in gaining knowledge to improve their academic performance.

3) For the future research, it is advisable to further study the impact of social media usage on other variables such as student's goals, personality, or other English skills.

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