



The Changing of Students' Language and Behaviour by The Intensity of Intercultural Communication on Social Media: A Case Study in ELT Class

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Abstract

This research conducted based on the phenomon on the languages and behaviours are showed by the students when they interact with their friends, teachers, and stafs at school. This research aims to find out the changes of students' language and behavior in relation with the intensity of intercultural communication using social media: a case study in ELT class. This research had been done in one of Senior High Schools in Mataram especially to the third grade students of science and social department in Mataram. In getting the data, this research applied observation and interview. It found that the intensity of exchange culture information by using social media has influenced most teenager today. Firstly, the students tend to use their language by using a kind of "*Alay language*" when they interact with their friends or even with their teachers whether inside or outside of the classroom. Secondly, the intensity of exchange culture information by using social media could help students to finish their school tasks. They work cooperatively with their friends in small groups. They are able to find out the information they need to present cultural celebrations and how something happens in less than fifteen minutes. This intercultural communication could also help them to build up their awareness of cultural differences among them. However, this intensive exchange of cultural information could also lead students to prefer to communicate with their network friends to friends in their school and home environment. Moreover, the students are likely becoming less sensitive towards their friends' problems.

Keywords: behaviour; communication; intercultural; language; social media

Introduction

In today's society, there is increasing number of Internet users so that social media has become more popular in daily patterns and routines. In Indonesia, the numbers of internet users are dominated by teenagers aged 15-30 years old. It is based on survey conducted by Markpilus found that there are about 50% to 80% from the internet users are dominated by teenagers (tecto,compass.com.2011).

The easiness of interchanging or sharing information through social media makes the teenagers intensively use it as their daily routines. It is because social media provides varieties of interesting sites such as Facebook, instagram, path, line, ask.fm, vine, kakaotalk, youtube, gmail, yahoo, e-mail, etc. Those sites draw teenagers' attention to use it, because it has multifunction in the process of intercultural communication. It is very appropriate for teenagers because they are curious to seek for a lot of friends, to interchange the cultures, languages, experiences, or even knowledge to one another, and to maintain the relationship with new friends around the world.

By looking at the advantages of social media, most of teenagers are intensively using it. They are willing to spend their much time to visit every site from the social media. However, they will lose their time to study the lessons or doing the assignments are given by their teachers at school. Besides that, having much time to use internet they will also lose interaction with their schoolmate, family or people in their environment. In fact, those students will not only change the way their language in communication, but their behavior will be also changed by the intensity of intercultural communication in social media. Therefore, based on the statements above, this study will firstly attempt to investigate the changes in language and behavior of students in relation with the intensity of their intercultural communication by using social media.

Social media refers to websites and applications *"that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking"* (Oxford, 2013). Researcher is increasingly able to understand more about social media users based on the demographic information they post to social media websites and then recruit them for research purposes. More people are accessing social media and revealing information such as their age, gender and occupation, making social media websites an effective recruitment tool. Social platforms such as Facebook and Linked In have been found to be an effective method to recruit individuals (Lohse, 2013); (Brooks,

Churchill, Fisher, & McDonald, 2010).

In this modern era, social media is an important part of our life, because it promotes the interconnectedness and interdependence of our culturally diverse world. Media for social interaction allows for people to communicate and engage with information that is quickly accessible on the Internet. In today's society, there is an increasing number of Internet users so social media has become more popular in daily patterns and routines. The communication that occurs in these online contexts promotes interactive dialogues that build understanding of different points of view. In social media, people have the opportunity to express their opinions to the public and participate in conversations and dialogue through a common virtual medium, which also means that at the same time, every person is a publisher and a critic in cyberspace (Babel, 2010)

People use social media for many reasons such as they need for connection and interaction with other people is evident. Using social media, people's desire can fulfill a sense of belonging through support from relationships with others (Maslow, 1981). After obtaining physiological and safety needs, people strive to achieve Maslow's third need: belonging. Social media provides this opportunity where people can communicate with others and belong to different networks via virtual communities on the Internet. In relation to interacting with others online, people use social media to gain knowledge and learn about different opinions and perspectives of issues, topics, and events. Most importantly, social media is used for socializing; it is a form of media that allows people to participate in conversations and online dialogue without being face-to-face with others.

The users of social media certainly get two effects such as positive and negative. As the negative side of using social media particularly some teenagers or students, they tend to spend more on it rather than focus on their lesson. As the example of the study with sample of 384 students and concluded that Facebook use has an adverse influence on student academic performance. The study noticed that males and females spent equal time on the Internet where females used Facebook more, but males had more friends than females. The important difference was that Facebook use had an adverse influence on males' performance than females. The authors accounted such adverse performance because males spend more time on sports and games activities than females, which caused a loss of time and a bad influence on performance (Haq & Chand, 2012).

On the other hand, It is imperative to realize that time spent on social activities (using Facebook or other social media) will be on the account of academic performance. This logic is important regardless of the positive side we see in social networks. A study that utilized students in a US university concluded to a negative relationship between time spent by students on online social networks and their academic performance (Paul et al., 2012). The authors pointed to the importance of attention span devoted to multiple sources of attractions. Such result indicates the importance of using Facebook and other social media tools wisely and towards a productive time in class rooms and back home. Besides that, social networking has been found to increase the user's self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). When people engage in social networking, they can control the information to be shared, so they tend to present positive information about themselves among their network of acquaintances. Such positive information usually solicits positive feedback, which enhances one's self-esteem and eventually provides several positive social benefits and well-being (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

Moreover, dealing with the intercultural communication on social media, there many researchers reconsider this case (e.g. (Cheese, 2008); (Chen, 2012), 2012; (Smith Pfister & Soliz, 2011); (Shuter, 2012). As the example, the result taken from Pfister and Soliz (2011, p. 264) illustrate their idea of changes with four interconnected arguments in the following way: "(1) producing new public fora capable of (2) hosting rich, multimodal "spaces" of contact on (3) a scale of many-to-many communication that (4) challenges traditional modes of representation". Moreover, the intercultural transformations using social media among people all over the world, have triggered contacts of people from different cultures and caused changes from "face-to-face encounters" to instantaneous "communication with others regardless of geo-political boundaries, time, or space" (Shuter, 2012). However, the impact of having more active on intercultural communication has dramatically changed the 'standard norms' of communication from the users if it compared to the last century. The intercultural communication on social media as 'digital culture' which is introducing changes to linguistics, speech, the way of spending time, etc. Instead of words, netters often use abbreviations, for example, *idk* ("I don't know"); *bff* ("best friend forever"); *brb* ("be right back"); *nvm* ("never mind"); *sup* ("what's up?"); *cya* ("see ya [you] later"); *lol* ("laugh out loud"); *omg* ("oh my gosh!"); *w8* ("wait"), *rolf* ("rolling on floor laughing"); *yolo* ("you only live once"), to mention just a few letters (M. Lebedko, Litang, &

Prosser, 2014).

A previous study by Lebedko found that students (Chinese and Japanese) from abroad who came to Russia to study Russian language and culture used social media less during the honeymoon stage (of culture shock and/or acculturation. They gradually began using Facebook and social media at the recovery stage and later they pointed out that 'speaking' with friends on the nets was supporting them if students experienced cultural bumps or communication failures at the acculturation stage (M. G. Lebedko, 2014). Impact of social media: values now are more dynamic than ever before. Shuter (2012) pronounced these tremendous changes as 'the revolution.' One can also see that the process of teaching has been transformed to learning, that gives initiative to students; e-books are preferred to books; writing has turned into Texting and IMing; abbreviations are often preferred to words and collocations; F2F (face-to-face) collaborative work has presently changed to distant collaboration when authors who do not know personally each other, know the projects they are working on and discuss them without getting acquainted. In regard to internet 'friendship', identity can be disguised when 'friends' are reluctant to know their 'friends' and use nicknames. The notion of intercultural communication has also changed from one way communication to networking with multiple friends. Another impact of the digital age is that previous control of information has been converted to information that can freely move around (Chen, 2012).

Method

This research was qualitative research. The participants of this study were the Senior High School students in Mataram which consists of 30. For additional information, the teachers of that students were taken as the participants as well, they were also interviewed related to the language and behaviour during the interaction with the students at school area. The data of the research collected using observation, interview and questionnaire. Firstly, observation was used to collect the data of students' language and behaviour. The researcher collaborated with teachers to observe the students in daily interaction in the school area. Secondly, the researcher interviewed the teachers and the students at the school. In interviewing the teachers, the researcher asked how the change of students' language and behaviour when they interact with the students whether in the process of teaching and learning or interaction in outside of the classroom. While the students were asked about the intensity of using social media and the language they used. The last, questionnaire was also be applied to get more information about the reason why the students intensively intercultural communication through the social media. Since the research is tentative, the questionnaire is short including five open-ended questions.

After getting the data, it analysed by using four steps such as identifying, clasifying, describing, and explaining.

- a. The first step, the researcher identified the data that had been taken in order to know the language and behaviour from students.
- b. After identifying the data, the researcher classified it.
- c. The next step, describing the data that had been classified.
- d. The last step, explaining the data based on the research question that formulated in the previous chapter concern with the changes of students' language and behavior of students in relation with the intensity of their intercultural communication by using social media and why they intensively intercultural communication by using social media.

Results

In this section, we attempt to investigate the changes in language, behavior, and way of thinking of students in relation with the intensity of their intercultural communication by using social media. As we stated on the introduction above, most of teenagers today are very enthusiastic in using social media, because it provides a lot of sites like Facebook, instagram, youtube, gmail, yahoo, e-mail,, etc, as the way to communicate or share varieties of information with their friends around the world. However, because of teenagers are frequently communication and interaction in social media, it will unintentionally influence their language, behavior, and the way of thinking in real life situation.

Students' Language

In the first time the students knew the Alay language, they only used it in the small group in their friends. However, the development of communication technology particularly internet which provides varieties of social networking sites make students intensively used the Alay language in the broad communication. This case causes the students in broader use of the Alay language in their daily communication.

As we know that, the language (Indonesian) that teenagers use today is rather deferent if it is compared to the standard language that people use. As we see in the

social media, most of teenagers tend to interact by using Alay language rather than formal language. This case I found to the students of SMA N 2 Mataram are using the expression like *"bectul bingiit"*, *"A@ halah s@yo gag t0w"*, *"males ah gue"*, etc. *"sm@ yank"*, *"Oza@y lah"*, *"@b@a@g@a@i@m@n@ @b@u@? @t@e@r@i@m@k@s@i@h@X=U"*, *"tul154nku"* *"P354N"* etc. Those kinds of expressions which are intensively used by them in social media. However, it will cause misunderstanding when they use it in the real life situation especially to people who are out of generation with the teenagers today, because those expressions are not only unreadable, but also make people confuse to understand those meaning. Otherwise, it would not create problems if it used to the person who has the same background knowledge.

On the other case, when the teenagers frequently use the alay language through social media, they would not realize that it will unintentionally influence their language when they communicate with their friends or even to adult people in real life. For instance, we often see the phenomena which happen in the school area, where the students frequently use the word *"keles"* in the expressions like *"iya keless"* *"lo kelless"* *"nda githu kelles."* Another example the inappropriateness use of capital letters in the beginning, middle, and last in a word or phrase in written task. Again, it is because of the habitual communication through social media. More seriously, they do not consider using it in the teaching and learning process. For instance, when the teachers are teaching in the classroom, frequently they hear students state the expression like *'ndak githu keles'* to express disagreement.

Another phenomena which is caused by the intensity of watching films is the use of expression like *'gue* instead of *saya*, and *'lu/lo* instead of *kamu/anda*, when they address to each other. What we hear today, most of teenagers use it in daily interaction especially when they talk to their friends, but sometimes they unintentionally use when communicate to their teacher. Actually, those expressions will be more impolite if it is used to the older one. However, most of teenagers do not care about the rule of language, even they do not consider to whom these expressions they address. On the other case, when the teenagers express the words *"fuck you man"*. It is because of the imitation from western culture as we see on the movie, where the actors always expressing their annoyance by saying *'fuck'*, *shit* or *bullshit* to the others. Therefore, as our suggestion, teenagers should limit their time in using social media in order to avoid negative infects which influence their language use and they also should be able to filter every single

word that often offend someone when they are communicating.

Teenagers' Behavior

In the past when there was no internet, the process of cross-cultural communication was limited to books, magazines, newspapers, TV, and radio. It certainly took times for students to get the resources for their learning needs. Even the existing resources were sometimes limited and could not meet the learning needs of students. Therefore, when the process of learning which required students to present their work, for example, cultural differences, they were only able to give very limited information about certain culture. This was because what they presented was not really their interest but it was only the resources available around them. Hence, it resulted in the limited and less rapid process of inter-cultural communication.

The limitation of knowledge of various cultural differences and the difficulty of access to the knowledge might have caused students lacking respect of cultural differences among them. We could see that they considered their friend, who was from western part of Java, as a strange person. The way he spoke in Indonesian influenced by his native language and his name, which has been commonly repetition of syllables, such as "*Kenken*", "*Ronron*", "*Kumkum*", tended to be laughable. They saw those things as something different rather than a cultural diversity. Consequently, they were likely less able to respect differences among them and not willing to work cooperatively when doing group-work. That was also likely caused by lack of rapid process of inter-cultural interactions which could be accessed by the students.

In the contrary, before the enactment of policy of IT-based learning and the change in one of the school regulations, allowing students to bring mobile phones to school, we could see the sights of social-interaction of groups of students outside classes, along corridors, and at the school cafeteria during the break time. We watched them talking and giving responses to each other as in the real world. This social-interaction among individuals could help students recognize and understand the habits, behavior, and customs of other students and obey other regulations which are in force in society.

School is the right place in which students learn how to socialize by doing

interaction in the process learning and getting life experience. They learn to respect their teachers, love and care about their friend's difficulties. The character-building through education is beneficial in growing sensitivity among students. Therefore, it might have reflected on how they treated each other, such as, visiting a friend who was sick, creating study-groups regardless their level of intelligence and place of origin, collecting money to help a friend who was having financial difficulty, and so on.

Nowadays, social networking site, such as *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, LinkedIn*, and so on make it possible for everyone to establish relationship between individual and other individuals in social networking cyberspace. Simultaneously, the users, who are from various background cultures, build up and expand social networks. These social media allow every user to make use of old or current events attached with photographs up loaded by other users in other parts of the world in the networking cyberspace. In addition, social networking provides its users with varieties of attractive features which might increase interaction among users. The development in the world of communication creates a great influence in social development which is likely connected with the involvement of the users. Young people, based on the survey as stated in the previous stage, are the most active users of all.

When we talk about social networking site, we absolutely will associate it with the negative and positive impacts of the use of the social media. However, in this stage we will attempt to present the changes in students' behavior in their social interactions among their friends as the phenomenon that we have been experiencing in my school surrounding. We will relate the changes in their social behavior to the intensity of the intercultural interaction with their social med-friends in networking site.

One phenomenon that we found currently occurred in learning English in the class room. Each representative of groups of students had to present one cultural celebration of other cultural celebrations they might know in the world. They were able to present, such as *Halloween, Valentine's Day, Thanks giving Day, Chinese New Year, Larung Kasodo, Gerebeg Maulud Festival*, etc. with attractive and colorful pictures. Previously, the students collected the information during the discussion with the help of internet connection with which all classes are equipped by the school. Media for social interaction allow its users to communicate and engage with information they quickly accessed from the internet (Sawyer, 2011). Most of the students were seen to interact with any types of social media. In other occasion, they collected the information they

needed for group presentation in the same way as they were preparing for presenting cultural celebration. They chose one of the topics, such as *The Rain Cycle*, *The process of Photosynthesis*, and *How Rainbow happens*. The easiness to get the information about cultural celebrations in the world are likely because of the cultural knowledge up loaded by other users of social medias. Exchanging cultural information could help students to be aware of cultural differences in their environment and in the worldwide. Moreover, the success of their presentation showed that they respected each other and were willing to work cooperatively regardless their cultural differences among them. Additionally, the ability to search for the information for their presentation is possibly supported by the students' skill to use the types of social-media and to interact with their net-friends in the social networking. The information can be sent or received in seconds only if they are skilled. Such skill could be acquired through the intensity of the use of the social media. They seem to frequently spend their leisure time doing on line activities, such as chatting, browsing, or interacting with their social network friends.

Other phenomenon, which is becoming a common sight in the school environment, is the students with gadgets on their hands. We can see small groups students are sitting on the floor or side by side and lined up outside of the class and along the corridor with their laptops, tabs, and smartphones. There are usually only few students found are talking to each other. They might prefer to interact with their social network friends to their school mates at the break time. They seem to like to stay in the class during empty school hours with their laptops better than to sit and read books, magazines, novels, etc. in the school library. Moreover, they would rather stay in the class for two hours or more after the class just to have connected with the social media than go home. This shows that the students intensively use the social networking site. Consequently, they are likely to be more frequent socializing with their social network friends in the virtual world than with their friends in their school or home environment. As stated by Blumer and Döring (2012) explain that the intensity use of certain online service may generally bring users to prefer to communicate through online to face-to-face communication. This might be because online social media websites, such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and others seem to have taken much of their attention from their

real world. They provide the users with easiness of ways for conversation, sharing and collaboration across borders. On the contrary, these appealing web-based services depend their operation on continuous user participation (Veltri & Elgarah, 2009).

Another phenomenon found was the students' less sensitive attitude towards the difficulties faced by their classmates. Some teachers complained to homeroom teacher about the lack of students' sensitiveness of the absence of one of their friend for a few days from school. Sadly, they did not know that their friend had been sick for a week and had not been visited. Therefore, we can see that the intensity of the students' interaction in the social networks has diminished their sense of awareness towards their social environment. People from individualistic cultures like to meet new people and be seen by many people better than preserve the relationships that they have made. They could have just said hello and asked for their friend condition via their smartphone or any social mediums anytime. This phenomenon should not have happened in the era in which people can interact and send/receive message or information to each other regardless of time, place, and distance (Rosen, Kool, BMcGuire, T, & Botvinick, 2010).

Students' Way of Thinking

Teenagers nowadays in all over Indonesia have been so far away left in the way of thinking. Thinking shortly, is the model way of thinking which is becoming the style of students at the present. They do not care what people will react toward their attitudes, as long as they feel happy and satisfy, they will ignore whether their behavior will cause something bad or not for the other people. This phenomenon happened to students who become the sample that I observed. The high intensity level of the use of social media with some applications like internet, facebook, wechat, BBM, have been considered as the main factor influencing the students' way of thinking. We can see around the school area, where the students making problems causing riots, smoking, consuming drugs, and committing other violence.

Based on our observation, we found some of cases of students' way of thinking influenced by the high intensity of using social media:

- They like to think carelessly and recklessly without thinking the bad side of it.

- They tend to get what they want instantly and easily. For example, when they are doing their homework, they tend to be copy paste on the internet. Another example, they copy paste the speech text from the internet.
- Students experience the moral degradation. For example, they act impolite attitude to the older people, express the harsh language like 'fuck you', wearing the improper dress, etc.
- They are still labile and are not able to take decision in solving a problem or conflict and they will even feel confused because they lack of confidence.
- They begin to think individualistic which leads them to be an egoist person and tend to underestimate others.

Those problems will absolutely lead them to the model of thinking which is likely to make them to be arrogant and egoistic.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the intensity of exchange culture information by using social media has influenced most teenager or students. Firstly, the students tend to use their language by using a kind of "*Alay language*" when they interact with their friends or even with their teacher whether inside or outside of the classroom. Secondly, the intensity of exchange culture information by using social media could help students finish their school task. They work cooperatively with their friends in small groups. They are able to find out the information they need to present cultural celebrations and how something happens in less than fifteen minutes. This intercultural communication could also help build up their awareness of cultural differences among them. However, this intensive exchange of cultural information could also lead students to prefer to communicate with their network friends to friends in their school and home environment. Moreover, the students are likely becoming less sensitive towards their friends' problems. In addition, the intensive of exchange of culture information by using social media could lead them to the model of thinking which is likely to force their arrogances and egoism.

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