

Social Media As a Platform for Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) : A Mixed-Methods Study on Computer Science Students

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Abstract

This study explores the affects of social media as a platform for acquiring English from the perspective of Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE). This study uses mixed-method designs with quantitative and qualitative approaches to the second semesters leaners of STMIK Pontianak, System Information program, consisted of 30 learners the academic year of 2024/2025. With the widespread and extensive use of platforms such as Instagram, Tiktok, YouTube, and other learning applications, learners are increasingly directed to real English content and real-time communication with vary people. This paper learns how social media influences to the development of language skills, including vocabulary, listening, speaking, and intercultural competence. It also investigates learners' behaviors, motivations, and strategies when engaging with English content online. The results indicate that social media can enrich language acquisition by delivering valuable experience, growing motivation, and helping autonomous learning. However, weaknesses such as inconsistent language input, limited corrective feedback, and potential distractions are also undeniable. In general this study highlights the significance of IDLE in modern language learning and reminds that social media can serve as an effective extra tool for enhancing English proficiency in an engaging way.

Keywords: Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE), Social Media, Mixed-Methods Design, Learner Autonomy, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have altered the way people learn, especially by making English language acquiring easier, more accessible, and more connected to the real-communication context. Learners can easily learn English through media social platform such as IG, Tiktok, Youtube, and numerous language-learning applications outside the classroom. These platforms are easily accessible and are widely used by students around the globe. The regular access to online learning platforms may give both learners and teachers with valuable opportunities to enrich their English competence (Nugroho et al., 2022). The

day-to-day use of these platforms unconsciously influences learners' development of language skills.

The massive and widespread integration of technology in both English as foreign language (ELT) and English for second language (ESL) learning has enabled learners to access English learning resources outside the classroom for language acquisition. This phenomenon is known as informal digital learning of English (IDLE) (Nugroho et al., 2022). In other words, IDLE refers to the self-directed and independent use of digital platforms or tools for learning English outside the classroom setting, including watching videos, playing games, engaging in social media activities, and other similar activities

(Rezai, 2024). The Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) concept refers to self-directed learning carried out through a variety of digital devices, such as gadgets, computer, MP3 players as well as digital sources, including the internet, web, Facebook, Skype, web applications, independent of any formal educational setting (Maulida et al., 2022). IDLE makes the learning process more enjoyable and less burdensome, while facilitating learners' comprehension and acquisition of learning material (Maulida et al., 2022).

Social media has become an indispensable part of Indonesian teenagers' live and its widespread use is inevitable (Ullah et al., 2020). Social media has a significant role in teenagers' life, especially in educational field, such as seeking information, news, insights, and long-distance interaction between learners. Social media functions not only as a means of communication but also as a rich and valuable source of information with strong potential to support education (Ardiel, 2024).

School of Information Technology and Computer Management (STMIK) Pontianak offers two programs, those are System Information (SI) program and Technique Informative program (TI). Then, System Information (SI) programs will be discussed more in this study, which is divided into two areas of specialization, those are Enterprise Information System (EIS) and E-Business Technology (EBT).

The specialized major of Enterprise Information System (EIS) is to integrate the company's information system, designing a strategic information system plans for an organization and managing organizational information resources that is computer-based. Meanwhile E-

Business Technology (EBT) specialized major includes translating business plans into web-based information technology solutions, as well as analyzing and implementing appropriate e-business technologies to enhance business competitiveness. The lessons offer are such as Enterprise Resource Planning, Knowledge Management System, Supply Chain management, Information Technology Governance, Digital and New Media, E-Commerce, E-Business Design, and others specialized major lessons.

Overall, System Information learners interact with English through the materials they learn in syllabus. Furthermore, apart from interacting with technical interfaces, students actively participate in online social networks where English is commonly used for communication, entertainment, collaborative activities, and information sharing. At last, while previous studies have demonstrated the role of IDLE in supporting EFL learners' language development, little is known about how Information Systems students draw upon both technical digital resources and informal social media spaces to facilitate autonomous English acquisition.

In this study researchers want to figure out the influence of social media to STMIK Pontianak learners to their English competence, as English still becomes the problematics to be acquired by them. Then this leads to the research issues as :

1. How does social media as IDLE platforms affect learners' English competence of reading, writing, speaking and listening?
2. To what extent does social media support autonomous learning among students?

This study concentrates on second-semester Information Systems students at STMIK Pontianak. The partakers consisted of 30 students in this inquiry, who belong to Generation Z, a generation that has grown up in the era of social media and digital technology and is often referred to as digital native. This study aims to examine how social media affect learners' English competence and how it supports students' independent learning.

Social media, as a product of technological developments, has become an essential part of daily life. It is used not only to connect friends and family, but also for professional, educational, and entertainment goals (Nugraha et al., 2024). In educational settings, social media functions as a learning resource by providing diverse content, including tutorial videos, language-learning materials, and collaborative discussions, often without the need for direct teacher supervision. Then the use of social media in language learning is consistent with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, both of which underline on the role of social interaction in learning, engaging with authentic materials and native speakers helps strength language proficiency.

Moreover, social media exposes learners to authentic language used in real-life situations, allowing them to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities in meaningful contexts (Surgawie, 2024). Then it allows learners to notice communication patterns, such as how people interact in English and use various speaking strategies and habits, which may increase their English skills (Fauziah & Sutrisno, 2025).

Social media allows learners and teachers of differ geographical places to join in global learning network in communicating and sharing knowledge, which may increase cultural awareness (Malliga & Vijhi, 2025). In educational field, it offers numerous educated platforms, like instructional videos, academic studies, webinar and online courses both promoting learners engagement such as live streaming, polls, also discussion thread which may increase learners' engagement and also developing educators professional in interacting with people in global, involving in latest research, virtual conference, also the use of teaching techniques (Sujarwati & Aydawati, 2025). Likewise in her study Susanti (2025) claimed that technology or online resources, like media social, podcasts, even other digital tools allows real-communication settings, repeated resources, and collaborative involvement (Susanti, 2025). Media social also offering autonomous learning outside the school environments leading to the learning improvements of English, also it gives change to choose what content they want to learn and decide their own learning goals. Furthermore media social gives learners chance to access the learning resources at anytime and anywhere they want, no time or place limitation (Fauziah & Sutrisno, 2025).

The four dimensions of language acquisition beyond the classroom based on Benson's (2011) IDLE can be defined as self-initiated activity (locus of control), spontaneous activity (formality), real-life activity (pedagogy) and happens in extramural digital setting (location). Then be included in receptive doings (RIA), such as watching and engaging of English content video in YOUTUBE, which concentrates on

comprehension, while productive activities (PIA) like giving comments to issues or videos or interacting with others, its focuses on production (Fang et al., 2025). The using of diverse digital tools and resources of social media platforms, such as Duolingo, memrise, allow learners the chance to communicate or interact to the native of the target language learned, share ideas, getting feedbacks of their performance, also can access the real communication input and negotiating meaning with peers and native speakers are also offered by IDLE (Fauziah & Diana, 2023). Subsequently media social as learning tools outside classroom settings as one of solutions to cope with the challenges both English as foreign language and English as second language, yet some weaknesses should be considered, such as limited access to technology, digital competency obstacles, bad connections also some other distractions (Susanti, 2026). The emerged of IDLE shows the notable event in L2 studies offering the vary use of technology tools of numerous learning sources (Zou et al., 2025).

Furthermore, it is recorded that Informal digital learning experience affects various aspect of Language acquisitions, involving linguistics capability, like vocabulary improvement, writing skills, spoken competence, also IDLE related to psychological competence such as enjoyment, self-efficacy, motivation, communicative behaviors, and emotional control, such as decreasing L2 anxiety, monotony, and burnout (Zou et al., 2025).

Previous study

Ayudia F. & Djoko S.(2024) in their research entitled “High School Students’ Perceptions of Using Social

Media in Learning English : A Quantitative Study” claimed that in short learners are having a positive perception the using of media social such as YouTube, TikTok, and IG in acquiring English, which exciting and easily accessed content then may boost English competences (Fauziah & Sutrisno, 2025). Furthermore Lis S. & Emilia NA. (2025) in their research claimed that the participants strongly agree that IDLE gives language support [M= 4,55], flexibility I use [M=4,25], and to boost their language acquiring [M=4,58]. Yet, hindrances such as no structured feedback and inconsistent learning designs need to be considered (Sujarwati & Aйдawati, 2025). Surgawie et al., (2024) claim social media as the additional learning tool for independent English acquiring, focus on to the strategic need and discipline to maximize its benefits, yet obstacles, such as the absence of organized guidance, possible distraction, also the difficulties in knowing progress should be noticed (Hermansyah, 2024).

RESEARCH METHODS

It is a Convergent Parallel Mixed-Methods Design, using quantitative and qualitative data to support the research outcomes, which taken simultaneously at the same time. In quantitative data, questionnaire is administered to students to gain data of the frequency the social media platforms such as IG, Tiktok, YouTube, and some learning apps are used, the increasing of English competences, also the kind of content frequently learned using likert scale. The Data collection was conducted on February 23, 2026 to the 30 learners. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected

concurrently. Participants first completed the questionnaire, followed by a brief interview session for the deeply responds of the questions' responses, consisted only the half participant as the representative of the study. The data then be analyzed using descriptive statistics also the possibly regression. Then semi-structured interview is applied in collecting qualitative data of learners' experiences in learning English with IDLE, strategies, challenges, also motivation, gathered directly at the same phase. Besides some documentation are also attached as the evidence in this study.

Multiple Regression Linear Model:

$$\hat{Y}=a_0 + a_1 x_1+a_2 x_2+a_3 x_3$$

Purposive sampling is applied in this study that is the 2nd semester students System Information program academic year 2024/2025, 30 students, who is proactively utilize social media for English learning, which belong to generation Z, and as the native of social media. The updated data from statistics conforms about 90% teens aged 13-17 as the active users of social media in global, like TikTok as the trend caused of its engaging and dynamic content (Fauziah & Sutrisno, 2025). Riazi (2016) purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are selected based on researcher's evaluation and specific aim of the study (Rezai, 2024).

Research information are obtained using questionnaire administered via google forms, consisted of 18 items of cognitive, affective and conative in line with Robins' theory (Fauziah & Sutrisno, 2025). As the initial study of Pratiwi (2023) discusses around the efficiency in assessing learners' attitude and involvement with learning tools. The three main areas of questionnaire are learners understanding of social media as a learning tool (cognitive), learners emotional reactions to social media for learning (affective), and students' active and motivated use of social media during learning (conative).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This chapter reports the study outcomes of the data, both quantitative and qualitative which are obtained from the respondents' of the questionnaire administered and their academic achievements gained. It highlights three main areas of social media those are learners' active and motivated use of social media during learning (conative), learners' emotional reactions to social media for learning (affective), and learners understanding of social media as learning tool (cognitive). The data are gained through google form to 30 respondents of STMIK Pontianak learners of 18 items. The data and the overall mean score gained are depicted as table follows as quantitative data:

Table 1. Mean Score of Three Main Areas of Social Media

Perceptions	Mean Score	Interpretation
Conative	3,47	Average
Affective	3,27	Average
Cognitive	3,35	Average

Table 2. Criteria of Mean Score (4 categories)

Mean Range	Criteria
4.01-5.00	Good
3.01-4.00	Average
2.01-3.00	Low
1.00-2.00	Bad

Table 3. Conative

No	Statement	Scale	Responden t	%
1	I often use social media to learn English.	1	1	3,3%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	13	43%
		4	14	47%
2	I want to actively participate in learning English groups on social media.	1	2	6,7%
		2	5	16,7%
		3	15	50%
		4	8	26,7%
3	I am motivated to use social media as a means of learning English because it more interesting.	1	-	0%
		2	1	3,3%
		3	14	47%
		4	15	50%
4	I intend to use social media application to practice speaking English.	1	-	0%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	15	50%
		4	13	43%
5	I want to use social media platforms to listen to English content such as podcasts or video.	1	-	0%
		2	3	10%
		3	9	30%
		4	18	60%
6	I plan to regularly use social media to improve my English skill outside the classroom.	1	1	3,3%
		2	5	16,7%
		3	11	37%
		4	13	43%

The subsequently followed by Cognitive areas of social media as follows:

Table 4. Cognitive

No	Statement	Scale	Responden t	%
1	I feel like I understand the English content I encounter on social media well.	1	-	0%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	15	50%
		4	13	43%
2	I believe that social media is an effective tool for learning English.	1	-	0%
		2	1	3,3%
		3	15	50%
		4	14	47%
3	I have sufficient knowledge about how to use	1	-	0%

	social media to learn English.	2	3	10%
		3	19	63%
		4	8	27%
4	I feel able to use social media to improve my English skills.	1	-	0%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	13	43%
		4	15	50%
5	I can evaluate the effectiveness of learning English through social media well.	1	-	0%
		2	4	13,3%
		3	14	46,7%
		4	12	40%
6	The use of social media improve my understanding of English.	1	-	0%
		2	4	13,3%
		3	8	26,6%
		4	18	60%

Then affective area will be depicted in this follows table.

Table 5. Affective

No	Statement	Scale	Respondents	%
1	I feel happy when using social media to learn English.	1	-	0%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	15	50%
		4	13	43%
2	I feel comfortable using social media to communicate in English.	1	-	0%
		2	1	3,3%
		3	15	50%
		4	14	46,7%
3	I am satisfied with the results of my English learning through social media.	1	-	0%
		2	3	10%
		3	19	63%
		4	8	26,7%
4	Using social media makes me more motivated to learn English.	1	-	0%
		2	2	6,7%
		3	13	43%
		4	15	50%
5	I feel more emotionally involved when learning English through social media.	1	-	0%
		2	4	13,3%
		3	14	46,7%
		4	12	40%
6	I feel excited when I use social media to learn English.	1	-	0%
		2	4	13,3%
		3	8	26,7%
		4	18	60%

Then the questionnaire data also be analyzed using statistical calculation of SPSS ver. 25 to figure out its influencing of social media usage to learners' English competence. The data are delineated in the following figure.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.262 ^a	.069	-.039	10.46299
a. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive, Conative, Affective				

Table 2. Simultaneous Significance Test Results (F-test)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	209.540	3	69.847	.638	.597 ^b
	Residual	2846.327	26	109.474		
	Total	3055.867	29			
a. Dependent Variable: Attainment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive, Conative, Affective						

Table 3. Partial Significance Test Results (t-test)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	83.473	14.107		5.917	.000
	Conative	-1.342	1.368	-.402	-.981	.336
	Affective	1.497	1.706	.438	.877	.388
	Cognitive	-.817	1.543	-.224	-.530	.601
a. Dependent Variable: Attainment						

Furthermore qualitative data are gained through an interview to respondents of their views or perceptions also experiences to social media as tool for independent learning as stated in the 2nd issue above. According to Sugiyona (2015), qualitative research is suitable for examining phenomena in their natural

environments, enabling researchers to develop a deeper understanding of participants' experiences. The interview then be recorded and transcript to obtain its data integrity and solely used for this study. The interviewed data can be delineated as diagram below:

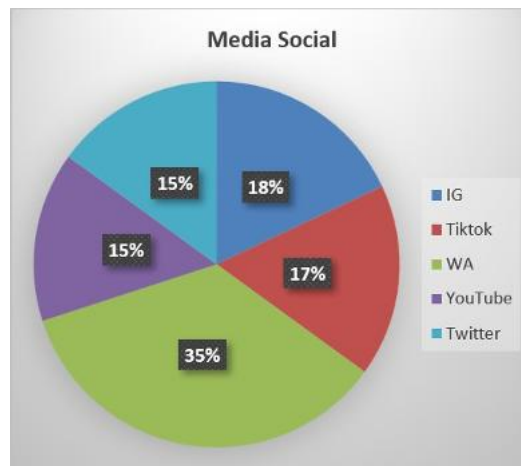


Figure 2. Most Social Media Use For Daily

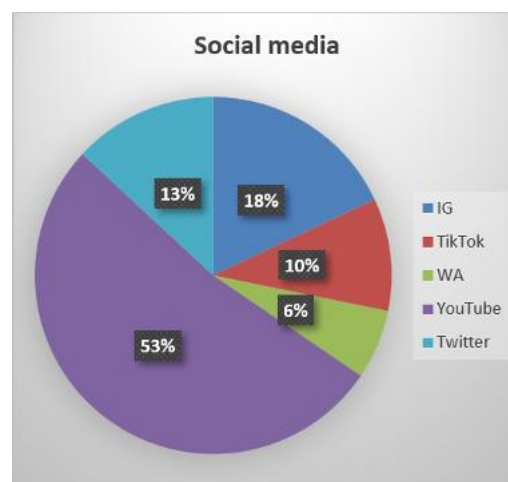


Figure 3. Social Media Use for Learning English

Discussion

Derived from the table 2 above of learners' perception of social media areas it indicates the average range, from 3.01-4.00 means learners have a moderately positive opinion, attitude or respond to social media. In other words, respondents have positive opinion toward the use of media social, yet not considered excellent. The main areas of learners' active and motivated use of social media during learning (Conative) has the highest score, namely (M=3,47) subsequently followed by Cognitive areas of M=3,35 at last followed by Affective score of (M=3,27), as displayed in Table 1.

From the table 3 above of conative component discuss about "I often use social media to learn English" it shows 43%-47% range, namely agree to strongly agree. Then other items discuss "I intend use of social media for speaking practicing" with point 50% (agree) to 43% (strongly agree). The responds display learners intends use of social media to learn English of conative areas.

In Table 4 of Cognitive area point 4 shows the highest number of learners that "I feel able to use social media to improve my English skills" range agree (43%) and strongly agree (50%). Then followed by "The use of social media improve my understanding of English" strongly agree (60%). In the

Affective area it reflects learners dominant emotional reactions, such as feel happy, comfortable, satisfied, motivated, involved in learning also feel excited to social media to learn English range from agree to strongly agree, as showed in Table 5 above.

Based on the figure 1 of Analysis Regression outcomes above the coefficient determination in Model Summary table the R Square is 0,069. It means only 6,9% of the main areas of social media influence the English competence of STMIK Pontianak learners and the rest is 93,1 % as the other variables which are not included in this study. It indicates the low influence or not explanatory power to one attainment.

Then from the coefficient table above the constant is (a) 83.473 with regression coefficient (a_1) is -1.342 and sig.0,336 then regression coefficient score (a_2) is 1.497 and sig. 0,388 next regression coefficient score (a_3) is -0.817 and sig. 0,601. Furthermore the regression equation is delineated as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = a_0 + a_1 x_1 + a_2 x_2 + a_3 x_3$$

$$\hat{Y} = 83.473 + (-1.342)x_1 + 1.497x_2 + (-0.817)x_3$$

This Multiple Linear Regression Model means Y score prediction is 83.473, coefficient variable X1 (conative) is -1.342 means it has negative effect to English competence, the subsequent coefficient variable X2 (Affective) is 1.497, depicts positive influence to English competence (Y) and the last variable is X3 (Cognitive) is -0.817 displays negative influence to English competence (Y) of social media areas. Then can be summed up that affective aspect of social media give positive influence to learners' English

competence, otherwise conative and cognitive aspects of social media give no influence to learners' English competence in this study, as the answer for the 1st research issues in research questions.

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competence, otherwise conative and cognitive aspects of social media give no influence to learners' English competence in this study, as the answer for the 1st research issues in research questions.

Data are collected through quantitative and qualitative methods which displayed on some Tables and Figures above through questionnaire and tests conducted. From the questionnaire administered about three main areas of social media shows that learners' active and motivated use of social media during learning (conative) has the highest score, namely ($M=3,47$) then followed by learners' understanding of social media as learning tool (cognitive) $M= 3,35$ and subsequently learners' emotional reactions to social media for learning (affective) aspect $M= 3,27$, with the average range from 3.01-4.00.

Furthermore data gained through the accumulated of statistical analysis of multiple regression displays the coefficient determination in Model Summary table the R square is 0.069. It implies just 6,9 % of main areas of social media influence learners' English skills or it has low influence to learners' attainment, and the rest is 93,1 % as other variables not observed in the study. This can be as future research for observing as the dominant variables which influence someone attainment.

Subsequently, based on the coefficient table of Multiple Linear Regression Model the Y score prediction is 83.473, coefficient variable x_1 (conative) is -1.342 which indicates it has negative effect on English skills attainment, then variable x_2 (affective) is 1.497, it implies positive influence on English skill (Y) and the coefficient of variables x_3 (cognitive) is -0.817 which

shows negative or no effect on learners' English skills.

Furthermore, qualitative data are gained from the interview to the participants as depicted in the Figure 2 above that the most media social use for daily communication is Whatsapp, namely 35 %, IG 18%, Tiktok 17 %, YouTube 15 %, and the last Twitter 15 %. Then Figure 3 shows the most social media use for learning English is YouTube 53%, followed 18.0%, Twitter 13%, Tiktok 10.%, WA 6.3%, and WA 6%. Overall, can be summed up that WhatsApp as the social media use for daily communication between learners, subsequently YouTube as social media used for learning English.

CONCLUSION

These findings describe that Information Systems learners' English attainment cannot be solely explained by the type of social media platforms used or the frequency of their use. Rather, it is also influenced by the learners' affective involvement, which plays a dominant and effective role in academic achievement. Furthermore, this study has several limitations, focusing only on Information Systems learners, which may restrict the generalization of the findings, and it also depends on one-sided perceptions or self-reported data. Finally, although it has several limitations, it gives insight into IDLE for future research.

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