English Exposure from Digital Media and its Influence on Communicative Competence: Students' Perspectives and Experiences

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Abstract

This research investigated the phenomenon of English language exposure from digital media, which is divided into three media platforms (internet and social media, audiovisual, and audio). The main aim of the research was to find out participants' perspectives on digital media as language users and digital media's influences on the participants' communicative competence. This research was designed as a qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document reviews. The findings are divided into two main issues. First, the participants' perspectives on digital media revealed that digital media are divided into two points of views; 1) their functions (providing platforms to integrate language knowledge into language productions, providing blueprints of popular linguistics features, and answering to any questions about all related information), 2) the contents (limitless, authentic, and engaging). The findings of the research suggest that there is an important experience of English exposure found and exercised by the participants from/in all the three digital media. Implications and suggestions are also discussed.

Keywords

Communicative competence, English exposure, digital media, students' perspectives

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Introduction

The notion of linguistics competence is initially brought forward by Chomsky (2006, p.3), which he uses to refer simply to *"a person's knowledge of his language and its system of rules"*. This concept is used when he defines language 'competence' as opposed to 'performance', which is the knowledge and skills required to deal with the social dimension of language use that are dependent on the speaker, the addressee, and other contextual features. In making such a distinction, Chomsky (2006) views linguistic competence as rule-governed systems which are unaffected by social and situational variations; grammar alone describes the speakers' knowledge of his language. Hence, if one has known all rules of grammars, one is enough to be called competence, regardless to his or her ability of non-grammatical aspects of communication (Popsecue, 2012).

However, the concept of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972) is believed to be a broader and more realistic notion of competence and is thought to be the most relevant contribution for the development of applied linguistics, especially in the field of education. Insofar as students' competence in language is involved, major issues have always arisen, one of which is the contributing factor of the process and one of the most definitive factors of students' language competence is the exposure of the target language. In Indonesia, formal classroom has conventionally been the sole looked-up medium where students' English language competence is expected to enhance. This is maybe due to the fact that there used to be a comparatively inadequate amount of linguistics activity students can do outside of the four walls of the English classroom where language exposure is possible. Consequently, the crusade of dedicating efforts to make best of mere classroom teaching and learning process had begun; interested parties have ventured a relentless endeavor to make these hours worthwhile for students by perfecting the teaching techniques, methods and so on, books have been updated constantly and teachers training have been continuously held to create a more effective measures to assist students. In short, any necessary effort to perfect the classroom process has been exhausted by teachers and educators alike. This raises the question as to why students in the country still have relatively low competence in communicating using English in real life as one of the most notorious problems in this issue had been long identified. Regardless of government's efforts, the bitter truth stands; classroom experience has a very limited range and capacity for students to obtain the required amount of exposure to improve their competence. Ranging between 6-8 hours a week over materials that students may not choose or pick, it makes it impossible for students to proceed a swift enough progress of learning or acquisition in improving language competence.

As an idea, the notion of students gaining competence in language from the exposure in their informal activities or environment actually goes way back, as oppose to traditional believe that students only learn English at school. The arguably most prominent argument was made by Skolverket (2006 as cited in Macloid & Larson, 2011, p.6), who stated that; "for some students, the one that gives greater influence for the overall language competence is the informal learning, while the classroom learning only works as stimulant". However in Indonesia, this so said exposure was simply non-existent before the euphoria of home entertainment, internet, and affordable smartphone as the media meant comes into being.

This research aimed to investigate the influence of English exposure from digital media toward participants' English communicative competence with the following research questions:
1. What are the students' perspectives on digital media as language learners?
2. How do digital media influence the participant' communicative competence?

Literature Review

Models of communicative competence

According to Bagaric (2007), along the lines of many applied linguists in modern times who gave their valuable contribution to the further development of the concept or framework of communicative competence, two of whose theoretical reflections and empirical work seem to have had the most important impact on the theory of communicative competence; one model proposed by Canale and Swain (1981) and another one is proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1990). The first comprehensive model of communicative competence, which was intended to serve both instructional and assessment purposes, is that of Canale and Swain (1981), further elaborated by Canale (1983). In their concept of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) refer competence in linguistics to the (conscious or unconscious) knowledge of an individual about language and about other aspects of language use.

On the other hand, Bachman and Palmer (1990, p.4) defined communicative language competence as "a concept comprised of knowledge or competence and capacity for appropriate use of knowledge in a contextual communicative language use." In elaborating on this definition, Bachman devoted special attention to the aspect of language use - that is, the way language is used for the purpose of achieving a particular communicative goal in a specific situational context of communication. In essence, the conceptual framework postulated by Bachman and Palmer is not much different from Canale and Swain's (1981) theory. Many theorists even suggest that the work of Bachman and Palmer (1990) is actually the elaboration models of Canale and Swain's (1981) model and relate more to the language learning. In fact, it is a revised model of the Canale & Swain's (1981) model, based on results in language testing research. For that reason, both theories have many resemblance and overlaps nature. According to Bachman and Palmer (1990), many traits of language users such as some general characteristics, their topical knowledge, affective schemata and language ability influence the communicative language ability.

Acquiring communicative competence from digital media exposure

The use of the English language outside of the classroom differs from learner to learner depending on individual differences and learning strategies. Pickard (1996), for instance, studied the strategies used by German learners to practice English during their spare time. The findings showed a greater involvement in passive activities, such as reading and listening, than in activities that required the use of productive skills. According to Pickard (1996), when

exposure to the target language is enjoyable and pleasurable, it may, then, aid language acquisition. Additionally, Lamb (2010) suggested that motivation and degree of autonomy are also fundamental aspects in language development when learning opportunities are scarce. He found that self-motivated students were more willing to seek and exploit the resources available in their learning environment. Similar results were obtained by Wong and Nunan (2011) in a study on the characteristics of "more effective" and "less effective" (classified according to the scores obtained on a standardized proficiency test) university students in Hong Kong. Their findings revealed that the more effective learners spent significantly more time practicing English outside of the classroom than the less effective learners. In addition, in a previous study, Nunan (1997) claimed that the 'good' foreign language learner finds ways of activating his or her language out of class. This statement is in agreement with research on successful language learners, which has demonstrated that language development can be attributed, in part, to the learners' determination to use the target language outside of the classroom (Hyland, 2004).

However, even when learners have plenty of resources available to use, they may not be aware of the potential ways of using them to acquire the language effectively. This is a problem that has been often discussed by researchers concerned with informal learning strategies. In general, they propose to raise awareness among teachers and to incorporate a domain in teacher training programs (Pickard, 1996) or in the school curriculum (Wong & Nunan, 2011) to teach students how to seek and make profitable use of strategies and sources for practicing the language in their particular learning environments.

However, Indonesia is not native to English language. Yet, given the recent development of communication technology (such as internet and social media), this no longer means that the supply and opportunity of the trafficking language is amount from limited to nothing at all like it used to. As in this globalization age, learning is no longer restrained in time and space. Through the internet, learners are offered opportunities to communicate and learn collaboratively with learners worldwide (Shield & Weininger, 2004), thus lifting the barrier of non-existent informal English language practice. Lightbown and Spada (1999) and Toyoda (2001) postulated that informal learning promotes learners' autonomy, social equality and identity and most importantly, the motivation as such some students do not find in the formal learning. Motivation of learning can often support learners to become more responsible and willing to engage in their own learning defined as learner's autonomy.

Internet and social media

The term "social media" refers to the wide internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or online communities (Dewing, 2010). The social media phenomenon in Indonesia is one of the biggest in the world. Over 95% of Indonesian Internet users use social media (Saleh, 2013 as cited in Inayati, 2014). Globalwebindex (2013) states that several popular social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, and Google are found to be highly popular in Indonesia. Saleh (2013) also states that Semiocast, a global social media agency based in Paris, has rated Jakarta, Indonesian capital, as the number one users of Twitter. Beside Twitter, Facebook has enjoyed a

considerably high popularity in Indonesia, which is ranked as the third highest Facebook user country by a leading media industry provider in NewYork (Mediabistro, 2013). A study done by Sutrismi (2014) about Indonesia teenagers' use of English in social networking, particularly Facebook, finds that it has become a common thing for teenagers in Indonesia nowadays to perform code mixing (Indonesian-English) in their social networking. This happens due to many purposes, two of which are to follow the trend and to show a prestige (Sutrismi, 2014). A sneak peak of some Facebook pages of randomly selected teenagers the researchers personally knows also reveals that English tends to be performed, especially by those who live in cities who are apparently have gotten comfortable and confident of their English.

Audio-visual exposure (TV programs and Movies)

Earlier research (D'ydewalle & Van de Poel, 1999; Vanderplank, 2009 as cited in Aurstad, 2013) has pointed to significant effects from media exposure to a second language acquisition among learners, although again, it may be argued that much of what has been measured is linked to passive understanding rather than an active performance. Gilmore (2007) further argues that a comprehensible input ought to be an authentic sample of the target language as authentic material offers much richer samples of the target language than the language found in adjusted material. Authentic material can in this sense enhance both the communicative competence of the learners and the overall linguistic competence. That means that the exposure of English that supplies input to learners is said to be more comprehensible and this very much relies on the authenticity of the material.

In general, any speaking English films that students watch supply a great authentic exposure. When students watch the films, they are exposed to the language, either vocabulary, grammar or most importantly aspects related to the socio cultural which is not normally found in any other contexts. This is one of the advantages films that has to offer as a source material of exposures. The acquisition happens when students do not think of the language as much as the story of the movie. Those who claim to watch movies a lot have better chance to acquire English faster because there is a pattern in form of accidental repetition that is a vocabulary or input that students are exposed to repeatedly and become fossilized in students' mind. Hence, the acquisition already takes place.

YouTube channels also have become massively celebrated audiovisual platform these days. This activity may not be under-credited anymore. YouTube channels are so popular that so many teenagers in Indonesia are not only loyal subscribers to some channels but as well as the practicing Youtubers. Although so far there is no research has ever investigated the phenomenon of YouTube and Youtubers and its influence to language learning (which is very necessary given its increasing hype), a preliminary interview to random language learners showed that many of English language contents are more likely to be visited such as new release song video music clips, upcoming movie trailers, viral videos, tutorials channels and talk show interviews.

Beside movies and YouTube channels, it seems that the medium of television programs of television can also play a role in the acquisition and strengthening of a new language (Webb, 2010). TV programs, interestingly, has shown to have a varied impact on

English learners. In Indonesia, television has shifted into one of the most important parts of "family" time. Not surprisingly, there are numerous channels with different and specified programs (sport channel, cartoon channels, cooking channels, etc). In cities, the availability the cable TV makes it possible for people all around to access channels from outside of the country, including English-speaking channels.

Audio exposure (Songs)

Lynch (2005) states that music is prevailing in different media such as TV, movie, nightly news and in different occasions such as when people do exercise, are at work, play, and worship. Songs nowadays have become oriented towards young people and usually consists of relatively short and simple words that enable even those who just have rudimentary knowledge about English to comprehend the songs and hence enjoy listening to them. Beside the potential acquisition of linguistics skills, another possible benefit the listeners can get by listening to songs, just like movies, is the involvement of cultural knowledge. Lems (2001 as cited in Xiaowei, 2010, p. 21) stated, "English songs are a rich mine of information about human relations, ethics, customs, history, humor, and regional and cultural differences." One of the researcher brings about this exposure to English related to materials found in songs is the distinctive advantage songs have is in the lyrics, which is the repetition of certain words and expression in the chorus. Beasley and Chuang (2008) underline the importance of the content of the lyrics, which should correspond with the listener's interests, which in turn, contributes to repeat listening to the song. Repetition is argued be important in incidental acquisition, as it contributes to deep knowledge (Beasley & Chuang, 2008 as cited in Batluk, 2015). In line with that, Lems (2001) in Xiaowei (2010) states that songs lyrics should be focused on since they have common short words, as well as repetition of words and structures which help learners understand the meaning of words. The repetition of the same words and structures is a spontaneous enhancement of memorizing the meaning, the pronunciation and the usage of these words and structures.

Methodology

Research design

This research was to describe the lived experience of language learners who are exposed to English language from digital media in their everyday lives, the nature of the research dictates a method that could allow the researchers to do in-depth investigation by acquiring lengthy description, elaboration and lavished information narrated firsthand from the participants, purely from their perspective. For that reason, researchers felt to be legitimately obliged to undertake a qualitative study under phenomenology approach ((Mulyadin, 2018; Mukminin, 2012; Wahyuddin, 2018). As pointed out by Moustakas (1994), the core principle of phenomenological study is to understand how one or more individuals experience a phenomenon and to explore in depth accounts of experiences and their

meanings from participants' personal words, descriptions, reflections, and perspectives on the phenomenon.

Participants of the research

The participants of the research were students in one of senior high schools in Jambi. It is arguably one of the most prestigious schools in Jambi city. This school has gained popularity due to the students' high achieving reputation, competitive nature, and versatile gimmicks in terms of subjects' achievement. However, that was not merely the reason this school was chosen, beside all those facts, this school is also very reputable in terms of English academic excellence.   According to Hycner (1999, p.180), "phenomenon dictates the method (not vice versa) including even the type of the participants." Purposive sampling was chosen since it is considered as the most important kind of non-probability sampling, to identify the participants. The participants were finally chosen based on several criteria set forth concerning the purpose of the research, which are:
1. The participants are at the same level or grade at the school, for practical reason
2. The participants are active users of digital media
3. The participants are particularly exposed to English language to some extent of digital media usage.
Boyd (2001) regards two to ten participants of phenomenological research subjects as sufficient to reach saturation. So, the total of five participants was hoped to contribute in this study.

Techniques of data collection

Simon and Goes (2011 as cited in Simon, 2013) mentioned that the most common means of data collection in a phenomenological study was through in-depth interviews to gather the participants detailed descriptions of their experience, participants written or oral self-reports or even their aesthetic expression (art, narratives, poetry) can also be evaluated. Lester (1999, p.1), a phenomenologist further expands it, saying   " …gathering deep information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participants observation and representing it from the perspective of the research participants."

Semi-structured interview

In this study, it is mandatory for the conduct of prolonged and explorative interviews to commence. A number of 15 questions were prepared prior to the interview. This question guideline was distributed prior to the interview was audio recorded. We took time to explain each point that was going to be discussed such as technical terms and difficult glossaries that might hamper their comprehension of the questions. The participants were students in their sophomore year. For that reason, we had to use as simple language as possible so there wouldn't be misunderstanding, misinterpretation or ambiguity. Few of the times, the code

mixings were inevitable in which we had to use some Indonesian words to explain certain words or expressions (and paused the interviews). Each interview was done in the course of 50 - 60 minutes for each participant. During the process, the researcher admittedly skipped and changed some prepared questions but overall the result of the interview was positively summed up when the researcher felt that the data were exhausted.

Trustworthiness

In this research, the data collected through interview and document review. This method was to establish trustworthiness of this research by looking at this phenomenon by obtaining different data or resources but from the same group of participants. Since it is phenomenological research, the in-depth prolong engagement in the interview was naturally the main source of the data and reviewing physical documents. Secondly, this research also used "reflexivity". The importance of being reflexive is acknowledged within social science research and there is widespread recognition that the interpretation of data is a reflexive exercise through which meanings are made rather than found (Mauthner et al., 1998). In this research, we interpreted how and why the participants thought, did and perceived the phenomenon as it was, which was then translated into the discussion and conclusion parts. More importantly, it lines up with phenomenological major views. As Hammersley (2007) pointed out, that phenomenologist, in contrast to positivists, believe that the researcher cannot be detached from his/her own interpretation and understanding and should not pretend otherwise.

The third way to ensure trustworthiness is member checking. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 314) stated that "this is the most critical technique for establishing credibility." In this research, member check was done twice; after all the raw data in form of transcripts was summed up and after the whole research was final. The purpose was beside to confirm that all data were accurate and authentic, the participants were also asked to give feedback and opinion of the whole result.

Data analysis and data reduction

In semi-structured interview particularly, from 15 questions set forth, in the execution, around 40 questions were asked. This causes unnecessary data that are not closely related to the investigations. The data that were not relevant or loosely relevant to participants' perspective toward digital media, language learning strategies or the influence of English exposure from digital media toward the participants' communicative competence were all dismissed as they didn't answer research questions. We read the report of the data and deleted the passages that did not seem to fit. Additionally, all irrelevant redundant data were also stored out, after this process; all the pages of the finding were soon filled only with relevant quotes and data.

Findings

Participants' perspective on digital media

In the quest of answering this issue, the length of the use of digital media by the participants had to be established first. Almost all participants of the research are avid users of digital media, who claimed to have been a loyal and constant consumer of virtual and digital experience, which involves a massive deal of language use. Digital media and by extension of course, Internet and social media as well as audio-visual and audio formats, had been personally exercised by the participants that spanned ranging between 2-5 years (for Internet and Social Media) and reasonably even more for the other two digital media (audio visual media and audio).

The extent of the use of each digital media is more or less the same amongst all participants in which the answer for the most frequently used media among all participants are the same (Internet and social media). There is a slight difference on two least frequently used media but not really significant amongst all 5 participants. The list as shown in the table below is of the use of digital media amongst the participants:

Table 1. *The exposure of English language from each digital media platform*

Participant	Exposure from Internet and social media platforms	Exposure from audiovisual platform (TV program and movies)	Exposure from audio platform (songs)
1	1	2	3
2	1	2	3
3	1	2	2
4	1	2	2
5	1	2	2

As evident from the table above, there is quite a striking resemblance in the pattern of digital media use among the participants. Clearly shown, from all three digital media, Internet and social media are unanimously the most frequently used platform, followed by audiovisual platform, which ranks number two (although three participants said that they are exposed to audiovisual media and audio in an equal or same quantity) while two other participants stated that they used audiovisual media more than audio or song format.

All participants agreed that the existence of digital media has many varying degree of critical advantages to English learning. Strictly from general standpoint, they viewed digital media as a practical platform that has a great influence to their overall English learning as well as their competence. It means that their English language learning is greatly assisted and affected by the exposure from those digital media. This was particularly signified when they answered to question in separate interview that explicitly asked their perspective of the existence of digital media toward their English learning.

The influence of digital media to students' communicative competence

Positive influence of digital media, there are two main quintessential data emerged as to how digital media were favored by the participants. First is the influence of digital media to their communicative competence is (1) viewed from the functions, and (2) viewed from the content.

Digital media viewed from the functions-Providing platforms to integrate the knowledge of language into language production. In their elaboration, all the participants stated that had been a part of regular social banters using two digital media they viewed to be most notoriously useful to perform the language; internet and social media. These two most prolific platforms, in which language is produced and used in different discourses, as stated by one of the participants, "offers a medium to connect people all around the globe." They enable the participants to be consistently updated with the news, information and whatnot, as well as give them a direct way to make new acquaintances and to talk to existing ones in regular basis. As specified further, the most often communication channels used by the participants were personal chat (Line, WhatsApp) and group chat (forum, blogs, community).

We had obtained copies of these private chats and asked the participants' permissions to be displayed in this research, to which they agreed (the copies of all personal digital documents are scattered all over this discussion). Social media (mostly instagram and facebook), are the second mostly used platforms when English language is produced, followed by internet sites with comment sections (Youtube, blogs, and posts).

By doing such virtual activities, English language overflows in terms of input as well as output. Further mentioned by the participants, the confirmation of word definition occurs somewhere along the way, and better yet, negotiation of meanings as well, in which the participants brainstormed or negotiated certain aspects of language, thus actualizing their critical thinking and linguistics strategies.

> "It is more fun and easier when we use digital media to learn English because in digital media we can explore our English, we [long pause] we can ask our friend or another country, we can talk about it together."(Participant 1)

According to some participants, one of the things that really distinguish the use of English language in digital media to other types of social-related communication forms, especially direct communication using English, is in terms of the psychological factors; performing English language in digital media spare them the social anxiety. It means that when they performed English language in digital media, psychological challenges that the participants normally have to face in direct speaking face-to-face interactions felt lifted. As a result, social media is preferred to use as they set aside communication protocols that some people might find difficult or discouraged to do if done directly. This case is best highlighted by one part of the interview below.

"…..you don't have to interact with the people in person. And by some (activities) doing speaking and some practice test in the school I think it will make us more nervous about showing our English."(Participant 4)

Answer to any questions about English language-related information, even by saying that language learners can find any answer for questions they have in English (like definition and usage of certain words) is an understatement because in fact they don't only answer the questions asked but also elaborate and provide explorative examples and related information thus potentially maximizing the learning. Furthermore, through the use of certain platforms (like movies and videos), this information is exemplified by being used in real contextualized communication. Yet this issue is best explained by the participants of the research in the case of Internet. Myriad of internet-based applications or online dictionaries such as Google Translate (which came up multiple times during the interview) not only enable the participants to find out just in a matter of seconds everything they need to know about English language start from vocabulary, expressions to other formal and informal aspects of English language but could also be done in practically easy and quick way with accurate results.

"before digital media exist, I think we have difficult way to learning English, we just learning English by book or finding difficult word just look at to dictionary and it took times and we have to bring dictionary…. but now when social media (digital media) exist we can use social media like Google translate to know what the meaning of the word or sentence." (Participant 1)

"….if we meet some difficult work, we can use Google translate to search or to know what the meaning of the word, so we can learn much…" (Participant 3)

"I think before the coming of this technology and easy access, it is little hard to learning English… like we should open the dictionary if don't know about the meaning of some words." (Participant 2)

"….. there are so many words that my teachers give as a vocabulary task and I think it's too difficult for us so we check it in the Internet." (Participant 4)

"yes, it is easy for now, because we can search from Google translate if we don't know the meanings and from movies and we can know more from how to daily speaking conversation and many else (others)." (Participant 5)

In the data, all participants could not help but comparing these applications to the traditional way of English learning (checking dictionary or asking teachers). This, beside having to do with the practicality, also meant that participants though that to have lifted the barrier of awkwardness or the "trouble" they must have go through if they have to consult their teachers or dictionary every time they encounter a new thing or a problem in their

English. Moreover, it is understandably easy to see why the participants favored digital dictionary rather than traditional dictionary. Beside the accuracy, online dictionary or applications are now featured with audio function to check the pronunciation of words searched. This was also majorly complimented highly.

Digital media viewed from their content

The second basis on the positive perspective addressed to digital media is from their content. Digital media contents carry many linguistics upsides that the participants viewed to be profoundly helpful and insightful into what English language is and how it is ideally performed. The views on the contents of digital media were subcategorized into three main parts.

Content of digital media is viewed as limitless and varied. All participants unsurprisingly agreed that digital media compared to any platforms of English exposure in their lives have the richest language exposure material, superior to any other kinds. This discussion inevitably leads to a comparison between digital media platform and formal English class such as school and English courses. In so doing, some participants claimed that English exposure from digital media was more abundant, more varied and to great extent, more dynamic than the English language they learned at schools or other formal classes like English course.

The superiority of digital media here is reasonable since other medium, formal English setting in particular, has many inevitable degrading factors. The most prominent limitation of such formal classes, course study or English club compare to digital media is primarily in terms of time. Formal settings comprise only 4 hours a week in the participants' school, which resulted to not enough exposure for the participants and ultimately a very limited amount of real opportunity for them to practically use English language in communication. This is thought to be inadequate as the driving force of communicative competence improvement.

Digital media are viewed to bring limitless and more versatile forms of content in which English language are often used either in blatant full English or code mixed in Indonesian language. This content can be both in form of writing and spoken ranging from articles, online games, Youtube channels, Web engines, mp3, social media for chatting, updating information, connecting to other people from all over the world and so many others. Thus, this varied and rich content indulge the participants to keep using them by switching from one activity to another. As the result, digital media have an unquantifiable number of gimmicks that keep participants interested and provoked to use them incessantly understandably so. In contrast, language exposure in formal learning only comes from two sources; exercise books and teachers' talking time and more learning-based and as consequence repetitive and regarded to be relatively monotonous.

Content of digital media is viewed as engaging. There is no denying that one of the best gimmicks of digital media is because they offer handful of interesting and engaging activities to do by the users. This is not exclusively designed for the teenagers, even adults

are also fond of using digital media mainly for this reason, but this phenomenon is probably more observable on teenagers since they leave myriads of digital prints whenever they do digital activities, mostly related to their nature to be more expressive and open than adults do.

The versatility of content or material supplied by digital media has exactly what common teenagers find attractive or enticing to keep them to stay "online". It keeps engaging the participants to use them in daily basis. Connecting it to the flexibility of the time the participants can venture and explore digital media, than the participants have what in their hands, a tool to do a lot of numerous different activities whenever they want or need to. This means they could switch from one activity to another anytime they wanted and chose the kind of material or forms of activity they want to do.

> "…yes, if I feel tired playing online games, I can just use social media or watch videos…yes…if we need to chat our friends, we can do it as soon as we want because of digital media, so it can be done." (Participant 3)

> "…because I think digital media have more interesting. And there are many kind of materials that keep them interesting than normally found in school. Such as YouTube videos that make me feel enjoy." (Participant 4)

Watching movies and Youtube vidoes and listening to songs but mostly using social media are amongst many activities that the participants normally did with digital media, additionally they also did blogs, online gaming, writing poem, reading articles and many others. Some participants claimed to being okay spending the whole day just to play with their phone doing those activities, which they normally did in school holidays.

Negative influence of digital media

Although the previous points were validated over and over again by participants with rich exploration, the data also showed that despite the ironclad stance the participants were taking, which is in favor of digital media, they also had several noteworthy downsides or negative influence on the participants' English learning. These came up within the interview by some participants.

Different (sometimes conflicting) versions of forms and usages of English language. With the progressive advancement of digital media, a numerous sources of information about particular topics, ideas and ways of language being performed or informed is one of the reasons they were being favored. Internet as a tool, which provides multitudes and extensive range of answer to language issues that the participants sought to find out, has in a great way help them to be critical in analyzing and synthesizing relevant information because it indirectly prompted them to choose certain information based on a particular context. However, for the participants this was not necessarily always a good thing. They said that the versions of information provided could be different, at best and conflicted at worst.

I think like when language used in in social media or Google search, we can't know which one is the correct one so it is…yeah…it is confusing." (Participant 3)

"the first one is learning by using digital media can make us confusing (confused). It is easy but sometimes too many (much) information and different so I don't know what is the right one. I think it may disturb us in learning English." (Participant 4)

Overall, the state of language confusion for the participants covers such factors as:
(1). Different usages of English language that are geographically-based (American, Australian, British, Singaporean, etc), (2). Personal style (pronouncing names of a person, places or buildings, etc.). During the data collection, the participants elaborated clearly by coming up with clarifying examples of this issue. One of the participants found two characters in two different movies that named "viola" and both have different ways of pronouncing (one is *"vaiola"* and another is *"viola"),* she got confused for a while and until with time went by, she eventually deduced at some points that both pronunciation of that named are practiced by the English speaking people. Another participant pointed out that it was confusing when some words were presented in different (written) forms such as *"grey"* and *"gray"* or *"center"* and *"centre"* (as distinguished by British and American English). For the formal purpose sometimes when finding similar cases to other words, it is hard to find which is from which type of English.

"I don't know which (one) should I choose because I don't know the correct one." (Participant 1)

Expose some culturally "inappropriate content" brought in English language.
One of the underlying substances of language is that it brings the cultural essence of the language users, in this case is English language users. As much as the participants praised the content of digital media, some behavioral content that are exercised in it carries negativism nonetheless, as viewed by participants. The culture meant here is one which implicitly or explicitly carried when English language is performed in real communication by the people who speak English as their native language or second language (western cultures).

It is clear that digital media have a very low standard of restricting or censorship if viewed from the looking glass of Eastern cultures, which is probably regarded as revolutionary in terms of political standpoint if we relate it to free speech. However, all participants agreed that not all of the English speaking content or material represented in digital media was well-fitting for them in cultural sense. The case of inappropriate use of verbal language as well as non-verbal content is inevitable since the gap between Indonesian culture and western culture is quite significant. Digital media expose language being used in real context of native or native-like communication and production. As the result, the culture carried by the platform is reasonably viewed to be both (or either) positive and negative. For example, some mild physical intimacy between a boy and a girl is considered normal in American or English culture but extremely taboo in Indonesian yet this kind of images and

texts still scattered around social media and internet. Some "naughty" words are also considered okay to be uttered by teenagers in western culture but not in ours. Furthermore, in Internet videos, Youtube channels and movies as well as some television programs, these kinds of behaviors were explicitly displayed repetitively for the participants to be exposed to in their daily lives.

This case was best highlighted by one of the participants saying more and more of her friends in social media were behaving erratically such as over-exposing themselves, tending to show precocious thoughts, which she believed as the impacts of social media from other countries users. When asked, she showed her friends' recent status and gave it to the researcher.

Figure 1. *Students' status in social media*

According to the participants, this type of behavior is inappropriate and they strongly opposed it. However, as in social media, the exposure is undetermined so they would see and be exposed to it anyway. This is thought to be prompted by the influence of global scale internet layout in which such behavior is seemingly seen as normal in the English speaking countries like in America but not for Indonesian teenagers. In this sense, according to some participants, English is used only to legitimize their thoughts in a way that it was coy and invited less brutal reactions or comments compared to the use of Indonesian language. Nevertheless when asked if they ever did at some points ever used that kind of language, some participants shyly admitted that they occasionally used somewhat light swearword such as "go to hell", "dammit" or "wtf" and "wth" (abbreviation) that were thought to be less vulgar and harmful socially.

From the copies of chats and social media pages above, it can be seen that the participants were inclined to use this type of language in communication. They stated that they used them strictly in informal context which indicated they did realize the difference of when to use this language and not (in this school, they wouldn't be acceptable). Additionally, there are reasons behind the use of benign curse words; it is strongly related to the strategies

the participants directly and indirectly use as language learners when exposed to digital media.

Discussion

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), communicative competence is a concept comprised of knowledge or competence and capacity for appropriate use of knowledge in a contextual communicative language. So, the nature of competence is not only the knowledge of a language but also the ability to use that knowledge in actual production. This concept is also relevant to the pioneering theory proposed by Hymes (1972) when the original idea of communicative competence was first introduced. Hymes (1972) claimed that competence should be respected as both knowledge of language and also the performance all at once.

In particular, communicative competence should be measured by several aspects, one of which is "Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails" (Hymes, 1972). This is what is seemingly the favorable part of digital media for language learners since they provide a place, medium or platform in which the ability to use the language is now possible in daily basis. With digital media, language learners can actually put their knowledge to use by participating actively on the discussion and communication through many different activities in digital media.

Bringing Hymes' theory (1972) to the phenomenon of digital media in which performance is what mostly determines the level of ones' communicative competence, the results of the research suggest that digital media play the utmost essential role in improving those competences by not only providing the constant exposure for language acquisition but also the platforms needed for the participants to exercise or perform those knowledge in an actual performance or production. This, according to the research, includes multiple activities in social media as well as varying English related platforms in the Internet such as commenting on blogs or Youtube, personal chat, forum chat and many others. In short, digital media create the opportunity of contextualizing use of English language through the many different platforms in which performance can be measured.

Breaking down Bachman and Palmer's (1996) theory of communicative competence by the influenced of digital media, the data suggest that the use of digital media (either consumption or production of language) does in fact have significant impacts on all aspects of the participants' communicative competences. However, what is quite interesting is how the participants perceived those three parts of communicative competences and the degree of the influences. We has to read between the lines to conclude that this order is mainly based on the idea and strongly associated with what the participants thought they learned less at schools.

The platforms of English language use in this case are strongly related to motivation. Motivation is also theoretically agreed to be one of the most prominent parts of language learning. It is understandably reasonable since the motivation is the driving force that can enhance the exercising of certain language in a significant manner. As mentioned by the participants, the personal-based interests promote by the digital media making it impossible for them not to be indulged in the phenomenon itself. The participants could individually

handpick based on their own personality work greatly in generating positive emotion of the participants thus making their motivation steadfastly linear. It is without doubt that the stronger their motivation, the more learning (or acquisition, for that matter) occurs. Although the motivations of actually using the English language in digital media are unique for each participant in way that they are interest-based (different for each participant), since there are literally numerous relatable activities that participants could choose to do from and in digital media, the typecast of the specialty here is no longer important. Digital media do not only indulge the participants with interesting content with language use but more importantly they encourage the participants tremendously to participate in the interest-based communities and certain social circle in which they are becoming a part of.

Conclusion

The result of the research suggests that there is an important experience of English exposure found and exercised by the participants from/in all the three digital media investigated in this research. This phenomenon was evident by the eloquence of the elaboration and exploration provided by the participants from the data during the interview. After confronting the experience of the phenomenon, it was also found that each aspect of communicative competence was affected direct/indirectly by the experience of constant exposure of English language. In regard to the intensity of the influence, the researchers may not fail to notice that the participants uniquely viewed the level of substantial influence of each communicative competence partially (if not mostly) based on what they felt lack of getting from formal settings.

It is to the researchers' realization that most language productions and performance exercised by the participants as the result of the influence of digital media were mostly analyzed from one form of data; written form. In fact the only speaking performance was observed by the researchers was exclusively done during a short period of interactions in the interview. Therefore, a conclusive statement that English exposure also influences the communicative competence in the form of spoken performance in particular may not be drawn. It will take another standalone investigation that includes prolong observation to cement that notion. However, since communicative competence was never specifically about certain set of skill, this research has answered the research questions based on given theory relevantly. This bridges us the suggestions for further research.

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