Exploring Teriary Students' Experience of Informal Digital Learning of English for Boosting English Receptive Skills

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ABSTRACT

The speed of technology development facilities students in learning English digitally. They could express and use English in an informal digital environment through social media and by learning English applications or resources. Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) contributes to students' language enhancement. This study tries to dig in about the use of digital learning of informal and independent learning of English. Therefore, this research aims to explore how IDLE activity can engage receptive skills in university students and to explore how IDLE receptive skill activity can develop university students' receptive skills. This study found that each individual can experience an increase in English receptive skills by going through the stages of learning using social media and English learning applications. IDLE-based learning can be built through the initiative and willingness of each individual because this learning is not tied to a specific schedule or material to be studied. Each individual can organize and determine how they learn according to their wishes.

Keywords: digital learning, informal learning, receptive skills, social media

INTRODUCTION

In this era, technology and digital are developing very rapidly. Lately, from young to old is close and familiar with digital media. The ease of developing technology makes it easier to help the learning process. One of the learning processes is to learn a language, and there is a new form of language learning in this digital era it can categorize as informal learning. The new format is Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE).

According to Lee & Lee (2019), they state that Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is autonomous English learning in the digital context of an extramural lesson of formal English classes. Another study conducted by Lee & Dressman (2018) states that the Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) concept is self-study using various digital devices (such as the use of gadgets, MP3 players, TVs, computers, etc.) and sources (such as the use of the web, internet, KaKaoTalk (a popular social network in Korea), Skype, Facebook, web apps, and online games) regardless of formal context.

The description of IDLE (Informal Digital Learning of English) is very suitable for digital media users, especially the young generation. The young generation can learn fun because they use digital media commonly used in everyday life. Digital learning is helpful in learning, mainly when doing as informally, such as the Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE). The students who apply IDLE (Informal Digital Learning of English) can make their learning process more manageable without feeling burdened. The learning process using IDLE (Informal Digital Learning of English) makes it easier for students to absorb learning material. Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) contributes to students' language enhancement. This study is want to dig in about the use of digital learning for informal and independent

learning of English. Therefore, this research aims to explore how IDLE activity can engage receptive skills in university students and to explore how IDLE receptive skill activity can develop university students' receptive skills. Previous findings suggest that participants of the research in the term of undergraduate students regarded the use of mobile phones as an effective way of language learning and also as a substitute for conventional language learning practices (Asad et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW
Informal Digital Learning of English

Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is an independent second language in a digital setting outside the classroom and is not connected to formal language guidance (Lee, 2020, p. 20). Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is growing along with the rapid use of technology and social media this day. Technology and social media have a positive impact on education. One is making it easier for students to access new knowledge that can be studied independently. According to Lee (2019), Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is independent English learning in the digital context of extramural lessons of formal English classes. Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) in extramural contexts is self-study, natural English digital learning in an unstructured environment outside the classroom, independent of a formal language program. For example, students can use their initiative to chat and interact with other English users on Facebook. According to (Lee & Dressman, 2018) state, the Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) concept is self-study using various digital devices (such as the use of gadgets, MP3 players, TVs, computers, etc.) and sources (such as the use of the web, internet, KaKaoTalk (a popular social network in Korea), Skype, Facebook, web apps, and online games) regardless of formal context.

According to Lee (2019), IDLE in extracurricular contexts is semi-structured, out-of-class, self-instructed, and self-directed digital learning of English that is still connected to a formal language program. However, on the contrary, IDLE in extramural contexts is unstructured, out-of-class, naturalistic, self-directed digital learning of English independent of a formal language program. Also, Lee (2019) states that self-directed English learning activities are done in out-of-class environments in informal digital learning, unstructured and not driven by a formal teacher. According to Miller & Wu (2018), unstructured learning through online media is relevant and significant to students' digital understanding as it is related to other students' lives, such as family, friends, and work. In their review of the use of the Internet and language learning. According to Sumuer (2018), self-directed learning is most likely to occur in learning contexts that support students in planning, implementing, and evaluating their learning processes using skills and attributes such as motivation, self-management, and self-control. According to Benson (2011), self-instruction and naturalistic learning, by definition, lie at both ends of the educational continuum across the classroom. In self-instruction, specially designed books, television, and radio shows act as facilitators and have a strong will to learn on the part of the learner. In contrast, in naturalistic learning, there are no instructions or specially designed materials and no intention to learn.

According to Hargie (2021), Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) can understand as an autonomous English activity in an extramural digital context. In this activity, students participate autonomously without being assessed by their language teacher. For example, EFL learners can casually read entertaining content (such as comics or travel literature) or interact with other English speakers on social media. Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) activities in this category are not formally structured and assessed. Digital media include computers, audio, and videotapes, TV, internet, corporate network, satellite broadcasting, and compact disks (Lin, et. al, 2017). They also state that Digital learning is exciting learning. The production of materials in self-learning has to cover more about media like pictures or sound than traditional learning to produce more exciting and lively teaching materials.

Receptive skills

According to Davies (1976), receptive skills consist of receptive reading skills and receptive aural skills (listening skills). Receptive listening skill is the potency to recognize the spoken language. Receptive listening skill is the capacity to comprehend communication in the language. On the other hand, receptive reading skills can help to understand texts of differing intricacy in a foreign language.

Listening is one of the forms of communication that people do daily. According to the survey, adults spend 45%-55% of their daily lives in communication. Listening is more than any other form of communication, such as speaking (Hargie, 2021). According to Rost (2011), listening is defined as a communication process that includes four types of orientation. The four types are receptive, constructive, collaborative, and transformative orientations. The first is "receptive orientation," which implies getting what the speaker is talking about. The second is "constructive orientation," which expresses and constructs the meaning. The third is "collaborative orientation," which means negotiating and responding to the speaker's meaning. The fourth is "transformative orientation," which creates meaning through complicity, empathy, and imagination. According to Lynch & Mendelsohn (2010), listening includes understanding communicated in language. It is typically accompanied by sound and other visual contributions, with the guide of recently acquired knowledge relevant to the context being listened to. According to Picard & Velautham (2016), listening is an essential skill in all areas of study. Effective listening is necessary for college students to understand formal lectures and tutorials and to interact with other students in small groups, during project work, and in social situations. Listening includes the understanding of the speaker's accents and pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and understanding their meaning. Listening opens up mentally and emotionally and makes them empathize with problems and concerns.

Reading is the process of learning something from what the reader has read and incorporating it into the academic context as part of education (Grabe, 2009). Reading is a process of conveying the message through words/written language. According to (Wahyono & Puspitasari (2015), reading is an important language skill for English foreign language (EFL) learners in Higher Education in digging up information as a reference and additional material for learning. According to Harrison (2004), the importance of reading relates not only to the development of knowledge but also to people's thinking ability. This ability supports the essential development of emotional, moral, and verbal intelligence. Reading skills include various skills that can permeate all parts of life. Having good reading comprehension skills enables one to interpret everything and find the meaning that has been read. During the reading skill is continuously improved, it will be able to develop the ability to communicate effectively through writing.

Despite the progress of literature in Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE), this study tries to dig into whether or to what extent IDLE activities can engage the English receptive skills in university students and explore how IDLE receptive skill activity can develop university students' receptive skills. Therefore, this study focuses on how the work of IDLE in university students utilizing their English receptive skills. This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do university students engage in receptive skills activities during Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE)?
2. How can Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) activity develop students' receptive skills?

METHOD

In this section, the researchers describe the methodology of this research. There are four sections presented, namely research method, research data, and subject, collecting data, analyzing data, and validating data.

Research Method

This research used qualitative research that used a case study. Qualitative research is built upon a different philosophical methodology, depending on which the individual and how the world is closely interconnected so it would not exist without the other (Ary et al., 2010). It sees social reality as something unique. The researchers must focus on the meaning of events to the people involved to understand human behavior. Qualitative research examines attitudes, behaviors, situations, and data quality. The focus is on understanding the context and explaining the intent of the action. Qualitative research uses non-randomized or purposeful selection methods based on specific criteria. Qualitative research learning behavior tends to naturally occur in a classroom, in a school, on playgrounds, or in an organization or community. According to Graue (2015), qualitative research is structured by the consideration of those who are the topic of the study. Qualitative data analysis is the process of describing, classifying, and interconnecting phenomena with research concepts.

Related to the purpose of this study, researchers used a case study. According to Gog (2015), case study research should use research questions that focus on explaining something by using the terms "how" and "why" questions. In addition, the case study method gains relevance because a more in-depth explanation and description are needed. According to Aczel (2015), case study research deals with certain situations where more variables are attractive than the obvious data points must be added. Therefore, it must be supplied from a plurality of different data sources to combine the data obtained by triangulation at several individual points. This is done with the help of pre-determined theoretical assumptions, which characterize the process of data collection and relevant analysis. In other words, case studies are a research strategy to realize a comprehensive approach, which includes design logic, data collection techniques, and an analytical approach.

Research Data and Subject

In this study, the type of data is verbal data, and the data sources are collected through interviews and recording. The subject of this study is sixteen students from English education majors in one of the universities in East Java. The participants were sixteen university students that obtained from different semester levels, including the 4th semester, 6th semester, and 8th semester. Some criteria selected the participants, and they proceeded to the interview stage. The participants are those who are social media users, who have used English on social media, who have ever written English on social media, watched English videos, listened to English audios, and used English application learning without any instruction.

Collecting Data

In collecting data, the researchers used interviews. In this research, the interview method was used to get data about the English major of college students' response to social media as an Informal Digital Learning of English. The interview is one of the most broadly involved techniques and the basis for getting qualitative data (Ary et al., 2010). The interview was used to collect data of people about their thought, feelings, and beliefs about the situation in their own words. The interview presents insight into the possible information about unexpected issues and the meaning of the event for people, including the data about the site and participants' points of view. The interview took by recording the data from participants. One of the most proficient methods of collecting data interviews is using an audio recorder. This is substantially less diverting than taking notes and presents a verbatim record of the responses.

The researchers conducted the interviewing in a focus group. A focus group such as a group interview generally focuses on a specific issue (Ary et al., 2010). Focus groups are helpful because they can connect the differences in points of view. The researcher gained insight into how participants think and why they think the other way around. Focus groups are more time, cost-efficient, and socially appropriate than individual interviews. It is also advantageous when a researcher works on a new topic or has little information. The topics and ideas expressed in focus groups assist the researcher in recognizing questions and other significant aspects of the occurrence that should be explored in their research.

According to Kellmereit (2015), the advantage of the focus group is that data can be collected more quickly at the same time with the use of fewer costs than conducting individual interviews. Another advantage is that focus groups allow the researcher to interact with respondents directly, which provides examples of chances for an explanation of responses.

Analyzing Data

According to Braun & Clarke (2012), thematic analysis is a method for efficiently distinguishing, organizing, and acquiring knowledge into patterns (themes) of significance in a data set. Thematic analysis sustain the researcher to see and understand the collective or shared meaning and impression. The thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify essential needs about the subject and the research question. According to Heriyanto (2018), there are several stages in conducting data analysis using thematic analysis, namely, understanding the data, coding, and determining a theme.

Validating Data

The researchers used triangulation the validating of data. Data triangulation determines whether the data collected by design or instrument can assert by the other data collection using a different design or instrument (Ary et al., 2010). The data validity was examined using data source triangulation. The data sources are EFL college students consisting of different academic semesters, which are 4th semester, 6th semester, and 8th semester in English education major, as well as interviews and recordings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected in this study was carried out by interviewing sixteen tertiary students' which was divided into eight parts interviews from different semesters, including the 4th semester, 6th semester, and 8th semester of English education major in Majapahit Islamic University.

Through analysis of thematics, this study found seven themes. The researchers found three themes in extramural learning, two themes in digital learning, and two themes in learning improvement. The themes in extramural learning consist of formality (unstructured), pedagogy (naturalistic), and locus of control (self-directed). The themes in digital learning consist of digital devices and digital media platforms. At the same time, the themes of learning improvement consist of English improvement and English receptive skills improvement. Each individual has their uniqueness and experience in their learning process towards informal digital learning of English. In the following sections, the experience and views of each theme from interview results will be presented.

Formality (Unstructured learning)

The results of interviews show that each subject produces different answers. Most answers from the interview results are answers by mentioning the study schedule in a week. The other answer from subjects mentioned that they learn English uncertainly, doing it in their free time or on weekends and based on their curiosity as well as their mood. The following are some statements of subjects:

"*I can say that I'm often doing too. For a span of about 2 to 3 times a week.*"
"*I do my independent learning of English is uncertain.*"
"*I have no schedule. Usually, if I have some free time, if I do not have any task or when I have free time, so usually like that. Usually, I watch YouTube and then search for vocabulary or grammar. I think it more when I had free time.*"
"*I do uncertain depend on my mood while studying. If my mood is not good, I worry that my studying will be disorganized. So, I studied when I'm in a good mood.*"

Based on all the statements above, it can be seen that each interview subject conducted learning in an unstructured way and based on their initiative.

Pedagogy (Naturalistic learning)

From the results of the subjects who were interviewed, there were several differences in their answers. The answer most mentioned by the subject is learning by finding meaning. Besides that, the other subjects mentioned during the interview are learning by taking notes or writing, memorizing, learning through digital media, and writing practice on social media. The following are some statements of subjects:

"*I usually do not know the meaning when I'm reading, when I find new vocabulary or sentences that I do not know I usually write on paper or a book and then remember it again.*"
"*I just memorize more, maybe if I get new vocabulary, or like how to correcting the grammar, I just memorize it.*"
"*I learn from listening to music and watching western movies.*"
"*..... I want my speaking skills improved, I try to consistent to open the application that I mention earlier (Cake application) to improve even more and also practice in speaking. .....*"
"*I usually prefer writing a caption. Because it is practically like there is a bit of confidence to write stuff like that. I usually make WhatsApp stories more often or maybe on Instagram. However, when I write captions, I usually make WhatsApp stories more often. Maybe I just doing something and then make a short caption in English, or maybe if I'm in the mood, usually I make a longer caption.*"

Based on all the statements above, it can be seen that each research subject in this interview applies a different way of learning without any instruction and specific materials. Besides that, their learning stages of English are also supported by the help of digital tools, which are digital media that follow the implementation of Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE).

Locus of Control (Self-directed learning)

From the interview results, it was found that each subject did informal learning, just like the definition of Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) itself. Each subject did informally and self-directed English learning. Even though they did the same thing, they had different answers. The subjects of the interviews mention the influence of digital media, artists, and friends. Besides that, some subjects also mentioned their goal and the way they learn related to their school stuff. The following are some statements of subjects from interviews stating that they were learning English independently due to the influence of digital media:

"*For me, because there is an event on television, one of them is the UN session. From that, there are representatives from each country, so I wonder "when my speaking can get better?" like that.*"
"*I like one of the boy groups from Korea, they are BTS. One member is pretty fluent in English, so I get my motivation to learn from that.*"

"*For me, it appears when I see someone or my friend who is good at public speaking and who is good at English, that is the point. Because of that, I'm motivated to learn. Because if other people can do it, I should be able to too.*"

"*I already studied English since I was in 1st grade of elementary school. I did my self-study since I was in elementary school. To be precise, what grade did I forget? I learned from the worksheets (LKS), and I tried to pronounce some things in English, like the names of objects in my class. However, my teacher is not explaining that thing yet.*"

"*For me, the initiative was formed because I have a dream to travel around the world. So I want to learn the language and the culture.*"

Some statements from the subjects above stated that they learn English based on Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE), which is carried out in a self-directed way, where the subjects can have the initiative, with or without the help of others, so that they can analyze their own learning needs, formulate their own learning goals, identify their sources learning, and can implement their appropriate learning strategies.

Digital Devices

The subject mentioned that almost most of them use cellphones and laptops. Nevertheless, there two of sixteen participants stated that they just used cell phones as digital devices for learning. Also, only one subject participant mentions using tablets as digital devices for learning. The following are some statements of subjects:

"*I use cellphone and laptop.*"

"*Usually for independent learning, I mostly use my phone.*"

"*Yes, me too. I use my phone because it is more flexible to carry it anywhere, and can be more practical.*"

"*I use cellphone, tablet or laptop.*"

From some of the statements above, it can be seen that the subject can use digital devices as a tool in English learning based on Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE).

Digital Media Platforms

The digital media platform is one of the crucial aspects of conducting IDLE-based learning. From the interview results, it was found that each subject mentioned different and varied digital media platforms, ranging from social media to English language learning applications. The most digital media platform used according by the subjects participants is YouTube. Besides that, the subject participants mentioned the digital media platforms they used, such as movies, Google, Instagram, music, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, English application learning, website, and digital news. The following are some statements:

"I *also study from watching Youtube.*"

"*Yes, I watch movies too. So it is like learning from the subtitle.*"

"*I most often use Google, especially from Google Scholar.*"

"*For the digital media platform itself, I use more on Instagram. There is much content like Kampung Inggris. It is usually shared like vocabulary. Moreover, also the grammar like this, and the example too. I also use Google Translate and Grammarly.*"

"*I use Spotify for independent learning of English.*"

"*....And one more is TikTok, there is a lot of creator content who shares about learning things or others, so I got my inspiration from there.*"

"*I mostly learn from Twitter.....*"

"*Usually I use Duolingo app to learn, and also Cake app. So I learn from those two apps.*"

"*.....I see foreign news like BBC.*"

From the statements of several subjects about IDLE-based learning above, it can be seen that each subject uses digital media well, from social media to English learning applications, so that it can help improve their English skills.

English Improvement

From the results of learning through IDLE, the subject stated an increase in their English skills. The subject participants of the interview stated that they get improvement in their English after doing independent informal digital learning of English. The most widely mentioned subject is pronunciation. Besides that, the subject also mentioned vocabulary enhancement, increasing grammar, English understanding, speaking skills, and writing skills. The following are some statements of subjects:

".....*my pronunciation is starting clear, and there are no Javanese accents.*"

"*I think I get a lot. The most I get from the application is vocabulary. Back then, I used to think like," what the meaning of this word?" so I looked for it in the dictionary and then,"Oh, it turns out like this, oh so all this time it means like this?". So I got a lot on vocabulary.*"

"*I learned about grammar.*"

"*At first, I still do not know anything, shallow knowledge, then thanks to social media, thanks to this application (Cake application), my knowledge, my skills are even better, not like before, it is better enough.*"

"*Compared to before. I used not to be able at all after I tried to learn English, my English skills have improved.*"

"*From the application, I can improve my speaking skills.*"

"*At first I do not understand English lessons especially speaking, now I can speak well.....*"

"*From Grammarly application itself, I know how to write in English after I do my exercise.*"

From the results of the subject's statement, it can be seen that their English skills have improved in several ways, such as in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary addition, understanding of grammar, improvement in speaking skills, understanding of how to write, and improvement from those who previously did not understand to understand English well.

English Receptive Skills Improvement

Subjects stated there was an increase in receptive skills from their IDLE-based learning outcomes. Receptive skills consist of listening skills and reading skills. Some subjects explained that there was an increase in both of their receptive skills. However, some subjects mentioned that their English Receptive Skills improved either in reading or listening skills. The following are subject statements:

"*I think it very influential. From watching movies or listening to music, we automatically listen to English native speakers more often. Maybe I can memorize more. Maybe there are some words when spoken by us, and native is different, automatically native's is better. Later we can imitate what the correct pronunciation looks like. So that can train my listening skills.*"

"*.....And also about the reading, I feel like I can understand if I know the meaning like "Oh, yesterday I remember the meaning of this word," it makes my reading fluent.*"

"*My reading and listening skill that I did not know before is getting better.*"

From the results of the subject's statement above, it can be seen that their English skills have increased in terms of receptive skills. Some of the subjects only improved in listening skills, some also improved in reading skills, and there was an increase in both aspects of receptive skills.

Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is English learning that is carried out outside the classroom informally with the help of digital devices or digital media as a learning process. Referring to Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) findings of (Lee, 2019), he classifies Informal digital learning of English (IDLE) into IDLE in extracurricular contexts and IDLE in extramural contexts. IDLE in extracurricular contexts can be defined as semi-structured, out-of-class, self-instructed, and self-directed digital learning of English. Otherwise, IDLE in extramural contexts is unstructured, out-of-class, naturalistic, and self-directed digital learning of English. In this study, it can be shown that participants apply IDLE-based learning in extramural contexts. It can be seen from the statements of participants from the interview results. The participants stated that they carried out learning independently, outside the classroom, using digital devices and digital media, and also carried it out randomly.

In the implementation of learning by applying IDLE-based learning, it can be seen that the participants learn outside of the classroom context. Although the participants did not explicitly mention the place of learning, it could be seen from how they learned. The participants said if they do learning in their free time or on weekends and without a specific binding schedule. These results from the interview related to Benson's theory of naturalistic learning, which states that naturalistic learning is no instructions or specially designed materials, and there is no intention to learn (Benson, 2011).

In the results of interviews conducted on 16 research subjects, they understood the concept of independent learning and carried out English learning independently and based on their wishes without any instruction or orders from their parents or lecturers. It can be seen from the statements of the subjects that this learning process is unstructured from their learning outcomes through digital media, either from social media or English learning applications. The result of the statement from the subject can link to Lee's idea that the state of Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE) is an independent second language in a digital setting outside the classroom and is not connected to formal language guidance (Lee, 2020).

The development of an increasingly progressive era makes students inseparable from digital devices and digital media. It can be shown in Informal digital learning of English (IDLE)-based learning, which is closely related to the use of digital devices and digital media. This can be seen in the subject's statements in their interview results. The research subjects in the interview mentioned the various kinds of digital media they use. The various kinds of digital media are the use of YouTube, Google, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, English application learning (Duolingo, Grammarly, Cake app, U-Dictionary, and Doctranslator), music (Spotify and Joox), movies, Netflix, internet, and digital news. From all of those media, it can be seen that digital things, either digital devices or digital media, can improve students' learning abilities and trigger their initiative learning.

The use of digital tools, including digital media and digital media platforms, can impact the development of learning a language in terms of learning English. The impact of digital learning can develop English skills in general, such as adding vocabulary and understanding grammar. Besides that, it also impacts receptive skills in the form of an increase in listening and reading English skills. This is also in line with the findings that suggest that participants of the research term of undergraduate students regarded the use of mobile phones as an effective way of language learning and also as a substitute for conventional language learning practices (Asad et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

In summary, university students engage in their receptive skills activities during Informal digital learning of English (IDLE) because of the help of digital tools, such as digital devices and digital media platforms. Besides that, how they learn, such as finding meaning, taking a note, memorizing, listening to music, watching movies, and using social media are the main factors that can engage in receptive skills during IDLE-based learning. The research also

showed that university students can develop their English receptive skills by going through the stages of learning using social media and English learning without instruction and independently. IDLE-based learning can be built through what students want, such as intention, willingness, and initiative to learn English can help them in the learning process. IDLE-based learning is not tied to a specific schedule or study material. Each individual can organize and determine how they learn according to their wishes.

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