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An Analysis of Students' Motivation Using Snapchat in Learning Reading

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Abstrak

Motivasi membaca merupakan salah satu faktor penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, terutama di tengah perkembangan teknologi digital yang menawarkan berbagai media pembelajaran interaktif. Snapchat sebagai platform media sosial memiliki fitur visual dan interaktif yang berpotensi meningkatkan ketertarikan mahasiswa terhadap aktivitas membaca. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis motivasi mahasiswa dalam menggunakan Snapchat untuk pembelajaran membaca bahasa Inggris serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi motivasi tersebut. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran (mixed methods) dengan desain sequential explanatory. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner berskala Likert yang melibatkan 31 mahasiswa dan wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap lima partisipan dari Universitas Mataram dan Universitas Indonesia. Data kuantitatif dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif berupa persentase, sedangkan data kualitatif dianalisis secara tematik berdasarkan Self-Determination Theory, yang mencakup otonomi, kompetensi, dan keterhubungan sosial. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 71,9% responden menyatakan lebih termotivasi membaca menggunakan Snapchat, sementara 84,4% merasa lebih antusias belajar membaca karena karakteristik platform yang menyenangkan. Temuan wawancara menunjukkan bahwa konten visual, kebebasan memilih materi, kemudahan memahami teks, dan interaksi sosial mendukung motivasi intrinsik mahasiswa, sedangkan motivasi ekstrinsik memiliki peran yang relatif lebih kecil. Penelitian

ini menyimpulkan bahwa Snapchat berpotensi menjadi media pembelajaran alternatif yang mendukung motivasi dan keterlibatan mahasiswa dalam aktivitas membaca bahasa Inggris.
Kata kunci: Snapchat; motivasi membaca; pembelajaran bahasa Inggris; motivasi intrinsik; metode campuran.

Abstract

Reading motivation plays an important role in English language learning, particularly in the digital era, when interactive technologies provide alternative learning opportunities. Snapchat, as a social media platform, offers visual and interactive features that may encourage students to engage in English reading activities. This study aimed to analyze university students' motivation to use Snapchat for learning English reading and identify the factors influencing their motivation. A mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design was employed. Data were collected through a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 31 university students and semi-structured interviews with five participants from the University of Mataram and the University of Indonesia. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly percentages, while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis guided by Self-Determination Theory, focusing on autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The findings revealed that 71.9% of respondents reported feeling more motivated to read when using Snapchat, while 84.4% expressed greater enthusiasm for reading because of the platform's enjoyable features. Interview findings indicated that visual content, freedom to select reading materials, accessible texts, and social interaction supported students' intrinsic motivation, whereas extrinsic motivational factors played a relatively smaller role. The study concluded that Snapchat has potential as an alternative learning medium for supporting university students' motivation and engagement in English reading activities.
Keywords: Snapchat; reading motivation; English language learning; intrinsic motivation; mixed methods.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the essential skills in English language learning, as it enables students to acquire information, develop vocabulary, improve language comprehension, and engage with various forms of written communication. However, maintaining students' interest and motivation in reading English texts remains a

challenge, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts where students may have limited opportunities to interact with English outside the classroom. In Indonesia, concerns regarding reading habits have encouraged educators to explore alternative approaches that make reading activities more accessible, enjoyable, and relevant to students' everyday experiences. Motivation plays an important role in this process because students who are interested in reading are more likely to participate actively and maintain their engagement with learning materials. According to Deci and Ryan (2020), motivation can be understood through intrinsic and extrinsic factors, in which intrinsic motivation involves personal interest, curiosity, and enjoyment, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by external rewards, expectations, or social encouragement. From the perspective of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), students' motivation is closely associated with the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2020). These motivational dimensions provide a useful foundation for understanding how students engage with English reading activities, particularly when learning takes place through digital platforms that allow greater flexibility, interaction, and personal choice.

The increasing integration of digital technology into education has created new opportunities for supporting language learning beyond conventional classroom environments. Social media platforms, in particular, offer accessible spaces where students can encounter authentic language, communicate with others, and participate in informal learning activities. Greenhow and Lewin (2016) explained that social media can connect formal and informal learning experiences by providing opportunities for communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. Similarly, Manca and Ranieri (2016) highlighted the educational potential of social networking platforms while emphasizing the importance of considering how their features are integrated into learning practices. Among these platforms, Snapchat offers distinctive possibilities through its combination of short visual messages, interactive communication, stories, captions, and creative features such as Bitmoji. These features may encourage students to engage with brief English texts in a more relaxed

and familiar digital environment. For example, reading captions, following stories, interpreting written messages, and communicating with international users may provide opportunities for incidental exposure to English vocabulary and expressions. From a motivational perspective, the freedom to select interesting content may support autonomy, the ability to understand short English messages may strengthen perceived competence, and communication with friends may promote relatedness. Nevertheless, the educational value of Snapchat cannot be assumed solely from its popularity or interactive features, since students may experience the platform differently depending on their learning interests, digital habits, and purposes for using social media.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between social media and English language learning, suggesting that digital platforms may provide opportunities to support students' engagement and motivation. Al Fadda's study on Instagram and Snapchat in English language learning discussed the potential of mobile social media applications in TESOL classroom activities, while Akpan's research explored the broader relationship between social media use and motivation to learn English as a global language. Similarly, Pujiati, Zahra, and Tamela investigated Instagram as a medium for supporting students' motivation and competence in English learning. Research discussed by Al Harbi also considered the use of YouTube and Snapchat in relation to EFL learners' listening comprehension. Although these studies provide useful perspectives on social media-assisted language learning, their primary concerns differ from the specific focus of the present research. Existing discussions have generally addressed English learning motivation, classroom engagement, language competence, or listening activities rather than examining students' motivation to read English through Snapchat. Furthermore, the relationship between Snapchat's interactive features and the psychological dimensions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness remains insufficiently explored within the specific Indonesian university context considered in this study. This creates a contextual and conceptual research gap concerning how students perceive Snapchat as a medium for English reading and how their experiences reflect

intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Investigating this issue is important because students' enjoyment of social media does not necessarily indicate that they are motivated to engage in meaningful English reading activities.

The present study aimed to analyze students' motivation in using Snapchat for learning English reading, focusing on their experiences, perceptions, and reflections on the platform's contribution to reading engagement. Specifically, the study examined how Snapchat's visual and interactive features were perceived to influence students' interest, enjoyment, confidence, and willingness to read English content. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020), the investigation considered intrinsic and extrinsic motivation alongside the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The research involved university students from the University of Mataram and the University of Indonesia who used Snapchat for English reading activities. By combining questionnaire responses and semi-structured interviews, the study sought to develop a contextual understanding of students' motivational experiences rather than establish a direct causal relationship between Snapchat use and reading achievement. The findings were expected to contribute to discussions of social media-assisted language learning by providing insights into how a visually oriented social networking platform may support English reading motivation. In practical terms, the study may also help English language educators understand students' preferences for digital reading experiences and consider how familiar social media environments can complement existing approaches to teaching and learning English.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach with a sequential explanatory design to investigate students' motivation in using Snapchat for learning English reading. In this design, quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data to provide a deeper explanation of the initial findings. This approach enabled the researcher to identify general patterns of students' motivation and explore their experiences and perceptions in greater detail (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The study involved 31 university students who completed the questionnaire and five participants who took part in follow-up interviews. The participants were students from the University of Mataram (UNRAM) and the University of Indonesia (UI) who actively used Snapchat, including for English reading activities. The research focused on students' reading motivation, particularly their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, as well as the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Data were collected using two instruments: a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale and was distributed online through Google Forms to examine students' experiences, motivation, perceptions of Snapchat features, and perceived reading development. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted through telephone calls with five participants to obtain more detailed information about their experiences. Each interview lasted approximately 10–15 minutes, was recorded with participants' consent, and was transcribed for analysis. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed participants to explain their experiences while maintaining the focus of the investigation (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021).

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly response frequencies and percentages, which were presented in tables and pie charts to identify motivational tendencies. Meanwhile, qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis by reviewing interview transcripts, identifying recurring patterns, organizing relevant information into themes, and interpreting participants' responses. This process was consistent with the principles of thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2022). The analysis focused on intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, autonomy, competence, relatedness, and students' perceptions of Snapchat as a reading medium. Finally, questionnaire and interview findings were compared through methodological triangulation to strengthen the interpretation of the results and provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' reading motivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Participants and Data Overview

The study employed a mixed-methods approach involving 31 university students who completed a questionnaire and five participants who participated in semi-structured interviews. The participants were Snapchat users from the University of Mataram and the University of Indonesia. Most were female English education students in their third to fifth semesters, with reported ages generally ranging from 21 to 23 years.

The questionnaire examined students' Snapchat usage habits, reading motivation, perceptions of interactive features, and perceived development in English reading. The interviews provided additional explanations of participants' experiences and motivational factors.

Students' Motivation and Perceptions of Snapchat

The questionnaire findings generally revealed positive perceptions of Snapchat as a supplementary medium for English reading. Students particularly valued its entertaining content, interactive presentation, and accessibility.

Table 1. Selected Questionnaire Findings on Snapchat-Assisted English Reading

Indicator	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Total positive (%)
Using Snapchat to read English content	59.4	21.9	81.3
Finding Snapchat content interesting	46.9	31.3	78.2
Feeling more motivated to read	59.4	12.5	71.9
Enjoying reading because Snapchat is fun	46.9	37.5	84.4
Using Snapchat because of content interest	67.5	18.8	86.3*

Finding Snapchat features helpful for comprehension	56.3	25.0	81.3
Finding English content easy to understand	68.8	15.6	84.4
Perceiving improvement in reading skills	43.8	21.9	65.7
Feeling more confident reading English	59.4	18.8	78.2

Positive percentages are sums of the two agreement categories. The 86.3% value is reproduced, but the percentages for that item are internally inconsistent and require checking against the original questionnaire responses.

The results suggest that students' interest and enjoyment were important motivational factors. For example, 84.4% showed greater excitement about learning reading because Snapchat was enjoyable, while 81.3% considered its features helpful for understanding reading materials.

Moreover, 65.7% perceived improvements in their reading skills, and 78.2% increased confidence. These findings indicate favorable perceptions of Snapchat-assisted reading, although they do not independently establish measurable improvements in reading proficiency.

Interview Findings

The interviews revealed four major themes: enjoyment and curiosity, visual engagement, repeated exposure to English, and limitations in academic reading.

Table 2. Summary of Major Interview Findings

Theme	Main finding	Supporting evidence
Intrinsic motivation	Short and interesting content encouraged voluntary reading.	Oci and Mila described Snapchat reading as engaging and less boring.
Interactive features	Visuals, quizzes, and multimedia content supported	Mila appreciated interactive quizzes, while Oci emphasized

	interest and contextual understanding.	the usefulness of pictures and videos.
Reading exposure and confidence	Regular exposure to everyday English increased some students' perceived familiarity and confidence.	Mila becoming more comfortable with short English texts and encountering new vocabulary.
Limitations and distraction	Brief content and visual distractions could discourage deeper reading.	Penta showed limited motivation and difficulty concentrating on substantial texts.

The qualitative findings supported the generally positive questionnaire results but also revealed important differences among participants. Oci and Mila considered Snapchat's short texts and multimedia features useful for maintaining reading interest. Mila also showed that regular exposure to English captions and stories helped her become more comfortable with everyday English expressions.

In contrast, Penta expressed reservations about Snapchat's educational value, explaining that its short-form content and visual distractions could interfere with deeper reading. This contrasting experience indicates that Snapchat's motivational benefits were not uniform across participants. Overall, the interviews suggest that Snapchat was more suitable for informal reading engagement than for sustained academic reading.

Discussion

The findings indicated that intrinsic motivation was an important factor in students' engagement with English reading through Snapchat. The high positive responses concerning enjoyment (84.4%), content interest, and reading motivation (71.9%) suggest that students were encouraged to read primarily because they found the content interesting and enjoyable. Interview responses reinforced this interpretation, as participants described Snapchat reading as less intimidating and more entertaining than conventional reading activities.

These findings can be interpreted through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the importance of psychological need satisfaction in developing autonomous motivation. Ryan and Deci (2020) explain that learning environments supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness can encourage more self-determined forms of motivation. In the present study, students' freedom to select content according to their interests reflected autonomy, while their confidence in understanding short English texts suggested perceived competence.

The results were also consistent with Al Fadda (2020), whose research on Instagram and Snapchat in English language learning highlighted the potential of social media to support engagement. Nevertheless, the present findings concerned students' motivation rather than experimentally established improvements in reading performance.

Snapchat's interactive and visual features were another important factor associated with students' reading experiences. Approximately 81.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Snapchat's features helped them understand reading materials, while 84.4% perceived English content on the platform as easy to understand. These results suggest that students considered short texts, images, videos, and other contextual elements helpful for accessing English reading content.

Within SDT, these perceptions relate particularly to competence, which refers to learners' sense of effectiveness in performing learning activities (Ryan & Deci, 2020). When students encounter manageable reading materials accompanied by contextual visual information, they may feel more capable of understanding the text and become more willing to continue reading.

The findings also correspond with Greenhow and Lewin (2016), who discuss how social media connects formal and informal learning environments. In this context, Snapchat may provide opportunities for incidental English reading outside classroom instruction. However, participants' perceptions of easier comprehension should not be interpreted as evidence that the platform improves comprehension across different text types or proficiency levels.

The results further showed that 78.2% of respondents reported increased confidence in reading English after using Snapchat, whereas 65.7% perceived improvements in their reading skills. These findings indicate that repeated encounters with short English texts may have contributed to students' perceived familiarity with English vocabulary and expressions.

The interview findings provided additional support for this interpretation. Mila is becoming more comfortable with English texts through repeated exposure and encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, including informal expressions. This experience suggests that Snapchat can provide incidental language-learning opportunities through everyday communication and entertainment.

From the perspective of SDT, increased perceived competence may contribute to students' willingness to engage in further reading (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Similarly, the distinction between formal and informal learning discussed by Greenhow and Lewin (2016) helps explain how students may encounter language-learning opportunities through ordinary social media activities.

Nevertheless, the study did not include standardized reading tests or pre-test and post-test comparisons. Therefore, the improvements should be understood as students' subjective perceptions rather than confirmed gains in reading proficiency.

Although most questionnaire responses were positive, the interviews demonstrated that Snapchat did not benefit all students equally. Penta showed that the platform's brief and visually stimulating content could distract attention from written texts and discourage sustained reading. Other participants also considered Snapchat more suitable for entertainment and casual learning than for academic reading. These findings highlight an important distinction between reading motivation and reading depth. Students may enjoy engaging with short English captions, stories, or conversations without necessarily developing the sustained concentration required for lengthy academic texts. This interpretation is consistent with the broader discussion of social media in education by Greenhow and Lewin (2016), which recognizes the relationship between informal digital practices and structured educational activities. Consequently, Snapchat may be more appropriately

integrated as a supplementary resource for encouraging reading interest, vocabulary exposure, and informal engagement, while conventional reading materials remain necessary for more demanding academic tasks.

The questionnaire and interview findings suggest that Snapchat was positively associated with students' self-motivation to read English. Enjoyment, content choice, interactive presentation, and repeated exposure to short English texts emerged as the principal factors explaining these favorable perceptions. These experiences can be interpreted through SDT, particularly the psychological needs for autonomy and competence, while Snapchat's social interactions may also provide opportunities for relatedness. However, the findings also demonstrate that positive motivation does not necessarily translate into measurable reading improvement. Differences in students' preferences, attention, and reading purposes influence how useful Snapchat is perceived to be. These findings could be interpreted alongside the studies conducted by Hanan and Tawali (2024), Tawali (2024), and Firman and Sudirman (2026). Collectively, these studies highlighted the potential importance of learner engagement, appropriate instructional media, and meaningful learning activities in English education. While cooperative learning supported reading interest, mobile learning applications offered opportunities for vocabulary development, and AI-assisted tools facilitated critical reading instruction

Thus, Snapchat appears to offer greater potential as a supplementary informal reading medium than as a replacement for structured academic reading instruction.

Another important finding was students' willingness to continue using Snapchat for English reading. The questionnaire showed that 93.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they intended to continue using the application for reading activities. Furthermore, 81.2% considered Snapchat suitable as a reading-learning medium, and 71.9% showed that content encountered on Snapchat encouraged them to explore topics further. These findings suggest that Snapchat was not merely perceived as entertaining but also as a potentially sustainable resource for informal reading activities. From the perspective of SDT, continued

engagement may be associated with learners' autonomous interest in activities that provide enjoyment and perceived competence (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The opportunity to select personally relevant content may encourage students to engage in English reading without relying exclusively on academic assignments or external rewards.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Snapchat positively contributes to students' motivation in learning English reading, particularly by encouraging intrinsic motivation through interesting, visual, and interactive content. The findings indicate that students feel more interested, enthusiastic, and confident when engaging with English reading materials on Snapchat. Its features provide opportunities for students to select content based on their interests, understand short English texts, and interact with other users.

Based on Self-Determination Theory, Snapchat supports three motivational aspects: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Intrinsic motivation, particularly enjoyment and personal interest, plays a more prominent role than extrinsic motivation. Therefore, Snapchat serves as a potentially useful supplementary medium for encouraging students' engagement in English reading. However, the findings reflect students' perceptions and experiences rather than objectively measured improvements in reading proficiency.

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