THE USE OF INSTAGRAM AS MEDIA TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS

Novita Mulyana

English Department, Faculty of Humanities

Udayana University

Denpasar, Indonesia

e-mail address: novitamulyana@unud.ac.id

Abstract

As the rapid of growth of technology, social media has become essential to human life. Social media has many roles, it can provide entertainment, it can be the channel of communication, and currently becomes media of teaching and learning including teaching and learning English language. One of the famous social media used as media of English language learning and teaching is Instagram as it provides many features that enable us to use it in the learning process. This library research study is aimed to provide general overview of how Instagram, as social media, can be utilized as media in language teaching and learning process as well as how effective it is in improving students' language skills. The data used in this study are secondary data, taken from previous studies conducted by researchers in relation to the topic. The results of the study show that Instagram has been widely used as media of language teaching and learning. It is proven effective in improving students' language skill, especially writing skills. In addition, based on several previous studies conducted, the use of Instagram is proven capable of improving students' positive attitudes and motivations towards learning for various reason.

Keywords – *Instagram, language skills, learning, media*

Introduction

The developments of technology have had positive impacts on various aspects of human life, one of which is in the field of communication. Nowadays, communication can be done easily without boundaries. In other words, we can easily communicate with anyone from various places and at any time. This unlimited communication is certainly very beneficial for humans in everyday life. Technological developments in the field of communication are also very rapid. Starting from the discovery of telephone, it developed to communication via short messages, and has now developed further to, the most popular platform of communication, social media.

Nowadays, various social media platforms are also developing very rapidly, one of which is Instagram. This social media is a photo and video sharing platform. However, it is not limited to just photos, Instagram has developed into a communication medium because this platform allows users to add information to uploaded photos. Users can also freely upload various types of photos and information except those which contain pornographic or violent elements. This platform also allows its users to communicate with other users through its various features. Instagram's various interesting features make it becomes one of the most favorite social media by all generations, starting from teenagers and adults. In Indonesia,

quoting from the goodstats.id website, Instagram is the social media platform with the second most users. Of the total social media users in Indonesia, 86.5% of them use Instagram. The users are mostly in the age range of 16 to 64 years.

The popularity of Instagram as a communication medium, especially for the younger generation, has made it considered to be learning medium as well, including in teaching English. Sanusi, et.al. (2021) shows that Instagram can be used as an English learning medium by explaining various Instagram features that can be used by teachers. Hargita (2019) stated that Instagram can be used as a language learning medium based on blended learning strategies. Various other studies have also been conducted to show the use of Instagram in language learning activities.

This study was carried out with the aim of providing a general review of the use of Instagram as a language learning medium, especially English, based on various research that has been conducted previously. This includes providing a review regarding the effectiveness of using Instagram as an English language learning medium as well as its relation to students' motivation and attitudes in the learning process. It is hoped that this study will be able to provide benefits for English language teachers by providing an overview of the things mentioned above and the development of social media as language learning medium.

Methods

This study is a library research and descriptive-qualitative study. The data used in this study was secondary data, meaning that the data was taken from researches that has been conducted by other researchers. The data source of this study was research articles related to the topic of the study, which is the use of Instagram as English language learning media. In collecting the data, documentation method was utilized. The first step in data collection procedure was selecting research articles relevant to the topic. The research articles were collected and downloaded from internet. After having sufficient articles related to the topic, each article was read thoroughly and note taking technique was involved in this process. Relevant information related to the research questions formulated in this study was noted down. The next process was analyzing the data by using the theory of language learning and teaching as well as learning motivation. The result of the analysis was presented descriptively using words/sentences. The following graphic, Figure 1, shows the procedure of the data collection and data analysis.
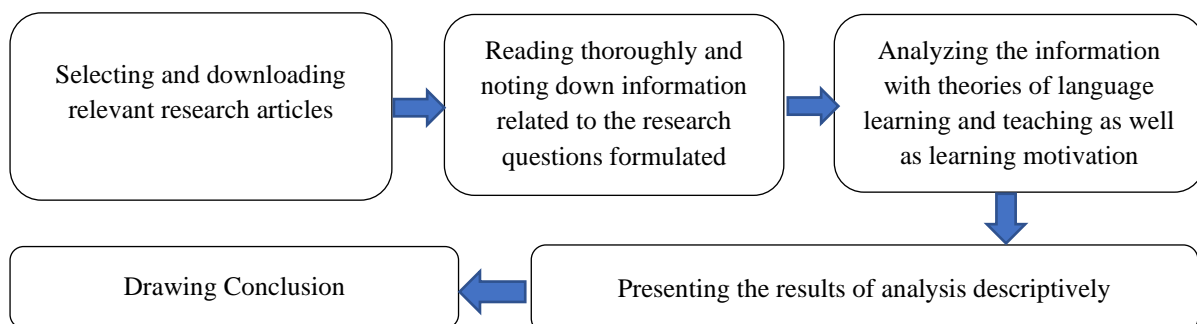

Figure 1. Graphic of Data Collection and Data Analysis

Finding and Discussion

Based on the analysis results, it was found that Instagram is one of the social media that is often used as a language learning media to improve students' language skills. This section will review the use of Instagram as an English language learning media and its effectiveness in improving students' language skills.

Language Learning Media

Before discussing the use of Instagram as an English learning media, it is important to first understand what is meant by learning media. Kemp (1977) defines learning media as tools or supporting materials in the learning process that can motivate students and are able to effectively explain and illustrate learning content. Arsyad (2011) defines media as a tool that is able to deliver messages or information from the learning process. Pulungan (2021) explains that learning media are all forms of learning aids that are used to stimulate students' thoughts, feelings, attention and skills so that the learning process can run smoothly.

Hamalik (1994) emphasized that learning media in a learning process should be able to encourage students' interest in learning so that they are stimulated to actively participate in the learning process. Learning media is used to enable students to learn quickly so that the objectives of the learning process can be achieved (Sardiman, 2008; Rahma, et.al., 2019; Ray, et.al, 2020). Therefore, it can be concluded that there are several important points in the definition of learning media, namely (1) learning media is any form of tool that can convey the content of learning material to students, (2) learning media is able to encourage students' interest in actively participating in the learning process, and (3) learning media is used to enable students to quickly understand the learning content so that learning objectives can be achieved well.

In the context of language learning, the selection and use of learning media is of course related to the objectives of language learning itself, which in general is to improve students' language skills. In language learning, there are four basic language skills that a language learner must master, namely writing, listening, reading and speaking. Therefore, in a language learning process, the learning media used should be aimed at improving one, several or even all forms of the language skills.

Instagram as English Language Learning Media

As previously stated, through technological developments in communication and the emergence of social media as one of the people's favorite communication media, Instagram has become one of the media for language learning, especially English. Sanusi, et al (2021) explain that Instagram is a social media application used to share photos. He further stated that photos uploaded by its user can be seen by the user's followers. In addition, the photo owners and other users can send comments to each other on photos that have been uploaded.

Instagram has various main menus and features that allow it to be used as an English learning media. The main menus on Instagram include *take photo, home page, news, feed, and popular* (Atmoko, 2012; Hargita, 2019). Several Instagram features that can be used as learning media include the *live broadcast feature, quiz feature, direct message feature, highlight feature*, and *image upload feature* (Hargita, 2019; Sanusi, et.al., 2021).

These various Instagram features can be used as a medium to improve students' English language skills. To practice listening skills, teachers can use the video or reels feature on Instagram, by uploading videos or even using videos in English that are available in the news/search menu. In this menu, various interesting topics can also become reference for teaching materials for students (Aloraini, 2018; Sanusi, et.al., 2021). In order to improve speaking skill, teachers can use the story, live or reels features as a medium for students to practice their speaking skills. Mansor, et al (2017) in Sanusi, et.al. (2021) added that the photo feature can also be used by teachers to stimulate students to practice speaking skill, namely by selecting one of photos from Instagram and asking the students to describe the photo.

Not only for practicing listening and speaking skills, Instagram can also be used as media for practicing reading and writing skills. For reading skills, teachers can use photo features and comment sections (Sanusi, et.al., 2021). Nowadays, many Instagram accounts upload content in the form of text via the photo feature and because it is a social media used by people around the world, English language content is quite easy to find. Likewise, to improve writing skills, teachers can use the caption feature or comment section. In the caption feature, students can write information in the form of paragraphs or short text related to photos uploaded to Instagram. Sholikhah, et.al. (2019) in their research used Instagram to teach students to write recount text. In the research, they used the story feature to upload an example of recount text, then asked students to observe the example. After that, students were asked to write a recount text and upload it to each student's Instagram account.

Effectiveness of using Instagram as English Language Learning Media

Previous studies have shown that using Instagram as an English learning media can effectively improve students' language skills. Soviyah, et.al. (2018) found that Instagram, in the experimental research they carried out, was able to effectively improve students' descriptive text writing skills as evidenced by the higher post-test scores of experimental class students compared to the control class. Research by Sholikhah, et.al. (2019) shows that using Instagram as a learning media can effectively improve students' recount text writing skills. Nurdiansyah, et.al. (2020), through their experimental research, found that there were significant differences in descriptive text writing skills between groups of students who received treatment compared to the control group. Handayani (2017) also stated that students felt that writing on Instagram was faster than writing on paper.

Using Instagram can also effectively improve students' reading skills. Putri, et.al. (2021), in their research instructed students to read text via Instagram. After reading the text, students are given a number of questions to test students' comprehension of the text they have read previously. The results of the research show that by using Instagram, students' reading skill was improved significantly. Apart from that, according to Moshidi, et.al. (2019), using Instagram as a media for learning English, especially in reading activities, can improve students' reading habits.

The similar results were also showed in listening and speaking skills. Agustin, et.al. (2021) argues that the use of Instagram in teaching English is also impactful in improving students' listening skill. In her research which utilized several Instagram accounts that share information through videos showed that the students agreed that doing so has improved their listening skill. Mahmudah, et.al. (2019), in her research also showed that using Instagram as

learning media was proven to improved students' speaking skill. In her experiment, it was found that there was difference result between the average students speaking test in pre and post-test, in which students in experimental class got higher mark than the control group. In other words, the treatment (using Instagram as learning media) has affected the students' speaking ability.

Its Relation to Students' Motivation and Attitude towards English Language Learning

Many experts argue that motivation and attitude are two key factors that contribute to a successful leaning process (Gardner, 2007; Fakeye, 2010). Learning motivation is defined as the reason or causes of someone's willingness to learn or to engage in learning activities (Pariwat, 2020). Dornyei (1998) classifies to types of learning motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. He further explains that intrinsic motivation deals with inner drive that cause someone want to engage in learning activities, while extrinsic motivation refers to external drive that makes someone want to involve in learning activities. Meanwhile, attitude refers to learner's responses or perspective towards the particular setting of the learning process.

Previous researches show that the use of Instagram in English language learning also has improved students' motivation in learning English and most of students performed positive attitudes towards its use in the learning process for two main reasons. The very first reason is because of Instagram's easy accessibility. Most of students involved in the researches agreed that Instagram is easy to access (Akhiar, et.al., 2017; Handayani, 2017). The second reason is that Instagram helps to promote their interest in the four basic skills as well as encourage them to improve their confidence and language skills (Vianty, et.al., 2014; Pujiati, et.al., 2019; Utomo et.al., 2020; Mahmudah, et.al., 2019; Devi, et.al., 2020; Anggraeni, 2017; Handayani, 2017)

Conclusions

In conclusion, Instagram as a social media, not only is useful in the field of communication, is also beneficial in the field of education. It has been proven effective to be utilized as learning media especially in teaching and learning English language. Its menus and features enable English language teachers to develop fun and innovative ways of learning English to improve students' language skills. Moreover, the use of Instagram as English language learning media has also proven to motivate students in learning English and gained positive attitude from the students. Two main reasons are because of its accessibility and ability to foster students' interest and confidence in improving students' English language skills.

References

Agustin, R.W., & Ayu, M. (2021). The Impact of Using Instagram for Increasing Vocabulary and Listening Skill. *Journal of English Language and Teaching (JELTL),* 2(1), 1 – 7.

Akhiar, A., Mydin, A., & Kasuma, S.A.A. (2017). Students' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards the Use of Instagram in English Language Writing. *Malaysian Journal of Leaning and Instruction (MJLI), Special Issue of Graduate Research on Education,* 47 – 72.

Aloraini, N. (2018). Investigating Instagram as an EFL Tool. *Arab World English Journal,* 4, 174 – 184.

Anggraeni, C.W. (2017). Students Perspective Toward the Use of Instagram in Writing Class. *Proceeding of the 1st English Language and Literature International Conference (ELLiC),* 68 – 74.

Arsyad, A. 2011. *Media Pembelajaran.* Jakarta: Rajawali Press

Atmoko, Bambang Dwi. 2012. *Instagram Handbook.* Jakarta: Media Kita

Devi, P., Virgiana, B., & Auli, M. Instagram: How Do Students View on It in Speaking Classroom. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris,* 7(2), 351 – 362.

Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching, 31*(3), 117-135.

Fakeye, D. O. (2010). Students' personal variables as correlates of academic achievement in English as a second language in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences, 22*(3), 205-211.

Gardner, R. C. (2007). *Motivation and second language acquisition.* Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.

Hamalik, (1994). *Media Pendidikan.* Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti.

Handayani, F. (2017). Students Attitudes Toward Using Instagram in Teaching Writing. *Jurnal Educative: Journal of Educational Studies,* 2(1), 23 – 29.

Hargita, B.S. (2019). Instagram sebagai Inovasi Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Berbasis Blended Learning: Kajian Pendahuluan. *Prosiding Sembadra Universitas Sriwijaya,* 2(1), 213 – 218

Kemp, J. E. (1977). *Instructional Design.* Belmont, California: David S. Lake Publishers.

Mahmudah, R., & Ardi, H. (2019). The Use of Instagram Platform Toward Junior High School Students' Speaking Ability. *Advances in Social Science, Education, and Humanities Research,* 411, 364 – 369.

Moshidi, A., Embi, M.A., & Hashim, H. (2019). Instagram Application: An Active Tool in Cultivating Reading Behaviour. *Journal of Information System and Technology Management,* 4(1), 95 – 106.

Nurdiansyah, A., & Abdulrahman, T.R. (2020). The Use of Instagram to Develop Students' Writing Ability. *Jurnal Akademika,* 9(1), 97 – 107.

Pariwat. (2020. Motivation and Attitude towards English Language Learning in Thailand: A Large-Scale Survey of Secondary School Students. *rEFLections,* 27 (2), 140 – 161.

Pujiati, H., Zahra. & Tamela, E. (2019). The Use of Instagram to Increase Students' Motivation and Students' Competence in Learning English. *Advances in Social Science, Education, and Humanities Research,* 355, 651 – 656.

Pulungan, A.H. (2021). The Use of Interactive Learning Media for Teachers in Rural Areas. *Budapesr International Research and Critics in Linguistics and Education Journal,* 4(1), 524 – 532

Putri, R.D.F., Hadi, M.S., & Mutiarani. (2021). The Efficacy of Instagra, @Gurukumrd as the Media in Improving Students' Reading Skills. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching,* 9(3), 350 – 355.

Rahma, S. et. al. (2019). Packaging Audio Visual Media in Tatak Tintoa Serser in Learning of Dairi Dance. *Britain International of Linguistics Arts and Education (BIoLAE) Journal,* Vol.1 No.2, pp.153-159.

Ray, S. A. et. al. (2020). The Quality of E-Learning Based on Learning Media Using Moodle LMS on Text of Observation Reports of Grade 10th Students of Vocational School Telkom Shandy Putra Medan *Britain International of Linguistics, Arts and Education (BIoLAE) Journal* Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 688-699.

Sanusi, A.P., Safitri, D.S., & Sabar, S. (2021). Instagram As Media and Tool in English Language Teeaching. *Palakka: Media and Islamic Communication,* 2(1), 11 – 19.

Sardiman, A. M. (2008). *Interaksi dan Motivasi Belajar Mengajar*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Perkasa.

Sholikhah, S., Syafei, M., & Utari, A.R.P. (2019). The Use of Instagram as a Media to Teach Students' Writing Recount Text. *Prominent Journal,* 2(2), 148 – 159.

Soviyah & Etikaningsih, D.R. (2018). Instagram Use to Enhance Ability in Writing Descriptive Texts. *Indonesian EFL Journal,* 4(2), 32 - 38

Utomo, A., & Bastiar, I. (2020). The Use of Instagram to Improve English Literature Students' Self-Confidence in Mastering Speaking Skill. *Jurnal Pendidikan Edutama,* 7(1), 81 – 92.

Vianty, M., & Palmi, R. (2014). The Use of Instagram to Promote Reading Interest and Build Student Character. *Proceedings of Sriwijaya University Learning and Education International Conference,* 247 – 253.