



THE USE OF INSTAGRAM FOR STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

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Abstract

One of the most popular social media sites among young people is Instagram. With its many features, Instagram can be used as a fun and non-monotonous writing lesson. This study examined the students' perceptions of using Instagram for their writing skills and the impact of Instagram on students' writing skills. In this study, the descriptive quantitative method was used. This study included 150 participants from students' university, questionnaires distributed over WhatsApp were used to collect research data. According to the study's findings, Instagram as an effective tool for improving learners' vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy. Learners also gain better ideas prior to writing tasks and develop their own writing style. If used and supervised properly, Instagram could be an effective pedagogical tool for learning a second language.

Keywords: Writing skills, Students Perceptions, Instagram as Learning Tool

INTRODUCTION

The use of Instagram is not just for sharing photos or videos; it can also be used as a fun learning tool. It is in a line with Shazali et al., (2019) they add that the recent survey proves that Instagram can be considered as one of the pedagogical tools in teaching writing. It is because there are many interesting features on Instagram that learning is not monotonous. Rahardjo and Mulyani (2020) express the interesting features of Instagram-addicted teenagers to use Instagram continuously. Even though Instagram's features appeal to teenagers; it is certain that they have the possibility to improve their English writing skills when sharing their caption activities in their feeds and stories. The author looks for social media learning features that might be used in the teaching and learning process.

Instagram is also known as the social network app which allows the users for uploading or sharing their activities whether photos or videos. The Instagram users are able to share those by using story feature, sharing photos, replaying other users' stories, and so on (Sain et al., 2022). However, if students make good use of it, they can make it a tool that will improve students' writing skills. In terms of language learning, Handayani (2016) claims that Instagram can be used as a source for applying a number of activities in language classrooms like digital storytelling, grammar activities through photos, role

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plays, reading, speaking activities through videos etc. In order to practice the language both inside and outside of the classroom, Instagram covers four language skills. Additionally, some studies were conducted on Instagram for developing writing skill (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018). According to this research, Instagram was a useful tool to improve students writing skills.

According to Sakkir et al., (2016) The internet can be used to help students' writing process and improve their writing skills in various kinds. Students can use social media to help improve their writing skills, channel their talents and express their ideas. Social media encourages individuals to increase confidence in expressing what is on their minds. Because of the high level of social media use, many people use it to help in several fields, one of which is education. In this sense, Al-Rahmi & Zeki, (2017) claims that using social media platforms such as Instagram in teaching and learning processes is becoming a more common practice, given the many possibilities it provides to transform learners into constructive participants who actively contribute to their learning experience.

In terms of students' perceptions of using Instagram to improve writing skills, research by Shazali et al. (2019) showed Instagram as an effective tool for developing students' vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy. However, data on student perceptions is still very limited, especially because the research only focused on high school students and only 25 students were research participants. Therefore, more research is needed on this issue. Aiming to fill this gap in literature, this study seeks to exploit university students' perspective regarding Instagram both as an educational and language learning platform.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media has a significant impact on the student community today, and this type of technology is gradually becoming a regular part of everyone's life in contemporary society. According to Mansor & Rahim, (2017); Sheldon, Rauschnabel, Antony, & Car, (2017); Smith & Anderson, (2018) social media has been growing at unprecedented rates with an ever-increasing number of users particularly among the young people. Information technology is evolving quickly, and new ideas are being shared on a variety of social media and networking sites. For instance, social media platforms like Instagram offer cutting-edge social interaction patterns of communication, some of which are neither directed nor reciprocated. Social media users can read or view their friends' online, independently produced postings without directly interacting with those friends.

According to Smith & Anderson (2018) Instagram which is gaining more popularity across the world is a social media platform where its users can share self-generated content in the form of photos or videos. Most students have personal Instagram profiles. Instagram is used as both an informational and instructional tool by several communities and institutions due to its simplicity and wide acceptance. Users can express ideas more creatively and actively due to these newest features. Maintenance the former fact in connection to the use of social media to teach writing in EFL classroom,

countless previous studies were conducted. The trend significantly shows that social media plays positive roles as it is stated in the following examples. Moreover, Akhlar et al., (2017) claims that Instagram encourages community-centeredness and generates meaningful communication among the students. In compliance with this, it is determined that social media can help students write better and increase their confidence to post their writing in Instagram. The activity by using Instagram is not time-consuming to be implemented and it is relatively practical to be administered and monitored every time and everywhere.

Using Instagram as a teaching and learning tool had several advantages. Research conducted on secondary school student's perception and attitude towards the use of Instagram in English language writing found that Instagram does help in developing students' writing ability in terms of new vocabulary and it boosts their motivation. This statement is supported by qualitative research done by Nada & Shiellany (2018) stated that Instagram is an effective tool for developing students' descriptive writing skills. This study also found that Instagram can be an effective pedagogical tool if used appropriately. Additionally, it was found that Instagram increases students' motivation to learn and their participation to classroom activities (Purnama, 2018). Among the studies conducted on Instagram regarding its use for language learning, Mansor and Rahim (2017) found that it is an effective platform in that it encourages students to interact with their peers in the group works related to videos they shot on the teacher led tasks. Therefore, previous studies have shown that using Instagram as a platform for learning both reading and writing is effective in teaching foreign languages.

METHOD

The study reported in this paper used case study research by using close-ended questionnaire as its main data collecting methods. This study presents the students' perceptions of using Instagram for their writing skills and the impact of Instagram on students writing skills. The participants of the research were 70 students at the university who have an Instagram account and have joined the writing English course. The study used a questionnaire to examine students' perceptions on the use of Instagram for their writing skills. Based on Febrian & Fadly (2021) a questionnaire is defined as a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. The questionnaires were completed using a Google form and it will be spread through personal chat WhatsApp. The writer will send the question one by one to the students that used as a sample. They will answer in a specific way. There were 10 items and the participants were expected to choose the most appropriate option of 4-level Likert Scale labeled by: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. This question will be spread to the student's university as a sample. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and presented in percentage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There were 150 students were participated in this research. The findings of this research are divided into ten sub-sections based on the students' statements to answer the questionnaire. The researcher presented the results of data that were gathered using a closed-ended questionnaire.

The Cronbach Alpha consistency test was used to evaluate the closed-ended questions before tabulating the participant data. The result had presented below:

Cronbach's Alpha	N of item
0.855	10

Based on the table above, the researcher got 0.855 as a result of the consistency of Cronbach's Alpha Score in the closed questionnaire. When the CR value is higher than 0,7, as with Cronbach's alpha, the scale is considered reliable (Surucu & Maslakci, 2020). Therefore, 0.855 is considered a high score. In short, it can be concluded that the variables regarding the use of Instagram for students' writing skill with 10 confirmed statement items consist of consistent.

The tabulation of data shows the cumulative data percentage for Likert scale used in the items in questionnaire. Table 1 shows the data of the frequency of students' posts in native language and in English.

Table 1. Frequency of Students' posts in native language and in english

No	Statement	Cumulative	Cumulative
		Agree	Disagree
1.	I usually use Instagram in my native language.	68.7%	31.3%
2.	I usually upload on Instagram in English.	67.2%	32.8%

Data has shown that more than 65% of the students usually use Instagram in their native language and they were only 31.3% students selected disagree. The next item showed that 67.2% students usually upload on Instagram in English. This can conclude that participants or these students found it more comfortable to post on Instagram in their native language. Therefore, for further utilization of social networking sites in classroom, an array of engaging activities is highly suggested to be carried out.

Table 2. Utilization of Social Networking Sites in Classroom

No	Statement	Cumulative	Cumulative
		Agree	Disagree
3.	I think it is easy to use Instagram to learn writing in English.	75.2%	24.8%
4.	I think it is interesting to use Instagram for writing task.	68.3%	31.7%
5.	I think Instagram has helped me to improve my writing skill.	71.2%	28.8%

6.	I feel motivated to learn writing in English when using Instagram.	72.7%	27.3%
7.	I learn new vocabulary from reading comments of my classmates on my writing.	73.5%	26.5%
8.	The ideas or comments from my classmates helped me to get better idea before doing the task.	73.2%	26.8%
9.	I will continue to write in English when using Instagram.	67.3%	32.7%
10.	I feel Instagram is a really good way for me to learn writing in English.	73.7%	26.3%

From Table 2, it could be seen that more than 70% of the students generally agree that Instagram platform is helping them to improve their writing skill in English. The data also gives answers to the research question on the impact of Instagram on students' writing skills. It is now shown that Instagram platform helps students in improving writing skills by making them motivated in learning writing in English and at the same time they learn new vocab by reading comments from classmates and also get to gain new ideas with assistance from friends or followers. What is more interesting is, 90 out of 150 students will continue to write in English when using Instagram platform. There is another item in the questionnaire which is participants were asked to give comments or opinions. 73.7% agreed that Instagram platform is a good way to learn writing in English meanwhile 26.3% disagreed. This information makes it possible to conclude that lectures and students can utilize the Instagram platform for teaching and learning activities. Because it is a tool used for educational processes and can assist them in controlling the learning process more efficiently through technology, most students think that Instagram software is crucial for their current and future activities. The study claims that the Instagram application helps young people develop independent study skills and inspires them to learn. Although they acknowledge that learning English is difficult, they enjoy it, especially communicating online, and prefer to study at home using the Instagram application. According to the research, Instagram can be an effective approach to learn writing and have stated that they were distracted by public figure post they follow on Instagram and also some reels or Instagram stories. Furthermore, because students learn independently at home, Instagram platform helps them improve their ability to retain terms. Students who use Instagram platform can improve their writing abilities in English. The data presented above lines up with previous studies showing that social networking increases student engagement and class involvement.

CONCLUSION

Given the results and the explanation above, from the perception of 150 students that participated in this research, it is clear that Instagram application does help in improving students' writing ability in term of new vocabulary and it boots their motivation too. Moreover, the writing of captions helps to widen the vocabulary range among students. Students are able to use various words to express their opinions, feelings

and even motivate others to write well. Through Instagram application, students are able to develop their own writing style. Furthermore, grammatical structure can be improved by reading other people's post especially the native of the English Language. The students are learning how to use word class in creating sentences through the reading of others' post and making sense of the usage of English Grammar. Using Instagram in completing tasks can provide a fun learning environment for students. The results of this study will help academics in the future by shedding light on how the Instagram platform may be used as a learning resource for English.

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