

# **The Use of Instagram for English Language Learning in English Language Education Departement**

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## **Abstract**

Social media could facilitate users to communicate and share the information with other people. Instagram is one of the popular social media to communicate with others by sharing a photos, videos or direct message. This popularity of Instagram can make it a potential media to develop English skills. English language skill is the ability to communicate to understand and produce the information delivered in English. This research focuses on examining the roles of Instagram and students' activities in using Instagram to develop their English language skills. This research applied descriptive qualitative to investigate roles of Instagram in developing students' English language skills and students' activities in using Instagram to develop their English skills. The data was collected by interviewing four students of a Private University from batch 2015. The English Language Education Department students of batch 2015 had the most experience in developing English language skills. The findings of this research include four advantages of Instagram to develop students' English skills. The advantages of Instagram are to develop students' listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill. Furthermore, this research found five activities in using Instagram that can develop students' English skills. These activities were included joining online

quizzes; watching English videos; reading English captions; writing English captions; making English video or Instastory, and commenting posts on Instagram.

*Keyword:* Instagram, English language skill, Social media

## **Introduction**

In this era, ICT becomes a necessity for everyone. ICT is also used in English language learning classroom. ICT helps teachers and students in the learning activity. Jain and Tyagi (2017) said that using ICT in learning process helps students to create a more effective and interesting.

One form of ICT that is important in language learning is social media. Al-rahmi, Othman, Yusof and Musa (2015) stated that social media is a medium of learning activities. Social media is a tool for sharing knowledge or information and learning about language by using technology. According to the researcher's observation on her peers of an ELED, social media users post their videos or write captions using the English language. It helps them in learning English learning.

Instagram is a popular social media among the millennial generation. Vianti and Palmi (2014) stated that Instagram is a social media that works to take photos, apply digital filters, and share them through Instagram and other social media. Instagram is also a language learning media.

Based on the preliminary interview, the researcher found two categories of students who use Instagram. First, some students used Instagram for English language learning. Second, some students used Instagram as entertainment. This research focuses on students who used Instagram for English language learning.

The aims of this research are :

1. Examining advantages of Instagram in developing students' English language skills.
2. Analyzing the activities that students use to enhance their English skills.

### **Literature Review**

In this era, almost all of people used social media to communicate with others. Khan, Ayaz, and Faheem (2016) stated that social media is a facility for people to share ideas easily and systematically and can be installed in devices. Beside to communicate, social media can also be used as a media for developing English language skills. According to Al Mubarak (2016), if social media is used correctly and wisely, social media can help to develop English skills effectively.

There are many social media in the world. The example is Instagram. Instagram is a popular social media in this era. Amancio (2017) said that "Instagram users can post photos or videos in their field and can also like what people that they are following are posting, their interaction happens with their photos and others people's photos".

Instagrams' features have their roles. Based on several expert Instagram has eight advantages as a media to develop English language skills. First, Instagram help students to develop their listening skill. According to Khalitova and Gimaletdinova (2016), Instagram is one of the facility for students to develop their listening comprehension skill. Students learn to understand the information or opinions by watch video on Instagram.

Second, Instagram also helps students to develop their speaking skill. Al-Ali (2014) argued that the role of Instagram as a mLearning tool to develop students speaking skill. Students practice their speaking using many of Instagram's features.

Third, Instagram is tool to develop students' reading skill. Students develop their reading skill by Instagram. Handayani (2016) stated that Instagram is a learning tool to develop students reading skill. Students use Instagram to communicate with others. So, students should understand the mean of the things that was delivered.

The other advantages is Instagram develop students' writing skill. Akhiar, Mydin, and Kasuma (2017) stated that activities in Instagram can develop the ability to write in English. Students can become more thorough in matters that need to be considered when writing, such as grammar, sentence structure, writing style, and ideas. Instagram also increase students' vocabularies. Sirait and Marlina (2018) state that students can develop their vocabulary through Instagram. New vocabulary can be found in captions, videos, and photos uploaded by Instagram users.

Instagram is a social media that is used by many people. Students can read the writings or postings of many people. This makes students more motivated to write. Sirait and Marlina (2018) said that Instagram helps to motivate students to write. Through posts and comments on the features on Instagram, students would want to write more and develop their skills.

Students use Instagram to develop their pronunciations. According to Azlan, Zakaria, and Yunus (2019), Instagram helps students in developing their

pronunciation. Some English account on Instagram show and share how to pronounce well.

Instagram is one of media for students to learn grammar. Reading the captions is one of the activities that can develop students grammatical mastery. According to Shazali, Shamsudin and Yunus (2019), students can learn to understand the correct language structure and grammar by reading posts on Instagram.

Besides the roles of Instagram as media for English learning, Instagram has many activities to develop English language skills. First is writing captions. Writing captions is one of the Instagram activities that can develop students' English skill. Sirait and Marlina (2018) said that writing captions on Instagram is one of the main activities to develop students' writing skills. Students develop their writing skill by writing captions on Instagram.

Second is photo inspiration. Students can give their responses to the photos that have been uploaded. Mansor and Rahim (2017) explained that commenting on post is an activity on Instagram that can develop students' English skills. Students can fill in the comments column regarding their opinions and responses about the uploaded photos.

Third, Instagram allows users to make videos using the video features. Akhilar, Mydin and Kasuma (2017) said that making short videos to introduce themselves is a language activity that can be implemented using Instagram. In

addition, videos that are made can also be varied in content, such as videos on correct pronunciation and videos that contain English songs.

Then, watching video can help develop students' English skill. Video is one of the interesting features on Instagram. Through Instagram, students can hear and view English-language videos for a limited time. According to Akhiar, Mydin and Kasuma (2017), watching activity using videos is an activity to learn languages through Instagram. Through watching English video, students can listen to the correct pronunciation.

The other activity is discussion. Discussions can be implemented through Instagram in the form of giving or replying to comments. According to Akhiar, Mydin and Kasuma (2017), the discussion is a language activity that can be implemented on Instagram. Students can conduct discussions via Instagram. Discussions can be held when a post is uploaded. Students can exchange ideas about the posts and discuss them with others.

Presentation is one of the activities to develop students' speaking skills. The individual oral presentation using Live video activities can be implemented using Instagram (Akhiar, Mydin, & Kasuma, 2017). Live is one of Instagram's features in which users would film themselves and broadcast it live to other Instagram users. When students use the Live feature, other Instagram users can give comments so students can answer or respond verbally. Then, reading English captions helps students in developing their English skill. Mansor and Rahim (2017) stated that reading others' post can develop students' English skill. Students reading others'

post to develop their reading skill. Students should have developed their reading skill to understanding the information one the captions.

Reading English captions is another activity that can develop students' English skill. Mansor and Rahim (2017) stated that reading others' post can develop students' English skill. Students reading others' post to develop their reading skill. Students should have developed their reading skill to understanding the information one the captions.

English language learning has two types of skills that must be learned. According to Aydoğan and Akbarov (2014), language learning has two skills that must be mastered, namely macro skills and micro skills. Both skills have different kinds of concepts.

Macro skills consist of four basic language skills. Aydoğan and Akbarov (2014) said that the four basic language skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. There is a correlation between the four basic skills. Micro skills consist of pronunciation, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary.

## **Methodology**

The research used a qualitative approach. According to Cresswell (2012), a qualitative research design is a type of education research method which was the best way to investigate a problem and elaborate a specific and detailed understanding of the main problem. Therefore, the qualitative approach was an appropriate method applied in this research because it could help the researcher to

find out about Instagram users in a specific and detailed understanding of the research.

The researcher applied a descriptive qualitative design for this study. Merriam (1998) stated that the goal of qualitative descriptive study is a comprehensive summarization of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals in everyday terms. Based on Merriam's statement, if the researcher adopted a descriptive qualitative design, she could attain specific information from the participants. Therefore, it could prevent misunderstanding in collecting the data and specific information deeply. This research was conducted at a private university of Yogyakarta on March 2019.

The participants of this research were four ELED students batch 2015 at a private university in Yogyakarta. As senior students, the ELED students of batch 2015 had the most experience in developing English language skills. This research applied the purposive sampling for the research sampling technique. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) stated that a purposive sample has been chosen for a specific purpose. Besides, the researcher had the suitable criteria for the research participants. The participants of the research were determined based on the criteria specified by the researcher. Additionally, the researcher had three criteria for participants in the research. Firstly, the participants had and had activated the Instagram account on their mobile phones. Secondly, the participants have followed the account of the English content. Thirdly, the participants had already made English language content using Instagram. Those criteria are selected to make sure



that participants actively using Instagram both receive and produce English language contents.

### **Findings**

The findings showed seven benefits and six activities from the use of Instagram in English language learning. They are as follows:

#### **The benefit of using Instagram in students' English language learning.**

*Developing students' listening skill.* From the interview results, four participants, Angga, Budi, Chelsea, and Dita stated that Instagram could develop their listening skill. Listening skill also can develop students' pronunciation and vocabulary. Angga said, "I watching skinnyfabs videos to develop my pronunciation" (A.1.3). Budi mentioned that Instagram could help to develop his listening skill. Budi explained, "I watching soccer video in Instagram to develop my listening skill (B.1.2)". When Budi develop his listening skill, he also can increase his vocabularies. Budi stated, "I increase my new vocabularies by watching English language video (B.1.1)". Chelsea also shared that using the video on Instagram was able to develop her listening skill. Chelsea said, "I develop my listening skill by watching Instastory who use English as their native language" (C.1.1). She also increase her vocabularies in developing her listening skill. She mentions "Listening skill also can increase my vocabularies" (C.1.2). Besides, the statement mentioned was similar to Dita who explained "Watching English language video on Instagram can develop my listening skill" (D.1.2).

Those statements were in line with Khalitova and Gimaletdinova (2016) who stated that Instagram facilitates the students to develop their listening

comprehension skill. This statement explained that Instagram can be media for students to enhance listening skill. To sum up, it justified that Instagram could help the students' to develop their listening skill specifically to understand the information by video or recording. When students develop their listening skill using Instagram, students also enhance their pronunciation. Students can listen how to pronounce well. Regarding the statement mentioned, it was in line with Handayani (2016) who stated that Instagram video posts can help the students to develop their pronunciation. Besides, there were various accounts which could be media to learn pronunciation through Instagram.

According to participants' statements, developing listening skill using Instagram also related to increasing students' vocabularies. Based on the interview result, new vocabulary could be gotten by watching the English videos on Instagram. As stated by Shazali, Shamsudin and Yunus (2019), Instagram can help students to increase their vocabulary towards the English captions. Consequently, the students could increase English vocabulary mastery through Instagram activities.

***Developing students' speaking skill.*** Regarding the interview results, it showed that Instagram could also develop the students' speaking skill. Two participants, Budi and Dita shared this point of view. Budi said "When I make the Instastory, sometimes I can practice my speaking skill" (B.1.5). Dita explained that making a video or instastory could develop her speaking skill. Dita stated, "Making Instastory can develop my speaking skill" (D.1.1). From their statements, it could

be concluded that their speaking skill was able to be improved by doing activity in Instagram such as making video or Instastory.

From the statements being conveyed by the participants, those statements were related to the statement stated by Hape (2018) who said that the students' speaking ability increases after using Instagram as a learning tool. Besides, the statement mentioned was also in line with Al-Ali (2014) who argued that Instagram can be used as a mobile tool to develop the students' speaking skill. He also added that Instagram can be a medium for the students to develop their speaking skill. Therefore, as a learning tool, Instagram could help the students to do the activities which could develop their speaking skill.

***Developing students' reading skill.*** Based on the interview results, there were three participants Angga, Budi, and Dita who considered that Instagram could develop their reading skill. Angga said, "I develop my reading skill by using Instagram" (A.1.3). It also conformed Budi's answer who stated that he developed his reading skill by using Instagram, and he answered, "I read daily quotes from Instagram to develop my reading skill" (B.1.3). Besides, Dita also developed her reading skill by reading English captions on the Instagram. She said, "I read long caption to develop my reading skill" (D.1.4). In developing reading skill, students can practice other skills, such as grammar and vocabularies. Angga explained that developing reading skill also can enhance his grammar. Angga said that "When I develop my reading skill in Instagram, I also can practice my grammar" (A.1.1). Beside, Dita said, "I develop my grammar mastery when I reading caption" (D.1.3).

Angga and Budi stated that developing reading skill can help them to increase their vocabularies. Angga said “Reading English quote also increase my vocabulary” (A.1.4). Budi also mentioned that “In developing my reading skill, I can increase my vocabularies by reading daily quotes” (B.1.1).

Based on the gained data above, it could be seen that Instagram could be a tool for the students to develop their reading skill. The statement mentioned was in line with Handayani (2016) who stated that the students use Instagram to develop their reading skill, and Instagram comes up as media for them to develop their reading skills. Mansor and Rahim (2017) added that Instagram helps the students to develop their reading skill apart from communication skill. To conclude, Instagram could be a learning tool to develop students’ reading skill related to its provided activities. Developing reading skill related to accepting grammar and vocabularies skill.

When students develop their reading skill by using Instagram, they also enhance their grammar and vocabularies. Based on data obtained, the students could learn about the structure of sentence or tenses. As stated by Akhiar, Mydin, and Kasuma (2017), the students can make sure that their grammar and structures of a sentence can increase through the use of Instagram. Also, the Instagram can help students to check their grammar. In regards to the statement mentioned, it was in line with Shazali, Shamsudin and Yunus (2019) who said that the students can learn to understand the correct language structure and grammar by reading posts on Instagram. Likewise, Instagram can help students to learn grammar such as the

structure of sentence or tenses. Thus, the students could develop their grammatical mastery by reading the posts on Instagram.

The other aspect that can be increased in developing reading skill in Instagram is increasing students' vocabularies. In addition, those statements mentioned could relate to the statement mentioned by Sirait and Marlina (2018) who said that the students can increase their vocabulary by reading captions on Instagram. Based on the interview result, new vocabulary could be gotten by reading the English captions in Instagram. From the statement mentioned, it was in line with Handayani, Cahyono, and Widiati (2018) who stated that Instagram is one of the tools which can develop the students' vocabulary mastery. That way, Instagram could increase the students' vocabulary through some of Instagram activities. For example, the students could increase their vocabulary among reading the English captions on Instagram.

***Developing students' writing skill.*** Based on the obtained data, three participants, Budi, Chelsea, and Dita argued that Instagram could develop their writing skill. Based on Budi's, Chelsea's opinion, and Dita's opinion, writing an English caption on Instagram could develop their writing skill. Budi stated, "Sometimes, I writing English to develop my writing skill when I post my Instagram content" (B.1.4). Chelsea mentioned, "I write the captions using English to develop my writing skill" (C.1.3). Dita also said, "Feature captions can develop my writing skill" (D.1.5).

Based on the finding mentioned by the participants of this research, the researcher found out that the students could develop their writing skill by using

Instagram. The participants' statement was in line with Akhiar, Mydin, and Kusuma (2017) who stated that Instagram can help the students to develop their writing skill. However, the statement mentioned was also in line with Mansor and Rahim (2017) who asserted that Instagram helps the students to develop their writing skill apart from communication skill. Moreover, using Instagram can also develop the students' writing skill to write recount or descriptive text (Listiani, 2016). For example, the students can write a descriptive text about the photo which they will upload or give the captions through the Instagram to develop their writing skill. Stated by Nada and Sheillany (2018) as cited in Shazali, Shamsudin and Yunus (2019), the effective tool to developing students' writing skill is Instagram. Also, the students can develop their writing skill by writing captions on Instagram. In conclusion, Instagram could help the students to develop their writing skill related to the provided Instagram activities.

#### **Activities in Using Instagram that can Develop Students' English Skills.**

*Joining Online Quizzes.* Joining online quizzes was an Instagram activity which could develop the students' English skills answered by participant one, Angga. He said, "I join the online quiz on Instagram" (A.2.1). He also answered the questions from the English account. Besides, some accounts of Instagram offered the online quiz for the students. Thus, the quizzes were about various styles of questions such as fill-in-the blank or multiple-choice questions.

Besides, Angga joined the online quiz about tenses, and he could know the correct answers in the next slide from the questions. Then, it could be an opportunity for the students to learn English on Instagram. As stated by Akhiar. Mydin and

Kasuma (2017), Instagram is a tool for continuous language exposure, and it can be a media of learning for the students in developing their English skill. Besides, the students could join online quizzes on Instagram to develop their English skills. From the statement mentioned, it was in line with Aloraini (2018) who said that Instagram comes up as English Foreign Language learning tool. From the statement mentioned, it explained that Instagram is a learning tool for students which can allow students to learn English. In consequence, joining online quizzes was one of Instagram activities which could help the students to develop their English skills well.

***Watching the English videos.*** Another Instagram activity which could help the students to develop their English skill was watching the English videos. Four participants, Angga, Budi, Chelsea, and Dita argued that watching the English videos on Instagram could develop their English skill. Angga conveyed, “I watch English video how to pronounce well on Instagram” (A.2.2). Budi also stated, “I watch English video on Instagram to practice my listening skill” (B.2.1). Besides, Chelsea watched the native speaker’s videos to develop her English skill. She mentioned, “I watch English language video like native speakers’ instastory to practice my listening skill” (C.2.1). Also, Dita said, “I watch English post on my Instagram to develop my listening skill” (D.2.5).

Based on the finding mentioned, the researcher found that the students could develop their English skill by watching the videos on Instagram. Manaroinsong (2018) said that watching or listening to videos with English subtitle or voices is one of way to learn English. From the statement mentioned, it supported the

interview result which explained that watching the video by Instagram could help the students to develop their English skill. Thereupon, watching English video on Instagram was an activity which could develop the students' listening skill and pronunciation. Also, the students could develop their English skill by watching English videos.

***Reading English captions.*** Based on the interview result, four participants, Angga, Budi, Chelsea, and Dita said that reading English captions was an activity which could develop their English skill. Angga said that reading English quotes and captions could help his reading skill to be improved. As Angga stated, "Sometimes, I read English quotes on my Instagram. (A.2.3). Budi also explained that reading English quotes could help him to increase his vocabularies. Budi also said, "I read English quotes on my Instagram" (B.2.2). Moreover, Chelsea also mentioned that "I read the captions which using English language because it can increase my vocabularies" (C.2.2). Also, Dita stated, "I read a long English caption to develop my reading skill" (D.2.4).

Based on the finding mentioned above, reading English captions was able to help the students to develop their English skill. For example, reading captions could increase students' vocabulary. Besides, based on interview result, reading English captions could also develop the students' reading skill. The mentioned statement was in line with Manaroinsong (2018), reading the English posts or comments could help the students to learn English. That way, reading English captions is one of the activities to develop the students' reading skill and increase their vocabulary mastery widely.



***Writing English captions.*** Writing English captions was one of Instagram activities which could help the students to develop their English skills. Those four participants, Angga, Budi, Chelsea, and Dita argued that writing English captions was one of the Instagram activities which could develop their English skill. Angga said, “I write the English captions on my Instagram post” (A.2.4). Additionally, Budi conveyed “I write caption using English language when I post photo or video on my Instagram” (B.2.3). Chelsea also said, “I write the English caption on my Instagram posts” (C.2.3). Dita agreed that writing English caption could develop her English skill. Dita stated, “When I write the caption using English language, I can develop my writing skill” (D.2.3)

Based on the finding above, writing English captions was able to help the students to develop their English skill. As stated by Manaroinsong (2018), creating Instagram posts in English text is a process of doing some action to support their English learning. Likewise, the students could increase their vocabularies and develop their writing skill by writing English captions. Hence, writing English captions on Instagram was an activity to develop the students’ English skills.

***Making English videos or Instastories.*** Another Instagram activity which could develop the students’ English skill was making English video or instastory. Those two participants, Budi and Dita said that making English video or instastory could develop their English skill. Budi said “Sometimes, I making Instastory using English language” (B.2.4). Dita also argued that making English video or instastory could develop her speaking skill. She mentioned, “Making Instastory can develop my speaking skill” (D.2.1).

Those statements mentioned could be related to the statement stated by Akhiar, Mydin, and Kasuma (2017) who asserted that an English language activity which can be implemented on Instagram is making English short videos to develop the students' English skills. Based on the interview result, two participants, Budi and Dita explained that making English video or instastory was also able to develop their speaking skill. Therefore, the students could develop their speaking skill by making English video and Instastory on Instagram.

***Commenting on the English posts on Instagram.*** Commenting the English posts on Instagram came up as an Instagram activity to develop students' English skill which was confirmed by Dita. She explained that to develop her English skill, she sometimes gave a comment in others' English post which could develop her English skill. Dita also said, "I comment on others' post using English language" (D.2.2). From the statement mentioned, Dita agreed that commenting the Instagram posts using English could develop her English skill.

In addition, the statements mentioned was in line to the statement stated by Mansor and Rahim (2017) who explained that commenting on the Instagram posts using English is an activity which could develop the students' English skills. Besides, Akhiar, Mydin, and Kasuma (2017) maintained that replying the comment using English on Instagram is an implementation of the discussion towards the Instagram. Additionally, replaying the comments using English as media of the discussion forum, the students could reply the others' post to share the idea or give the opinion through replaying the comments. Therefore, commenting post on

Instagram using English was an activity which could develop the students' English skill.

### **Conclusion**

As the first finding based on the data collection, there were four advantages of Instagram to develop students' English skills. Those were developing students' listening skill, developing students' speaking skill, developing students' reading skill, and developing students' writing skill. Furthermore, the researcher also found five activities in using Instagram which could develop students' English skills as the second finding of this research. Those second findings were joining online quizzes, watching the English video, reading English captions, writing English captions, making English video or Instastory, and commenting on the English posts on Instagram.

### **Recommendation**

Regarding the findings of the research, there are some suggestions. **For the students.** From this research, students can use Instagram as a medium in students' English language learning. Also, the Instagram can help the students to learn English. The results of this research can also give information about the activities in using Instagram to develop students' English skills. Therefore, the researcher recommends the students to apply kind of activities on the Instagram such as making English video or writing the English captions to develop their English skill. **For the teachers.** The results of the research can help the teachers to consider on using Instagram in the classroom activities. Regarding the research information,

Instagram can also be a medium learning to learn English for the teachers. From this research, teachers can apply Instagram activities in classroom activities. Hence, the researcher recommends the teachers to consider in choosing Instagram activities to apply in the classroom activity as a media in asking the students to answer the questions based on the teachers' posts in commenting column to develop the students' English skill. **For the other researchers.** Regarding the research findings, other researchers finally know the role of Instagram and its activities in developing the students' English language skill. In addition, the other researchers can use this research to become preliminary research about the topic and lead them to explore this problem in a different scope. Likewise, other researchers may use this research as the main topic to other investigations related to the use of Instagram in developing the students' English skills. Therefore, the researcher also recommends other researchers to start working on other topics dealing with the use of Instagram as learning media at other schools or colleges to know how the various factors in the use of Instagram in developing the students' English language skills. Also, the other researchers can use this research as an additional information research topic in a more specific topic such as using Instagram to develop students' writing skill.

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