ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF INSTAGRAM USAGE AS A MEDIUM TO LEARN ENGLISH

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Abstract
The popularity of Instagram made people increasingly use it well, one of which is to learn new languages. English as an international language is a language that is being encouraged to be mastered by people. The objective of this study is to know how EFL students use Instagram as an English learning medium. The data collected was from English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) students' batches 2019-2021 who learn English with Instagram as the learning medium. This study was conducted in a descriptive qualitative method by distributing an open-ended questionnaire. The results showed that ELESP students have a positive perception of Instagram usage as the learning medium to learn English. ELESP students deliver how Instagram can enhance vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation knowledge, and also gain new information.

Keyword: EFL, English education student, Instagram

Introduction

Living in an increasingly sophisticated era with all the needs that can be utilized conveniently causes humans to be more enthusiastic and to develop technology's sophistication. Humans do not merely develop hardware technology, but also software and applications that cannot be touched physically. Indeed, creating these applications is based on reasons to assist nowadays humans' diverse needs. Nah et al. (2005) found that the application could help in managing time, communicating with others, maintaining security and protection, and decreasing excess paper use. Currently, social media is one of the most popular applications in society. Aldahdouh et al. (2020) defined social media as a group of applications that uses an internet-based ideology and technology of Web 2.0, and that builds User Generated Content. In this era, there are hundreds of social media such as social network sites (Facebook), blogs (Blogger), microblogs (Twitter), wikis (Wikipedia), photo-sharing services (Instagram), video-sharing services (YouTube), products/services review (Yelp), social bookmarking (Diigo), and social gaming (Words with Friends) (Greenhow et al., 2019).

With the development of an advanced and diverse era, social media is in demand by the public, especially the younger generation. Sampasa-Kanyinga et al.

(2018) found that the younger generation may spend their free time scrolling on social media for approximately one to less than five hours a day. This is certainly because of many things that can be found on social media such as music, vlogs, tutorials, and academic or non-academic information. Social media has a great influence on the development of society that can be accessed by people. According to Hosen et al. (2021), the influence of social media can boost students' learning performance, individual motivation, and sharing of knowledge. This influence is beneficial for students' social and learning life to be closer and easier to reach all corners of the world without visiting certain places. As an ELESP student who studies English as the main subject, of course, many accurate and interesting sources are important. Through social media, students must be able to find and choose reliable and accurate sources to not get the wrong information. Students must be wise in using social media as a learning resource because it might also provide a negative influence due to a lack of information selection and content (Eryadini, 2021).

One of the social media that has skyrocketed in recent years is Instagram. Ting et al. (2015) defined Instagram as an application that supports photo-sharing activity and social networking for individuals and companies. Campbell (2022) confirmed a statistic on how Instagram has collected over 1.393 to 2 billion monthly users. Popularity of Instagram is used by the public to share various content. From the various content provided by Instagram, people can take advantage of and develop it positively.

As has been stated before, Instagram does not only provide entertainment but also a variety of interesting and useful information. Not only information like current news or history, but Instagram can be a medium for delivering educational content to be used as teaching materials. Today's learning is not only about books but new technologies have engaged educators to employ and explore particular attractive teaching methods, especially in EFL learning which has built significant growth in language learning (Sharma, 2019). One of the lessons that can be found on Instagram is learning a language, for example, English. Learning a language can be found in various contents because people do not only discover lessons in a particular account for the English course but also from random captions made by people. Atila & Irnanda (2021) stated that students who read and write captions can improve their vocabulary and practice writing expressions.

Learning English as Foreign Language

Globalization causes the development of an international language, English, that is used by all people around the world (Rao, 2019). English is growing in popularity with the expansion of English-based content such as interesting songs and movies. Referring to Dhanya et al. (2016), learners tend to be easier to learn informally because learners can study and socialize informally at the same time with more opportunities, including learning English. Even in Indonesia, there are many international schools with English as the intermediate language of instruction. This indicates how important English is to be mastered in today's society. As an international language, people with a good mastery of English have more privileges. The role of English language in advanced careers holds an essential role in improving job performance and promotion prospects (Clement & Murugavel, 2018).

By mastering English, there is no fear anymore to communicate with foreigners while visiting abroad or meeting foreigners in Indonesia. Uztosun (2021) asserts that EFL speakers have good regulation and motivation to develop a higher speaking competence. EFL speakers will easily understand various information, songs, and movies in English. Besides being able to communicate and understand English in daily life, English is also one of the main academic requirements. If students intend to continue studying abroad or do student exchanges, students need great English proficiency with a sufficient TOEFL score as evidence. Gunantar (2016) stated that English may be used for various fields like foreign companies and offices and educational institutions.

Instagram as a Learning Medium

Instagram as a social media that is widely used by the young generation is one of the interesting learning media. On Instagram, people may undertake sharing content in form of videos and photos through particular accounts manage by "teachergrams" or the creator of learning accounts (Resyadi, 2020). Inderawati (2017) asserts that today's learning is not only about reading a book or writing on paper, however, but students are also free to explore social media as a platform to learn attractively. Instagram offers a variety of informative content that can be used as new knowledge for everyone, starting from science, history, skills, the latest news, languages, and various tutorial content. Erarslan (2019) found that Instagram could be one of the educative platforms that people use with high-positive perceptions.

In the context of learning a language, Instagram contains various speaking, listening, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary contents in the English course accounts. Aloraini (2018) delivered an English course on social media and adopted the real learning experience to be changed into a fun and attractive learning experience. In addition to the English course account, students may also learn English from someone's caption. For example, native celebrities write captions and comments in English. By reading English captions, not only basic English is obtained, but students can get slang and idioms there. According to Purba et al. (2021), Instagram users, or in this context students, can upgrade a variety of language styles both formally and informally by expressing feelings, thoughts, and messages.

By learning a language through Instagram as a medium, students can develop their knowledge well. Students are expected to create their content to be shared on Instagram. Various learning activities can be posted on Instagram like creating prompts or some sentences to enhance students' knowledge both in the group and individually (AlGhamdi, 2018). For that explanation, language learning through Instagram is an interesting thing to discuss and learn.

Method

This study used a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative research is research based on an observation of people's perceptions (Khan, 2014). This research method originated from the study of human behavior (Khan, 2014). Besides that, this method is formed to assist the researchers' understanding of human beings and social living things (Toloie-Eshlaghy, 2011). The qualitative method is a research method that uses description to show the results of the

collected data. The data of qualitative research can be in the form of interview transcripts, videotapes, photographs, personal documents, memos, field notes, or other official records (Seers, 2012). Qualitative articles and reports often contain quotations and describe what a particular situation or view of the world is like in narrative form. The written word is very important in the qualitative approach, both in recording data and disseminating the findings.

To collect the data, researchers used open-ended questions in the Google form and spread them to the respondents which were ELESP students of Sanata Dharma University. The reason for choosing open-ended questions in collecting the data is that respondents can elaborate their responses without being limited to the available answer choices. An open-ended question is a question that does not demand a correct answer (Husain, et al, 2012). It provides respondents direct view of thinking (Robert, et.al, 2014). An open-ended question is a question in which the answer is not suggested, so the respondents can use their own words (Popping, 2015). So, it is essential for official statistic measurement (Conrad, et.al, 2016). After collecting the data, the responses were coded into several categories. Coding is the process of organizing qualitative data (Stuckey, 2015). After the data is coded, the written long response has changed become one word based on the "code" or "category" and then the code is calculated and converted into a chart or table.

Findings and Discussion

The study shows the data obtained about ELESP students' perception of Instagram usage as a medium to learn English, which was taken from 42 respondents. It is important to know about EFL student perception of certain learning mediums to learn English, whether they are comfortable, interested, or satisfied when using the learning medium. So, it can be a reference for other learners to try the same medium. Instagram is one of the social media that have much English content since it can connect people from all over the world and also many English learning tutors also use Instagram as a platform to share their knowledge. This study will reveal how the ELESP students' perception which is EFL student towards the use of Instagram to learn English. Most of the respondents were from the 2019 batch which was 59.5% of the total respondents.
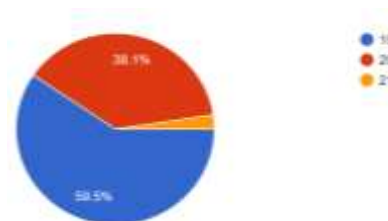

Figure 1. Respondent Distribution

All respondents have an Instagram account and usually use this app every day. However, the duration is varied.

Table 1. Instagram Usage Duration

Duration	%
More than 3 hours	14,3
2 – 3 hours	28,6

1 – 2 hours	23,8
Less than 1 hour	33,3
Total	100

Based on the data, most of them use Instagram for less than 1 hour, which was 33,3% of total respondents. The respondents stated that Instagram can be used as a medium to learn English because of its affordability, connect people globally, and also facilitate self-improvement. These 3 categories are obtained after coding each response. Affordability is a factor that is related to easiness and accessibility. With this factor, it makes sense If many people are interested to use Instagram since users can easily download this app on Play Store freely. Advanced technology also connects people from around the world. What we need to have is just Internet access. Instagram also facilitates the user to connect with people globally. More interestingly, the presence of photos and short videos makes people more interested in choosing this app over others. Besides these features, the presence of Instagram stories also makes these apps enable the user to see others' activity just like slide shows throughout the day (Pangaribuan. et. al., 2018). By connecting with people from all over the world and easily accessing English content on Instagram, we have the opportunity to improve ourselves. We can see the example of respondents' responses in the table below

Table 2. The reason for using Instagram to learn English

Reason Categories	Respondent's Response Example
Affordability	Yes, it can. Because there are a lot of English content creators that post their videos and it is very interesting to learn from them.
	Yes, I can find a lot of English content on Instagram.
	Yes, because sometimes I can see English videos on Instagram.
Global Exposure	Yes, because it is connected to the users in this world
	Yes, because I followed so many American Artists, they post a lot of photos or videos and then they write a caption on them, so can learn from their captions.
	Because there is a lot of information from abroad, especially the information provided in English.
Self-Improvement	I read some posts and watch some short videos about the English language
	Yes, but it depends on the users. If the users utilize it as a medium to learn English, then it'll work.
	I read some posts and watch some short videos about the English language

After calculating all the responses based on each category this study found that most of them stated that Instagram's affordability makes this app can be used

as a medium to learn English, which was 47,60% of total respondents. We can see the results in figure 2 below
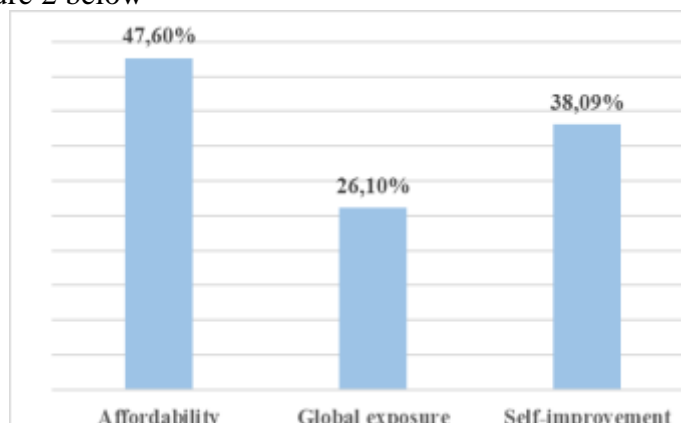

Figure 2. Respondent distribution

All Instagram users have purposes why they watch or looking at certain content, including ELESP students. They have purposes why they see English content on Instagram, whether for learning or entertainment. Regardless of the respondents' purpose, entertainment and learning have a tight connection, which is considered continuous brain training (Corona, et.al., 2013). We can see some examples of student's responses in table 3 below

Table 3. The purpose of watching English content on Instagram

Purpose Categories	Respondent Response Examples
Learning	• When I found English learning in a certain account, I will save that content and learn from it.
	• I will save the content and I can view it many times to help me in learning
	• I'm watching video and collecting new vocabulary
Entertaining	• Watch a video or something that I like.
	• I exploring the Instagram reels
	• Watching a podcast or some American TV show

66.60% of respondents stated that the purpose of watching English content on Instagram is to entertain themselves, while 33.40% others to study. The comparison can be seen in figure 3 below
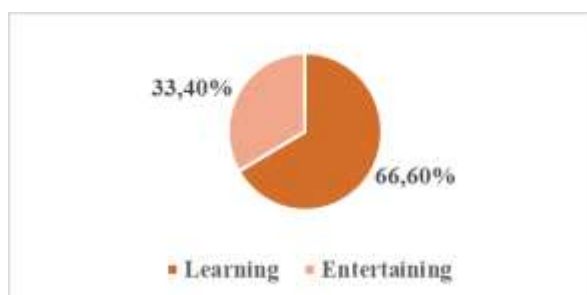
Figure 3. The purpose of watching English content on Instagram

Many of them also have followed English-speaking public figures and free English learning accounts. Moreover, they also have learned English through those free English learning accounts. Following the English account makes EFL students who often open Instagram will get used to the text or sound of English. Table 4 below shows the number of respondents that follow those accounts and those who do not. Those who have learned through a free English learning account and who have not been shown in figure 4 below.

Table 4. Account for Learning English on Instagram

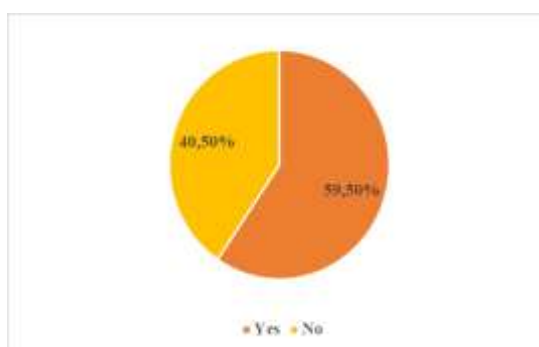| Categories	Follow (%)	Not follow (%)
English-speaking public figures	50	50
English learning account	66.60	33.40

Figure 4. Already learning through a free English learning account

Based on figure 4 above, 59.50% of respondents have learned through a free English learning account, while 40.50% of others have not. After showing that they have an interest in learning English through Instagram, respondents also stated that learning English through Instagram has many benefits. The benefits have been categorized into 4 categories, which are vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and listening. Vocabulary is an important part of language mastery. The more EFL student has, the better they master a language will be (Tuan, 2011). The next category is grammar. Grammar covers language rules. It is about how words combine in a sentence, the choice of words that are appropriate in a sentence, and the change that happened at a different time. Grammar mastery is considered the foundation of language proficiency (Wang, 2010). The other categories are speaking and listening. Speaking and listening skills are very important in mastering a new language. EFL learner is considered fluent If he or they can speak in the target language without translating their mind. Listening skills refer to the skills that are needed by EFL learners to directly listen to the target language without confusing by what the native speakers say. Speaking and listening skills are highly important since it is highly interrelated in real-life communication (Sadiku, 2015). We can see the example of respondents' responses in the table below

Table 5. Benefits of using Instagram to learn English

Benefit Categories	Respondent's Response Example
Vocabulary	Increasing vocabulary.
	Yes. We can increase our knowledge, learn new vocabulary, knowing the world's situation by only using our phone
	Yes, I do get positive benefits. The benefits are knowing more idioms, phrases, and words.
Grammar	Know more about grammatical correct
	Practice understanding sentences in English
	Sometimes, I even can get a simple grammar lesson
Speaking	Yes, it improves my speaking skill
	Yes of course! On Instagram, I can get a free lesson on how to pronounce a word correctly and how native speakers form their sentences.
	Learn how to pronounce the word correctly
	The benefit so far is in terms of listening
Listening	Yes. I can know the culture of the UK and the US, how to pronounce words correctly, and so on

The highest benefit of learning English through Instagram is improving vocabulary, which is 47.61% and the lowest is grammar, which is only 14.28% based on the figure below:
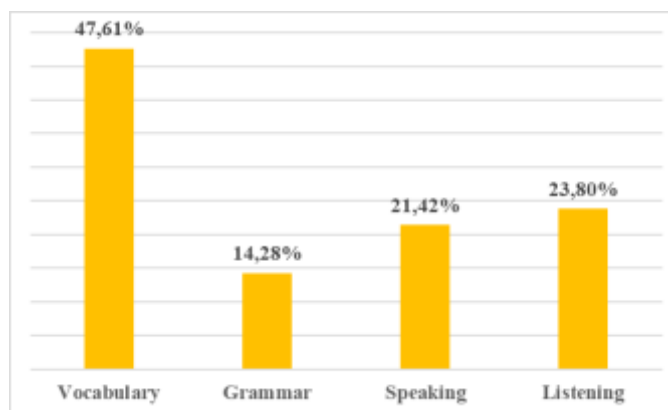

Figure 5. Benefits of using Instagram to learn English

Conclusion

Based on the results, this study shows that ELESP students' have a positive perception of Instagram usage to learn English. All of the respondents also have an

Instagram account and often use it, which is at least 1 hour a day. It shows that Instagram is a social media that is always being opened every day. The respondents stated that Instagram can be used as a medium to learn English because of its affordability, connect people globally, and also facilitate self-improvement. Although the focus of watching English content on Instagram is mostly to entertain themselves rather than to study, most of them have already followed free English learning accounts, 66,6% of respondents have followed free English learning accounts. Besides that, half of the respondents also followed English public figures. It is such a positive result even though the purpose of watching English content is to entertain themselves, it is still beneficial for EFL students. Learning can be done through entertaining as well, and learning in a fun way just like watching entertainment content can be instilled more deeply in the human brain. This study also shows that learning English through Instagram has 4 benefits which are increasing vocabulary, increasing the ability to use the correct grammar, and increasing speaking, and listening skills. These four categories are the foundations of language mastery. Based on the EFL student perception, Instagram is social media that is very useful and effective for increasing English ability.

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