

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background of the study, research questions, objectives, significance, and definition of key terms will be presented. This section serves as a foundation for the research, providing an overview of the problem being investigated and the reasons behind conducting the study.

A. Background of Study

Digital technology's rise has changed education in the modern era, particularly in higher education when it comes to teaching English. One of the social media sites that can be utilized as teaching tools in the current digital era is Instagram, which has grown to be an essential part of students' social and academic lives. Instagram's focus on visual content and unique features like Stories and IGTV enable students to communicate in ways that go beyond traditional written communication and express themselves creatively.

This platform could be a helpful teaching tool for enhancing students' speaking skills in addition to being a communication tool. This study aims to find out how Instagram can help college students improve their speaking abilities. By carefully analyzing Instagram's use as a learning platform, this study is expected to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of digital communication in the context of higher education.

Today's students, especially those studying in higher education, are accustomed to using cell phones every day. The more multimedia is used in the classroom, the more advantageous it is. Mobile phones are occasionally used for learning and skill development, particularly when it comes to correctly and appropriately learning English pinpointed by Barakati (2013: 12).

They serve as a channel of communication as well. Rosyida and Seftika (2018:386) claimed, social media use as a communication tool has significantly increased as a result of technological advancements in the digital age. They also claim that social media offers some options for text, photo, and video browsing. Anyone can also produce, edit, and link to original material that they want to share on social media.

It is also implied in the Quran Surah Al-Isra (53).

وَقُلْ لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْزِعُ بَيْنَهُمْ
 إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾

Surah Al -Isra verse 53 states, “ And say to My servants, ‘Let them speak good words).” This emphasize the importance of speaking well.

Meanwhile, Instagram can play a role in improving speaking skills of university students by providing a platform to share ideas, interact with audiences, and practice visual and verbal communication. Through the content created, students can hone their speaking skills with more confidence.

Alfaki (2014:15) suggests that devices (computers, cellphones, etc.) and the internet are means used to facilitate the practice in this case, especially for students studying the language to improve their language skills, even though the effectiveness of learning the language depends on the individual using it.

Students' use of social media has increased dramatically over the last ten years, to the point where it is now an essential part of their social and academic lives. Higher education institutions are adopting more technologically advanced learning environments, so it is critical to comprehend how social media usage affects language proficiency in particular domains.

Instagram is a special kind of communication because it emphasizes visual content, primarily in the form of images and short videos. IGTV and Stories are the only two platform features that let users express themselves artistically and in ways that go beyond traditional written communication. An innovative approach to understanding how communication dynamics are shifting in the digital age is to look at how these visual elements influence the speaking abilities of university students. Textual and auditory modalities are usually highly valued in traditional language learning frameworks. However, it is important to understand how language development especially speaking proficiency is aided by apps like Instagram in the digital age, where visual content rules. Visual cues can be used to teach and learn languages.

On Instagram, students can interact, exchange personal narratives, and display their uniqueness. Examining the impact of Instagram on the language use and communication preferences of college students can provide insight into the connection between social media and verbal proficiency.

While a lot of research has been done on social media's overall effects on education, not much is known about how specific platforms, like Instagram, impact college students' speech abilities. This study provides a thorough analysis of the relationship between speaking skill development and Instagram usage in order to close this knowledge gap and contribute to the expanding body of research on digital communication in educational settings.

This study looks at the connection between speaking skills and university students' usage of social media, especially Instagram. English Language education majors at Antasari State Islamic University were the focus of the study. The study's conclusions should deepen our understanding of the dynamics of digital communication in higher education by illuminating the ways in which Instagram impacts college students' speech abilities.

Previous research focused on EFL students who followed the national curriculum specifically. This study did not look into how Instagram affected EFL students in an international school setting. It makes use of the Cambridge Curriculum. The study focused on using Instagram

for speaking skills in different circumstances rather than analyzing the use of Instagram videos for monologues or opinion-voicing. In order to fill the gap, the researcher considered the study should be undertaken at an Indonesian school that implements curriculum of Cambridge and national curriculum as well. It is designed to be learner centered, with opportunities for students to select topics and options that represent their personal contexts and interests, as well as skills-focused.

In addition, the Cambridge Curriculum is able to adjust the other curriculum that available in the school. There are only some schools in Indonesia that implement this curriculum. Therefore, this also motivates the researcher to look deeper into the impact of Instagram on students' speaking skills in Indonesia.

The research gap confirms that previous studies have not specifically addressed how the use of Instagram can affect EFL students' speaking skills in a broader and more flexible learning context, whereas this study directly links social media (Instagram) to the improvement of speaking skills, thus filling the gap of previous studies that only discuss the use of Instagram videos for monologues or opinions, not for the development of speaking skills in general and in various situations. This research seeks to fill the void of previous studies by exploring specifically how Instagram can be used to improve the speaking skills of university students, particularly in the context of a nationally diverse curriculum. This research not only broadens the scope of the context (from school students

to university students), but also deepens the understanding of the role of social media in English language learning that is more relevant to the needs and characteristics of today's students.

B. Definition of Key Terms

A few terms related to research are defined to avoid misunderstandings.

1. **Social Media Platforms:** Social media platforms and tools facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of ideas, knowledge, and multimedia content among online communities. For example, more focus on Instagram.
2. **Speaking Proficiency:** Speaking Proficiency is a crucial sign of competency and effectiveness in oral communication. It entails politely speaking, presenting compelling arguments, and engaging in thoughtful discourse.
3. **Instagram:** Instagram is a well-known social media platform that prioritizes the sharing of visual content. Users can interact with content through likes, comments, and direct messages, in addition to uploading and sharing stories, and videos.
4. **Learning speaking skills:** it refers to the process of developing verbal communication skills, which includes effectively expressing ideas, feelings, and opinions. It involves practice, feedback, and mastery of vocabulary and grammar to enhance one's ability to communicate clearly and confidently.

C. Research Questions

This study investigates the following research questions:

1. How do university students use Instagram for learning speaking?
2. What benefits does Instagram contribute to developing university students' speaking skills?
3. What challenges do the university students face when using Instagram in learning speaking?

D. Objectives of Study

The study has the following objectives in accordance with the research questions:

1. To explore how the university students use Instagram for learning speaking.
2. To examine the benefits of using Instagram for developing university students' speaking skill.
3. To investigate the challenges university students face when using Instagram in learning speaking.

E. Significance of Study

The study on the role of Instagram in enhancing speaking skills among university students holds significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it expands language acquisition theories by integrating social media into language learning frameworks, enhances understanding of digital literacy in this context, and identifies effective learning strategies through specific Instagram features like stories and reels.

Practically, the findings will guide educators in incorporating Instagram into language curricula, serve as a resource for students to improve their speaking proficiency, inform curriculum developers about the potential of social media as a pedagogical tool, and promote collaborative learning by encouraging interactions with peers and native speakers. Overall, this research aims to bridge the gap between social media usage and language learning, offering insights and applications to enhance speaking proficiency among university students.