

## **Instagram As Media and Tool in English Language Teaching**

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### **Abstract**

*The main concern of this paper is to discuss the use of Instagram features as a media and tool in English language teaching. This paper outline the points including Social Media for Education and Instagram for English Language Teaching. The discussion of this paper reports that Instagram is beneficial for the English language teaching where there are several features which can support the teacher to conduct an effective and efficient teaching and learning process. It also supported by some technical use com combining digital media of Instagram and English language materials. The content of this paper is also expected to contribute for the teacher to make a digital learning environment through the media and tool that provided by Instagram.*

**Keywords:** *Instagram; Media, Tool; English Language Teaching.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers must have four competencies namely pedagogic competence, professional competence, social competence and personality competence. In examining the two competencies above. Firstly, the teacher must have professional competence. That is the ability of mastery of learning materials widely and deeply that enables him to guide learners meet the standards of competence (Grangeat & Gray, 2007). One of the points said teachers are expected to "master and utilize information and communication technology in learning". Secondly, teacher must have the social competence that is the ability of teachers in communication effectively with learners, fellow educators, education personnel, parents / guardians, and the surrounding community (Lane et al., 2004). One of them said teachers are expected "Utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) to communicate and self-development". This utilizing the ICT is beneficial for the teachers' professional development especially for improving the teaching and learning quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kedzior & Fifield, 2004).

There are many new invented technology and developed social networking nowadays. It provides people, for especially students, with benefits and reasons to use it. According to

Resyadi et al. (2021) this technology is commonly used by the students for leaning. This is the chance for teachers to see what is becoming trend in the society can be used as media and tool in teaching-learning process as well as to master the material for themselves. Social media will be the right place to hang for a while, seek for ideas for material teaching and implementing for the students as out-class interaction (Reinhardt, 2019).

Social Media is a place to socialize, interact and join with others. Social Media became popular when Facebook and Twitter began to be known by the internet users, this is what then makes social media and internet become inseparable (Li, 2017). No wonder, if the people hear the word of social media, then their minds would be directly fixed on the Internet - Facebook, Twitter, Blogging, YouTube and all other facilities that bridge the relationship and interaction between people.

Utilization of social networking for the purposes of teaching and learning is not much to practice it. Many people think learning is memorizing some material. The students seem to be a copy machine that copies books into their brain. Though, memorizing is the lowest level of learning, as the Benjamin Bloom noted in Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956).

By looking at this situation, as a teacher, it is important to look for an opportunities by employing the internet, one of which is a social media as a medium of learning for certainly for not want to be known as an old-school teacher. As the concern of the social media use, Instagram becomes the one of the most popular social media nowadays which is used by millions of people all over the world. Hence, many teachers and educational trainers share and teach through the Instagram. Therefore, the Instagram should not be seen only as a social media but a bigger opportunity lies to see it as a great chance for teaching. For this concern, this paper describes the possibility of Instagram to be used as a media and tool for the language teaching

### **What Is Instagram?**

Instagram is an application to share photos that can be seen by the followers of the photo uploader and can give comments to each other. Based on some literature, Instagram name itself comes from insta and gram, "insta" derived from the word instant and "gram" derived from telegram, can be inferred from the name means to inform or share photos to others quickly.

Instagram is an application that focuses on the experience to share photos to social networks via mobile devices. Based on *tekno.liputan6.com*, by September of this year, Instagram already has 800 million active users every month, with 500 active users everyday.

Established in 2010 the company Burbn, Inc., is a startup technology that focuses only on the development of social media applications. They come with the first app that is Burbn,

a social media app with a number of other features. But in the end, they focus on developing the application in the photos, comments, and also the ability to like a photo. That's what Instagram eventually became.

The emergence of new means to communicate, through social networking or social media such as this Instagram, can have a tremendous impact, especially on education. Children will learn better if teachers involve them in the learning practices that are being studied. Well, to realize it in social media teacher can use Instagram. It can be a link and share information between students, teachers and even parents. Teachers can use social media Instagram to announce homework creatively, share experiences with students in the classroom with the help of drawings and other things related to education (Philip, 2013). To define this Instagram, Resyadi (2020) specifically defines it as an application that online application that supports the photos and videos to share. Hence, Instagram can be shortly known as mobile media and tools that concerning on sharing photos and videos with the communicative feature.

### **Social Media for Education**

Such an educational system is nothing new in the field of English. English is an international language; it means global coverage. Through social media, it is possible to reach someone in the other part of the world so that the interaction process becomes easier (Handayani, 2016). This concept is then applied in the use of social media in learning. Teachers and students can reach each other even without going to school. Lack of hours of English in school makes students less interact with English which is in fact, the main key to learning language is interaction.

Learning English now becomes easier. Photos, which became the main attraction Instagram users, can actually be used as teaching materials by teachers. For video, either for learning or not, is also available in Instagram that can be used as teaching materials. Features such as dictionaries is also been provided even though not as complete as the online dictionary in general. Furthermore, there are many other Instagram features that can be used as media and teaching materials in learning English.

This paper focuses on the explanation of a number of Instagram features and their relation to English learning. One by one the features will be analyzed and explained in relation to the linguistic elements of English presented in the form of teaching techniques so that readers as for teachers will realize that much can be done by using Instagram in English learning.

### **ELT using Instagram**

In the current research by Resyadi (2020) it found that the Instagram has brought positive influence to its followers including the learners. For this, there are so many Instagram features that can be used as media and teaching materials. The two main features that can summarize all learning in the classroom are “Live” and “Group Message”.

“Live” is like video calls, but if most video calls are only for 2 directions (A to B), this feature allows many users to view live streaming of your video (A to B, C, D, E) to be able to watch. This feature can be utilized as a teaching media. In addition to teaching in the classroom, usually teachers do not have much time to meet face to face with their students. This feature allows it to happen. “Live” users can also see who is watching it and this can be used as a means to check the presence of students. The audience can also interact with the “Live” user through the chat feature therein.

The group message feature is like a virtual class. Teachers can interact with students, and students can interact each other in the group that has been created. If there is instruction or notification about something, the teacher can do “send-all message” to all users who are in the group. Not just chat, this feature allows sending pictures and video. Teaching materials or to collect tasks can also be done using this feature. That is the two main features that can be used Instagram as teaching materials or media teaching. This is obviously beneficial for the teacher and students to ease the remote learning (Kirst, 2016). In the next section, some other features that are not less important in the form of point per point discussion points about the skills contained in the English language and how to teach using the specific feature of Instagram.

### **Instagram Features for English Learning**

This part presents how to teach the four English skills namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing as well as the four English Language Elements namely Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation and Spelling.

To teach listening, teachers can create what is called “Blank Video”. It is a video that contains only sound but no image. Images may be replaced with a black screen or other color or with a single image cover. Remember that the video on Instagram; its duration is only 60 seconds so that if the material is more than that should be divided into several parts. Then please upload to the Instagram class and the students will then see or rather listen to the video as a listening resource. It can also search other videos by using “Search” features. This allows us to search for photos or video or hashtag and geotagging and so forth. There are various videos in Instagram that can be used as listening or authentic material teaching materials such as speech, monologue, story, dialogue, word, etc. (Aloraini, 2018).

To teach speaking, teacher can use the “Photo” feature. Photo feature is the main feature Instagram where it can see the photos uploaded by the user. Select one of the photos uploaded by the user for later on to tell it directly (Mansor & Rahim, 2017). This also applies to Instagram videos. This “Video” feature allows us to view user uploaded videos. The unique feature of this video is, its duration is only 60 seconds make it not too long or too fast. Teachers can take advantage of this photo and video to be retold directly as a teaching material (AlGhamdi, 2018; Liliia & Gulnara, 2016; Purnama, 2017). Then, as a means of gathering tasks, teachers can take advantage of video upload feature available or live features (Syawitri, 2019).

To teach reading teacher can use the “Caption”, “Comment” or “Photo” feature. “Caption” is a writing post describing an uploaded photo, so the photo is not only a picture but also an explanation below it. Unfortunately the caption feature is limited to only a few hundred characters so it can not be too long. One can do with this caption feature is looking for an artistic photo. Artistic photo, usually, the caption is full of meaning and not in can not be interpreted simply because requires a deep understanding. This will be an exercise for students as reading comprehension.

The “Comment” feature is also the same as the caption feature is just not limited to characters so as long as anything teachers want to write can be written using this feature. Long text or can be cut into pieces can be included in this feature. It can include a matter of staying merged with the text and then post it. To collect answers can also be through this feature and will be recorded .Who collects and when it is time can be monitored if there are students who do not collect or late collect their assignment.

Photo features can also be used to teach reading. Text will be made in the form of photos and then uploaded to Instagram as a reading material. Teachers can also look for authentic material in the form of short stories uploaded by Instagram users. Teachers just need to look for it in the search bar. An update of this photo feature is that can post several photos at once in the form of a post; also called “Batch Upload” feature. So if teachers want to post a very long photo-shaped text can divide it into 10 photo samples. Teachers do not need to upload 10 photos one by one because everything can be uploaded at once into one post only. Questions can be placed in the caption section and answers in the comment section.

Talking about the reading of course will not be separated from the students’ writing ability. To test it, just look at what the students write in the caption or comment column. As indicators to be scored for example how the organization of paragraphs, how to use punctuation, it is precisely the workmanship and others related to writing skills. One thing

for sure is that students will be very careful in writing something on Instagram such as caption or comment because it will be public and read by everyone so that the writers will also be very careful in order to minimize their language errors. Publicly posted writing is great as a form of writing practice because it will be accustomed not to write and post directly but by using the stages of writing systems such as revision and proofreading.

Teaching this writing is closely related to vocabulary, grammar and spelling as well as some other writing rules so indirectly to these three things will be trained by itself depending on how many paragraphs the students write. The most important thing that will be done by the teacher is to provide input such as suggestions, critics, corrections and motivation to the students so they will be more interested to write by using the correct writing rules.

To teach vocabulary can also be done separately from other material. Teachers or students may post photos containing English words along with their meaning and manner of use and synonyms or antonyms. Posting it three times a day would be a good thing for students to improve their vocabulary. More vocabulary posted would be better. Then as a follow-up, students can, write the example sentence in the comment field (Erarslan, 2019).

In Instagram, there are so many photos containing a brief description of the rules of English known as grammar. One photo contains the formula or how to use a grammar material will be very much found in Instagram, then teacher can make it as a means for discussion in the comments column. Teachers can also post about grammar and then the answer is written in the comment field. One of the accounts that the author is very helpful in learning English is @guruku\_mr.D account. He often posst things related to English so it gives many benefits to Instagram users who want to learn English more deeply (Gonulal, 2019).

## **CONCLUSION**

Teaching English should not always be in the classroom but it can also be done outside the classroom. There are so many media and teaching materials that can be used to teach English, one of which is Instagram. It as a social media builds a global network among Instagram users who are in one region, country or outside the country so that interaction becomes easier because the real essence of language learning is to multiply the interaction of the language being studied. Linguistic elements and language skills can also be enhanced by using this Instagram media. Students will also feel motivated and interested because such learning is not common as in classroom so they will put more emphasize in learning English. Using Instagram in teaching-learning process in accordance with the theory of ICT which stated the internet as medium or teaching materials where the source is not limited. What becomes the main factor then is the creativity of teachers in delivering the English language material. Hopefully, teacher will be more aware of things like this so that learning English will be more effective and efficient in order to improve students' English proficiency.

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