

Can social media help you get better at listening? High school students' views on how social media affects their listening skills

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How to cite:

Saputro, A. H. B. & Erzad, A. M. (2023). Can social media help you get better at listening? High school students' views on how social media affects their listening skills. In *Proceedings of The International Conference on English Teaching and Learning Issues (3rd ICETLI 2023)* (pp.147-154). <http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/icetli.v2i1.796>

ABSTRACT

Learning English requires mastery of four fundamental skills. The listening skill is one that can be enhanced by using video or audio content from social media, namely Instagram. Instagram is a popular social media platform with many users, including students. Additionally, Instagram's advantages for listening and English learning can be fully utilized to get new material and knowledge from its features and contents. This study examined the Instagram content that students most frequently access to improve their listening skills as well as their perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of applying Instagram as a medium to improve listening skills. Four high school students from XI grade of language major became the participants of this study. A qualitative descriptive method was adopted in the study. Three different techniques, including interviews, observations, and documentation, were used to gather the data. The findings of the research indicated that video and audio content like music, games, speeches, explanations of things, movies, etc. are what Instagram users most frequently access to improve their listening skills. According to its features and contents, particularly its simplicity and flexibility, Instagram is useful as a listening learning media. Many students learn new things when they explore Instagram content as well. Then the drawbacks for the students are the global and native content, many of which have unnecessary and difficult-to-understand content.

KEYWORDS:

Listening;
Instagram;
Social media;
Students' perception;
Learning strategy

INTRODUCTION

The learning system is an important component in the education sector especially to obtain successful teaching and learning. There needs an effective strategy in teaching and learning which creates a good environment in educative activity, especially in the class. In Indonesia, since the COVID-19 pandemic, the government applied a new way of teaching and learning

called “learning from home” which is the learning activity done from home by using mobile devices supported with internet connection and mobile apps. Besides, the use of mobile devices has increased and also followed by the rise of social media use. During the COVID-19 pandemic or since the new norm policy was applied, it diverted the educational paradigm in teaching and learning activity caused by the increase of social media use between school and university students (Rahim & Ali, 2021).

Social media is one result of the technology development that has many users aiming to interact with other people around the world. Social media has various platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WeChat, Line, WhatsApp, etc. Nowadays, social media is also used as educational media and changes people’s viewpoints whether their social life or the environment around them (Rohmah et al., 2020). The numerous users, simplicity, and other advantages of social media can be a reason to include educational content to facilitate people to learn something or increase their knowledge. Moreover, the existence of smartphones, tablets, laptops, and other portable gadgets also has an important role in facilitating people to access social media. However, the prevalence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has triggered the prosperity of Digital Learning Communities (DGLs) in simplifying transferring course contents (Abdul et al., 2020).

Instagram is one of the big social media platforms that have many users which can be used to communicate or share a moment, photo, video, etc. Instagram is used by a massive number of people every day generally by teenagers (Erarslan, 2019). Teenage users usually share their moments with their friends on Instagram by posting a photo or video on their timelines and Instagram stories. Besides, there is “Influencer” in social media which has had a big impact on the Instagram algorithm with their fame and massive followers. The influencer usually comes from artists or well-known people and makes Instagram accounts for their branding or interacts with their fans and others. Social media influencers are individuals who actively use their social media accounts and are often involved in a certain topic, as well as providing new information (Hermanda et al., 2019).

In Instagram, there are many education accounts, especially English education accounts that actively share new knowledge. People can learn new knowledge from their posts or join their online course which is free or paid. The content usually includes pictures and short videos about English such as conversation, grammar, habits, listening, etc. Since 2017, digital content consumption has increased because of the increase in social networks, and stimulates the opportunity of the development of the content industry in Indonesia (Hamzah et al., 2020). On the other side, English education has already become an important knowledge in Indonesia so the spreading of English learning and teaching through social media also become common. In English learning, listening skill is one of the main or basic skills in addition to writing, reading, and speaking. Listening is important because through listening to people we can comprehend the meaning, especially in daily activities (Agustin & Ayu, 2021). In Instagram, listening education content is usually implemented in video content, including a conversation, speech, etc. Some English education accounts that actively share English education content such as @aarons.english and @gurukumard share their content almost every day and also they have online courses or even an English education book. The educational contents are usually shared on the timeline and Instagram story which includes pictures, short videos, QnA, etc.

Several studies have already been done and shown good results of Instagram in students' listening skills. Instagram content can affect the student's vocabulary and listening skills, even though there's differences based on each student's opinion but the percentage is

enough to make them satisfied (Agustin & Ayu, 2021). Instagram also has a positive impact on students' language skills especially improving listening, speaking, and reading skills by using the short pronunciation exercise video and when meeting keywords or topics related to the English language (Erarslan, 2019). Furthermore, using SMLL (Social Media Language Learning) method can be an option for improving students listening skills (Sitorus & Azir, 2021).

Based on the explanation above, Instagram has already become a social media platform that supports the educational sector proved by many educational content creators or "Influencers" who share educational content to obtain people's interest in knowledge. Furthermore, educational content has a role in expanding and facilitating the knowledge sector. On the other side, there's a gap showing that is what kind of content affects people's listening fluency, is it videos, pictures, captions, QnA, etc. And now on, Instagram has already been updated with new features so there's a possibility the factors in the previous research changed such as IG's TV changed into Instagram Reels which shortened the duration of the video.

In this research, the writer wants to analyze the use of Instagram content as educational support for senior high school students' listening skills whether it enhances their listening skills or not, and also as the development of a previous study that focuses on the use of social media particularly Instagram by high school students. In this study, the research addresses by following research questions; what Instagram accounts and contents are mostly accessed by students from XI grade of language major to enhance their listening skills, the benefits and drawbacks of using Instagram as media to enhance students' listening skills.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative description is a research method in which the data can't be obtained by quantitative research methods or statistical procedures (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019). Also, qualitative descriptions have an inductive plot which means the process started by the event is explanatory and becomes generalization as the conclusion from the event (Yuliani, 2018). Descriptive survey research is focused on giving a reflection about something and needs connection with the data collection technique such as interviews, questionnaires, or observation (Maidiana, 2021). In this research, the researcher uses a probability proportional size sampling technique to choose the participants. Probability proportional size (PPS) is a procedure for choosing participants based on the sample auxiliary information that considers the connection between participants with research variables (Maidiana, 2021). The participants in this research are one English language teacher and several students from one of XI language major classes because this research has a strong connection with language learning, especially English. The instruments and data collection used in this research are interview, observation, and documentation, and to validate the data the researcher uses credibility test technique that is triangulation techniques, which consists of source, technique, and time triangulation.

RESULTS

The research focused on analyzing the use of Instagram social media to enhance students' listening skills. The findings come from interviews with several XI grade language students

and an English teacher, observing the school environment, and several documentations from teacher and school staff. The findings are explained briefly below:

Instagram Accounts and Contents Mostly Accessed by the XI Grade Language Students to Enhance Their Listening Skill

The students from XI language class mostly are Instagram users, for their own reasons and some of them spend a lot of time using it. Several students have spent much time accessing Instagram. The students spent time around 15 or 30 minutes to 1 hour accessing Instagram. These findings were also supported by Mr. K the English teacher who stated that most of the students in language class have social media.

An influencer is one of several factors that make students use Instagram, and most of the interviewed students follow an influencer. Several influencers were stated by the students, such as Aaron English, Mobazane, Selena Gomez, and others. On the other side, some students only follow local influencers but the content that they see on Instagram sometimes provides English content. Furthermore, the statements collected showed that most account that is followed by students is in the circle of entertainment, which includes singer, actress, gamers, and education influencer.

Instagram has several pieces of content inside, and students have an interest in it. The Instagram content that is mostly accessed by students according to the interview results, showing that it is about entertainment content, such as songs from Selena Gomez, motivation, sports, games such as Free Fire and Mobile Legends from Mobazane, and education such from Aaron English, etc. that showed in videos, audio, and pictures.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Instagram in Listening Learning

Besides Instagram's fame and well-known open social media which provides many kinds of content, we know that Instagram is a global social application that also has positive and negative sides. In this section, several statements also have been obtained by interviewing a teacher and several students in language class. The result will be separated into several explanations, and the focus is placed on student issues and a teacher as supportive data, to collect different points of view and create a stable research conclusion.

The results showed that the benefits of Instagram in listening learning are they still can learn out of or besides the school activity, simple or easy to use, simply, have interesting content, and they can look for content that they want freely by using its features such as upload, share, and see videos or pictures, follow to people around the world, etc.

The drawbacks of Instagram in listening learning are the content inside Instagram is wide open and random, so they need a little bit of effort to search or make a topic algorithm that the content, contains their interest or what they want to see, such as avoid or report some unnecessary content and some of videos content are cut or ended before the content are end, and English accent that sometimes hard to understand.

DISCUSSION

Listening learning through Instagram needs several requirements because based on the data collected, some pros and cons show up. Instagram is not only social media that is suggested, but several social media potentially can be used as listening learning media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc. According to the data collected, Instagram is popular among the students in the XI language class, and this was also confirmed by the teacher. From

investigating students' interest in Instagram and their suggestion to encounter the drawbacks when using it as a listening learning media, shows that the students are interested in using it as a supportive learning media.

The Instagram Accounts and Contents Mostly Accessed by XI Grade Language Students to Enhance Their Listening Skill

Listening learning through Instagram needs several requirements because based on the data collected, some pros and cons show up. Instagram is not only social media that is suggested, but several social media potentially can be used as listening learning media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc. Following several accounts that are beneficial in listening learning has also become a requirement when using social media as learning media because learners can interact more with something necessary about listening. Several social media accounts have already been stated by the students and can be recommended for learners.

Based on the statement collected, almost all of the students in the XI language class are social media users, which means most of the students in the XI language class are connected to social media. The connection between students and Instagram is close because of its popularity as one of the biggest social media platforms around the world, and it has over 400 million active users (Alalwan, 2022). Instagram provides interesting features that make the user feel flexible when accessing it and a lot of public figures use it to interact with their fans, commonly known as influencers.

Instagram has a variety of influencers that share interesting content on Instagram, starting from educators, celebrities, and artists. Some of the contents are branding, interacting with their fans, being involved with certain topics, providing new information, etc. (Hermanda et al., 2019). The impact of the influencers can affect users to make them a role by providing their fans with new information or knowledge, and in XI language class itself, some of them follow several of them that provide new information to support their knowledge such as @gurukumard, @aaron.s.english, @mobazane, @selenagomez, and so on.

Several features and content that Instagram provides such as photography, videography, typography, illustration, IG TV, story, reels, and more can be accessed freely, anytime, and anywhere as long as the device is compatible and supported with the internet connection (Rianto, 2021). Furthermore, the contents and features of Instagram are interesting and this can be advantageous in the education sector because the students interviewed in the XI language class itself have an interest in Instagram features and content. The students in XI language classes were interviewed, showing several contents that they were interested such as video, audio, and pictures about their idols, actress, gamers, educator, etc. Video content motivates the students, decrease anxiety, and also provides real and actual situation with the authentic situation (Febiyanti et al., 2021). The video itself is usually combined with audio and caption, and this correlates with increasing their vocabulary, reading, and writing skills (Reviana et al., 2021). The accounts and content that are mostly accessed by the students are connected with the entertainment sector, which provides interesting themes of content that young people mostly like, such as songs, games, films, motivational words, actors, etc.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Instagram in Listening Learning

Listening to learning using Instagram is a good decision because most of the contents and features are suitable and easy to use when applied to learning activities, especially in English (Erarslan, 2019). The contents and features of Instagram are catchy and easy to use, and that is why most people use it as their social media platform. Furthermore, many local or native

educational content creators educate people by using Instagram are many, and that's also become a plus point or benefit for using Instagram as instructional learning media, especially in listening learning.

Maximizing the benefits of Instagram in listening learning can come in several ways such as spending much time accessing listening content, educational content creator, practicing especially trying to interact with other users by using English, creating learning strategies, etc. One of the ways suitable to use is to create a learning strategy such as collaborative learning or insert listening comprehension inside learning with videos because in some cases collaborating students into a group can affect their trust to accomplish an assignment through social media (Alalwan, 2022). Practicing is important in language learning besides theory and that's why practicing is needed (Anwas et al., 2020). In addition, several strategies can be used in maximizing learning activity, especially listening such as using several media that we can access through technology like podcasts, news, audio-blogs, videos, pictures, and so on (Erben et al., 2008).

Furthermore, in creating a learning strategy, we can collaborate several listening events with technology such as listening for pleasure or information, which is usually in the form of songs, films, jokes, news items, discussion interviews, documentaries, news headlines, etc. (Field, 2009). Several forms of listening events can be accessed through several media such as smartphones, computers, laptops, and others, as long as connected to the internet, and social media especially Instagram itself already contain such content.

Besides Instagram's benefits, there is also a drawback that comes. Instagram provides global content which means the users need to filter the content because people have their interest. The students that have been interviewed indicate that almost all of them have issues with the global content which shows unnecessary content, and makes them put a little bit of effort to avoid or report the contents. In addition, the features and user behavior also become drawbacks, and that's why becoming a smart user is really important when accessing every social media including Instagram. To obtain successful learning by using Instagram, there needs a strategy such as mixing it with blended or collaborative learning (Beemt et al., 2020). However, we must pay attention carefully when accessing social media, especially in the learning sector because if there's a positive, there will be a negative.

To overcome the drawbacks of listening learning from Instagram is flexible because every learner and teacher has their own style when teaching or learning. Encountering makes educational environment on Instagram such as following educational content creators, ignoring unnecessary content, using other media like learning books or dictionaries, becoming a smart user by managing the time when accessing it, avoiding negative content, practicing, etc. On the other side, teachers and students also have a role in encountering the drawbacks when using social media in learning including Instagram, because the teacher can utilize their role such as giving instruction, material, explanation, etc. to the students when learning by using internet. Creating a supportive environment in teaching and learning is important as well because there are several factors such as the institute organizer, public environment, teachers, and students' roles as learning subjects (Poeryanto, 2022). In addition, parents also have a role as a support system in learning, because they can monitor their children to follow the instructions from the teacher, filter children's activity, give advice, etc. when their children accessing social media. However, to overcome the drawbacks several roles should be responsible like teacher, student, and parents because a good environment will bring out good outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the researcher creates several conclusions. The contents that are mostly accessed by interviewed students most of them are videos and pictures contents from reels and story features. The contents that are mostly accessed by the students follow their interests such as content about sports, music, games, and education. It means the content, especially videos or pictures with any kind of theme such as songs from Selena Gomez, games from Mobazens, Education from Aaron English, and so on, become the content that makes students' listening skills develop. The kinds of content that most students access to enhance their listening skills depend on the student's interest. They will have access to any content as long as they are related to English, especially listening.

The students are interested in Instagram as their listening media because, besides its simplicity, Instagram can be used out of learning activities in school, and provides several interesting features or content that can be freely accessed by the users. The teacher also stated that Instagram is a beneficial application especially when using it as listening learning media. This means, that Instagram is quite beneficial as a listening learning media regard to the students' and teachers' feedback.

The main drawback of Instagram is the global content. The students and the teacher have stated the same issue which is the content is global so the users need to filter the content. In addition, pronunciation and subtitles issues are also stated by the students because most of the English content is from native speakers, and the accents or speed when they talk is fast makes some students understand.

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