Instagram as A Media to Enhance Writing Skill of Students in Langsa

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Abstract

This research is carried out to investigate how the uses of Instagram application to improve students' writing skill. The participant of this research is three students of seventh semester from English Department of IAIN Langsa in academic Years 2020/2021 who have been selected through purposive sampling based on certain characteristics. In here, there are 3 students. This research used qualitative method to gain the data; observation and documentation. Based on the results, they used Instagram features; photo and video sharing and social network to share their mind and daily activity on it. Therefore, they can use it to find many accounts that they wanted. And then, the researcher found that the participants searched and followed several educational accounts that contain learning English content. Concequently, the participants' writing ability improve after they convey their ideas on Instagram. As the result, they were able to practice and apply what they have learnt before in writing English caption actively on their Instagram accounts. It also can be proven from their writing score which participant 1 obtained 83 score, participant 2 obtained 87 score and participant 3 obtained 62 score in writing English in the manner of using proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, appropriate content, appropriate vocabulary, and conveying clear information.

Keywords : Social Media; Instagram Application; Writing Skill.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology is the application of science that aims to fill human needs and accelerate the achievement of the objectives of each activity that will be carried out. Technology gives people opportunities to spend their time more effectively. People have been assisted by technology including learning a foreign language. The one of assisting part of

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technology is social media. Social media is a great place for students to express themselves because it encourages distinctiveness. The integration of gadgets and social media helps a lot (Wil, C, S, C, et.al., 2019, p. 225). Social media represents "the technologies or applications that people use in developing and maintaining their social networking sites (C. Fuchs, 2017, p. 38). Hence, the students can utilize social media to improve their English learning skills.

This research investigates how the uses social media of Instagram application to improve students' writing skill and it is impact on State Institute of Islamic Studies Langsa students of English department in writing skill. Instagram was launched in October 2010. It has attracted more than 150 million monthly active users, with an average of 55 million photos uploaded by users per day. And more than 16 billion photos shared so far. And 90% of users are under the age of 35. Based on Instagram's education demographics, users with some college education are most active on Instagram with 30% and college graduates have the second highest activity at 18%, while users with a high school diploma or less make up another 15%. (Yuheng Hu, et.al., 2014; Instagram, 2017). It makes Instagram as a means of learning English. Hence, It can be practiced by the students in improving their English skills. Furthermore, through this application, the students can utilize it to improve their English learning skills. Especially writing skill. As many people know that Instagram holds to upload photos or videos by writing interesting captions underneath. Through using English as a caption, it can show the followers how interesting and classy the upload is. They can improve their writing skills by writing English captions, replying to each other's comments with friends. It can be indicated that students can take an opportunity to write everything in their head and to be read by others. In

previous study, Irfan Zidny and Suharso (2017, p. 191) reported that the use of Instagram in the teaching and learning process significantly improved the students' writing skill. The students made a good improvement on the aspects of content, vocabulary, organization, grammar, and mechanics. The social media worked well to improve their interest, focus, and proficiency in writing.

The purpose of this research is to investigate how the uses of Instagram application to improve students' writing skill and the question of this research is how are the uses of Instagram application to improve students' writing skill?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section contains the previous literature that concerned with social media and language learning; In relation to English language learning, writing skill, and Instagram application.

2.1. Writing Skill

Writing is one of the productive skills which more emphasized in produce language. Damanik (2017, p. 38) states that writing skills is one of four English skills that should be mastered as English foreign learner. Writing is focus on how to produced language than receive language. Nevertheless, Celce and Murcia (2000) indicate that:

> "Writing is the production of the written word that results in a text but the text must be read and comprehended in order for communication to take place. In making good writing, we should use the correct grammar, choose appropriate vocabulary, manifested by handwriting, spelling, layout and punctuation. (Celce and Murcia, 2000, 142)."

Writing is functional communication, making learners possible to create imagined worlds of their own design. It means

that through writing, learners can express thought, feeling, ideas, experiences, etc to convey a specific purpose. The purpose of writing is to give some information. (Richard Kern, 2000, p. 172).

From the definition above, it can be concluded that writing is one of four skills that are very important for communicating and sharing information. Through writing, students also are able to master English micro skills such as idiom, grammar and structure, and vocabulary so that they can arrange written form regularly. In addition, writing can be practiced by the students to focus on generating ideas, organizing it coherently, revising it into clearer meaning, and editing it for correct grammar with use good punctuation. By writing, students can share their thought, feeling, ideas, even experiences in their mind on the paper.

2.2. The Existence of Social Media for Students in Learning English

Social media is being quickly working up during last few years. Many people are connected by accessing social media. Everyday, more than 90 percent of college students visit a sosial networking site. People have woven these networks into their daily routines, using *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*, online gaming environments, and other tools (Raut and Patil, 2016, p. 281). According to Boateng and Amankwaa (2016), social media is rapidly changing the communication setting of today is social world. The emergent of social media is significantly influencing the academic life of students. Therefore, students can utilize social media as supporting media in learning and can fill their academic needs.

Patel (in Mardiana, 2016, p. 2) states that using social media in a learning process begin to rise significantly and likely to imply for education practice and provision especially in term of connecting

with their students or with their colleagues, to access news and appear in their walls. In educational field, there is a positive way of using social media. Both students and teachers have increased effective in learning process. With good engagement, can enable to greater inclusiveness for learners, although the role of teachers need to be well supported to develop successful digital pedagogies (White, G.K. in Mardiana, 2012, p. 1). Students and teachers are belief of social media to interact with each others and gain their knowledge.

2.3. Instagram Application as A Support Students' Language Learning

Handayani (in Pujiati, 2019, p. 652) states that Instagram can become an appropriate medium for English learning process. Students obtained benefits from the use of social media to enable them in sharing ideas, create their own content, published it, as parts of 21st century skills. Because of these benefits of Instagram, students can enhance their knowledge in English learning. They receive support for English learning by continuously improving their language skills. Even more, Instagram is a place student to share photo/video with write caption so that students are able to learn new vocabularies, correct sentence structures and grammatical items in improving writing skill.

3. METHODS

This section presents the participants of the study, research design, and the procedure of data collection.

3.1. The Participants of the Study

The participants were English department students of IAIN Langsa. The researcher took English students of seventh semester. They are consist of 54 students. The researcher took

three English students of seventh semester because they were determined based on three characteristics that have been chosen. According to Sugiyono (2017, p. 85), purposive sampling is a data sampling technique based on certain considerations. Subject and object of the research that have been determined by the researcher can be seen as follows; 1) the participants are the active Instagram users, 2) the participants often use English captions in their Instagram posts, 3) the participants are English department students.

3.2. Research Design

This research is applying qualitative method. Qualitative method is looking for a deep understanding of a phenomenon, fact or reality (Raco, 2010, p. 1). According to Creswell (2009, p. 1), qualitative research as an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem.

The research presents the identification and analysis of a phenomenon related to improve students' writing skill by using Instagram application. In this research, the researcher investigated the participants' experiences, impressions, and perceptions toward the use of Instagram to improve students' writing skill.

3.3. The Procedure of Data Collection

The research used observation and documentation method as the instrument of the research. The researcher observed the activities of the participants' Instagram accounts by using researcher's account approximately four months. Before doing the observation, the researcher has been allowed by the participants since they gave agreement to be participants for

this research. Besides, The researcher used visual document consists of the screenshot of participants' Instagram posts. In addition, the researcher also attached the participants' essay writing results as additional data for the research.

4. RESULTS

The data were gained from two sources data that consist of observation and documentation method to support finding and discussion of this research. The data were described as follow:

4.1. The Result of Observation

In this research, the observation was carried out by observing three of participants' Instagram accounts. The researcher found that participant 1 and participant 2 have a little similarity in using Instagram. Meanwhile, participant 3 used Instagram more for showing up photos but still used English caption on her posts. This observation was taken by the researcher on 1st August to 30th November 2020. It can be shown in the following table.

- Participant 1

Table 1.1
Participant Instagram's Activities

Instagram Account	Instagram's Activities
@husnulyakin9967	- He posted 5 videos (3 short and 2 long videos) about tips in learning English. He also shared some information with using English language. - He actively followed several International accounts which contain English and educational accounts. There are 11 accounts that he has followed. - He wrote short and long English caption on Instagram. - He has posted 15 times with English captions on Instagram.

- Participant 2

Table 1.2
Participant Instagram's Activities

Instagram Account Name	Instagram's Activities
@keanesjournal	- She posted 3 videos with using English in it. - She often wrote motivation words on her Instagram. - Sometime she used short and long English captions on Instagram. - She also actively followed international accounts which contain English and educational accounts. 7 accounts that she has followed. - She not only put English caption. But, she also posted pictures containing English and aesthetic pictures which is edited by herself. - She has posted 20 times with English captions on Instagram.

- Participant 3

Table 1.3
Participant Instagram's Activities

Instagram Account Name	Instagram's Activities
@mashitah.rahmadhani_	- She did not post any video. - She only post some photos with using simple sentence caption in English. - She has followed 2 educational accounts contain English learning. - She has posted 14 times with English caption on Instagram.

The researcher also observed the participants' writing skill improvement on Instagram. They started to use Instagram application on 2018. But, rarely write English caption on their Instagram posts. In 2019, they started to write English caption sometimes at least writing caption

with phrases. For instance, Participant 1 was able to write simple sentences 7 times and write phrases 10 times. Participant 2 was able to write compound sentences 3 times and write phrases 2 times. Meanwhile, participant 3 was able to write simple sentences 2 times and write a compound sentence. Entering 2020, the participants have more confidence to show their skill in writing English caption. They started to explore their writing skill with writing English caption more interesting than before. It can be seen on the table of participants' Instagram activities above. Not only have good writing caption recently on Instagram. But also, they were able to finish the academic writing task very well. They recognized to write an essay correctly. Furthermore, they can make an essay in the manner of using proper grammar, spelling and punctuation, appropriate content and vocabulary. They also can arrange to write an essay based on the composition of the writing consisting of an introduction, development of idea, and conclusion. As the result, they are used to implement their writing skill to help the academic needs in college.

Moreover, the researcher also found how often participants open educational accounts both local and international accounts. They have followed that so automatically the latest posts from that accounts will appear on their Instagram wall. The researcher can be concluded that the participants actively use Instagram with using English. Furthermore, they play Instagram not only just having friends or just sharing their daily life. But also share something interesting by actively using English as a caption in their posts which indirectly they also share knowledge about English with the followers who read their posts. Besides using English captions on Instagram, participants take advantage of social networking to search foreign accounts that can help them to improve their English

skills. Hence, they can be also active in opening local or international accounts where there is English learning content.

4.2. The Result of Documentation

The researcher has carried out documentation stage for three participants. The type of documentation was in form of pictures screenshots that have been posted by participants on Instagram. The documents were analyzed indicate that using Instagram application obtained to improve students' writing skill. Through Instagram, students were allowed to take advantages of their facilities in improving their English learning skills. The following are one of the documentation stage taken by the researcher.

- Participant 1 (@husnulyakin9967)

199 tayangan

husnulyakin9967 WH😊 AM I ?

Hell♥.. I'm Husnul Yakin, 21 years ♥ld fr♥m the university ♥f IAIN Langsa.
I live in Langsa city, Aceh pr♥vince. I l♥ve singing and writing especially f♥r research.

Being an educated pers♥n is the biggest dream f♥r every♥ne. 😊f c♥urse, ♥ne ♥f the ways is t♥ reach l♥cal ♥r internasi♥nal sch♥larship.

But the c♥mm♥n issue that happen is the lack ♥f c♥♥perative partnership f♥r institusi♥ns. C♥nsequently, there are s♥ many students difficult in ♥btaining f♥r sch♥larship they want t♥ achieve.

By being the Y♥uth Campus Ambassad♥r ♥f Ind♥ensia, I want t♥ establish relati♥nships am♥ng universities t♥ devel♥p students' pr♥sperity thr♥ugh enhancing the educati♥n's qualities ♥f Ind♥nesia.

Thank y♥u ↓

Participant 1 caption on Ig

- Participant 2 (@keanesjournal)

Participant 2 caption on Ig

- Participant 3 (@mashitah.rahmadhani)

Participant 3 caption on Ig

4.4.   Assessment of Students' Writing Skill

In addition to observation and documentation, researcher has included participants' writing score in the

Academic Writing task. The result of the assessment can be shown as follows.

Table 2.1
Participants' Writing Score

Participants' Name	Score					Score Obtained
	C	O	V	LU	M	
Husnul Yakin	24	17	17	20	5	83
Keane Mariza Ajani	24	18	19	22	4	87
Mashitah Rahmadhani	19	12	12	16	3	62

C = Content

O = Organization

V = Vocabulary

LU = Language Use

M = Mechanics

5. DISCUSSION

This stage discusses about some data analysis based on the theories used in this research. The theories are about using social media such as Instagram application to improve students' writing skill. This research includes the theory of Patel (in Mardiana, 2016, p. 2) which states that using social media in a learning process begin to rise significantly and likely to imply for education practice and provision especially in term of connecting with their students or with their colleagues, to access news and appear in their walls.

From the theory above, the participants of this research use Instagram to improve their writing skill. They utilize Instagram to learn English. They did it in some actions. For instance, searching and following the educational accounts. That accounts also contain English content to improve English skill. All content from that accounts will automatically appear on Instagram wall so participants can learn English

whenever they open their Instagram account. It makes social media such as Instagram as an educational practice for students to be able to enhance their knowledge about English.

There is also a theory of Handayani (in Pujiati, 2019, p. 652), Instagram can become an appropriate medium for English learning process. Students obtained benefits from the use of social media to enable them in sharing ideas, create their own content, published it, as parts of 21st century skills. One of the participants action is writing English caption on their Instagram accounts. They often upload photos or videos with using English caption. They also did that by sharing ideas toward write English caption. Furthermore, they can manage what they upload to make it more attractive. Participants published new update on their Instagram for more to share their knowledge about English.

From observation in August, the researcher found that participant 1 and participant 2 wrote English captions in the form of simple sentence. But the next 3 months, they were able to write more than 3 sentences in their posts. Differed from participant 3, she was more actively wrote English captions in the form of simple sentence. Based on their content, Participant 1 more shares videos and information for easy learning English like sharing videos about speaking with American accent. Participant 2 more shares photos and videos such as sharing about motivation words or pearl of wisdom in English. Meanwhile, participant 3 more shares photos for showing her dailylife but still using English caption on her posts. In addition, the result of writing score showed that participant 1 obtained 83 score. Participant 2 obtained 87 score. Meanwhile, participant 3 obtained 62 score.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on findings and discussion in previous chapter, the result of this study shows that the participants of English department students of

IAIN Langsa are using Instagram to improve their writing skill. They imply it by using English caption in their posts. Moreover, they also actively upload their new post in English whether it is sharing videos or photos about their daily activities with interesting captions in the form of information or motivational words. In addition, the participants use Instagram to follow several educational accounts that contain learning English content. As the result, they not only play Instagram but they can also learn English as well. The result of their writing score also shows that participant 1 obtained 83 score, participant 2 obtained 87 score and participant 3 obtained 62 score in writing English in the manner of using proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, appropriate content, effective in the use of vocabulary, and conveying clear information. They improve English skills through Instagram as parts of 21st century skills.

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