Assessing native speaker modeling on social media: Effects on student speaking proficiency

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Abstract

EFL students in Indonesia still discovered some problems in speaking, such as limited time in classroom practice, lack of confidence, and need for innovative learning media. Addressing this problem, this study investigated whether implementing native speakers' modeling on social media as learning media affects students' speaking skills. As we live in the existence of digital lives, social media has become one of the popular digital platforms; therefore, we can advance social media to assist students and teachers in classroom teaching and learning. Furthermore, social media nowadays are viral and used mainly by students, so it would not be complicated to integrate social media into a classroom activity. This study employed a quantitative method using a quasi-experimental research design that involved 58 tenth-grade students of one senior high school selected toward a purposive sampling allocated into experimental and control classes. The oral test of describing people served as a pre-test and a post-test. The t-test was employed to analyze the data. The result showed a higher score improvement in students' speaking in the experimental class. In addition, the students were enthusiastic when the treatment was conducted. This finding means English native speakers' modeling on social media potentially affected students' speaking skills in describing people.

Keywords: *Speaking Skills, English Native Speakers, Social Media*

Introduction

English as a foreign language in Indonesia has settled as a compulsory subject in schools, and it aims to develop English communication in both spoken and written language. Hence, students should gain good speaking ability to carry on their studies. However, enhancing English speaking skills as a foreign language is still a problem for EFL students in Indonesia. Speaking is generally seen as a more complex language skill than other skills (Chou, 2018). Statistical data from the

English Proficiency Index reported that Indonesia is one country that ranks low in terms of English proficiency levels worldwide (Education First, 2021). As a result of the researcher's preliminary observation, it was indicated that Indonesian EFL students have some speaking issues. For instance, the speaking problems were a lack of English vocabulary, a lack of opportunity to practice speaking in the classroom, a fear of making mistakes, a lack of enthusiasm to speak English, and a need for excitement and innovative teaching methods the speaking problems. Some studies also stated that Indonesian EFL students encountered some speaking problems: difficulty in expressing English ideas, fear of making mistakes, preferring to speak the L1, limited time practice, low motivation, and need for an appropriate teaching style and method (Ibrahim, 2020; Imami, 2019; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020).

Moreover, the studies above showed that students faced linguistic and psychological speaking problems. Limited time in the teaching and learning process, lack of opportunity to practice in class, lack of vocabulary, and need for the appropriate method, including the learning media, become the significant causes of speaking problems. The limited time of teaching English and the need for an environment of practice, such as practical imitation and repetition of speaking, are the things that must be considered and given more attention to advance English skills (Hamad et al., 2019; Lauder, 2020). In line with that, limited time causes students to have an inadequate chance to practice English, and they also have difficulties finding an environment to practice their speaking skills, so students only practice in class for around 40-45 minutes per meeting. As a result, some students only study English as a requirement to complete their studies.

In response to those problems and the importance of speaking skills, technology, such as social media, could be seen to assist the language learning process; also, the teachers' role is expected to make learning sessions enjoyable. Agustin and Ayu (2021) supported the idea that various technologies used for learning media can assist learning. Social media has developed significantly in every field of our daily lives. The latest data showed that between 2021 and 2022, social media users in Indonesia increased substantially by 21 million or more than 12.6 percent, as one of the most popular users is among young people (Barman, 2020). Social media has transformed how people live today and made communication significantly more straightforward, promoting the exchange of data, photos, and videos made by users (Sasikala et al., 2021). In the educational context, social media can enable learners to communicate freely with others in a nearly natural environment. Learners who are engaged in a setting where the target language is utilized for instruction can acquire new languages quickly and

effectively (Ahmed, 2020). In EFL, social media usage gives students unique chances to improve their English language skills. English is one of the most extensively utilized on social media, as it is a foreign language for international communication. Anwas et al., (2020) found that many functions of social media features can be served as learning media for English practice. Therefore, social media can assist in the advancement of listening, speaking, writing, and reading, especially among English language learners. As stated by Namaziandost and Nasri (2019), integrating social media into the EFL classroom will expand language exercises and improve the learner's motivation and performance in speaking skills.

Social media has many platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Even today, Instagram is one of the most popular social media for young people in Indonesia (Data Reportal, 2022; Statista, 2022). Many young people, particularly students, see Instagram as essential social media because it offers simple access to exciting features, such as watching exciting videos, getting information, expressing ideas, and finding enjoyment. It was also strengthened by Huang and Su (2018), which stated that various of Instagram's functions could make it the most favored social media among young people, especially students.

Moreover, In EFL, Instagram has become one of the best English applications because users can learn simply and entertainingly (Resyadi, 2020). According to Abdullah Al-Garawi (2019), Instagram developed students' language skills while enjoying new learning experiences that instilled in them a feeling of place and time independence. There are lots of exciting features on Instagram. Instagram provides photo and video features, comments, stories, writing captions or statuses, live broadcasts, direct messages, and many more. Instagram often updates features so that users do not get bored. Instagram has a story feature that provides various activities such as polls, quizzes, and others. This allows users to interact actively and learn easily. In addition, many Instagram accounts offer English language learning, so users, especially students, can access them easily (Carpenter et al., 2020).

Therefore, social media such as Instagram was selected for this study for several considerations. First, Instagram can be applied through smartphones, which is part of technology that is very close to most students in Indonesia. Data Reportal (2022) and Statista (2022) state that Instagram is one of Indonesia's most popular social media platforms for young people, particularly students. Second, Instagram can provide a new way of learning accessed through a smartphone; students can activate their target language without excessive concern because they will practice well. Third, even outside the classroom, students can encourage

critical thinking and concept organization and allow additional time to demonstrate modest classroom speaking ability.

In addition, some speaking activities could be done through Instagram, such as telling experiences, creating monologue vlogs, reviewing, role-playing, and many more. Instagram provided some learning videos (Dhiwangkara et al., 2020) and specific information about English materials (Agustin & Ayu, 2021). The English Instagram video mainly discusses a particular material, such as daily life expressions, common errors and mistakes, speaking tips, tutorials, and others. Besides, many English native speakers' modeling have an Instagram account, but few selected accounts provide innovative and enjoyable English learning, such as the @gurukumrd Instagram and @aarons.english Instagram. Both of them had many followers and showed simple and unique materials. In addition, Resyadi (2020) stated that those accounts provide exciting materials and have the power to make the English learning process and its atmosphere more engaging.

However, some previous studies have only focused on the effect of Instagram in general English (Erarslan, 2019; Newton & Williams, 2021; Salehudin et al., 2020), and only a few studies that discussed the effect of Instagram on developing speaking skills in classroom learning (Azlan et al., 2019). Besides, studies investigating the specific English native speakers in speaking skills context were relatively rare, and most studies discussed the effect of native speakers on writing and vocabulary skills (Evafaliyanti & Usmawita, 2019; Hidayah, 2021; Schenck, 2020). This present study also had limited speaking material, which was descriptive text material. Therefore, the present research obtained empirical evidence of students' speaking ability by integrating the native speakers' modeling on Instagram as learning media. To address the gap, the present study aimed to reveal whether English native speakers' modeling on social media affects students' speaking and how the effect size of native speakers' modeling on social media affects students' speaking in describing people.

Method

A quantitative research approach with a quasi-experimental design was used to investigate the impact of native speakers' modeling on social media on students' speaking skills. As Creswell (2012) stated, a quantitative research method examines through a statistical methodology that generates precise data to address the research topic or hypotheses. Furthermore, a quasi-experimental design was used in this research, which proposed to investigate the effect of one variable on another variable by isolating, managing, and modifying the variable in an actual-atmosphere situation (Cohen et al., 2007). The study involved tenth-grade students

from a senior high school in Tangerang Selatan. Two classes were selected through purposive sampling: one experimental group (30 students) and one control group (28 students).

Data were collected using an oral test administered twice, as a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test assessed the students' initial speaking abilities, and the post-test evaluated the influence of the intervention. Both tests covered the same descriptive content and were scored using a speaking rubric by Brown (2004), which considers grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation. The treatment involved three modeling sessions for native speakers on Instagram. The data were then analyzed using t-test analysis to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. Preliminary tests (validity, reliability, normality, and homogeneity) were conducted to ensure the data's suitability for t-test analysis.

Results
The pre-test, post-test, and gain score: A comparison
After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed it using SPSS 26 versions and Microsoft Excel. The following data was the output of pre-test and post-test student scores. The score range was based on the lowest to the highest scores of students. The classification of the score is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Score of the Pre-test

Score	Experimental Class		Controlled Class	
	F	%	F	%
30-40	5	17%	8	29%
41-50	15	50%	12	43%
51-60	9	30%	4	14%
61-70	1	3%	3	11%
71-80	0	0%	1	4%
81-90	0	0%	0	0%
91-100	0	0%	0	0%
Mean Score	48.1		47.6	

Table 1 presented that the experimental and control classes' pre-test scores had many students who obtained under standards score minimum. There were

more students in the control class (11%) than in the experimental class (3%) who placed in the middle score (61-70). Furthermore, the intermediate score (71-80) percentage showed the control class (4%) higher scores than the experimental class (0%).

Moreover, the main point of Table 1 showed that students in the experimental and control classes obtained similar average scores: the mean score of the experimental class was 48.1, while the control class was 47.6. The t-test of the pre-test result (*p*= 0.81) revealed there was no significant difference between the experimental class (M= 48.1) and the control class (M= 47.6). This result indicated that both classes (experimental and control) started at a similar point. In other words, they had similar types in terms of their ability before the treatment was conducted, a crucial requirement for any experimental design, including quasi-experimental ones.

Table 2. The Score of Post-test

Score	Experimental Class		Controlled Class	
	F	%	F	%
30-40	0	0%	0	0%
41-50	0	0%	8	29%
51-60	7	23%	13	46%
61-70	15	50%	3	11%
71-80	6	20%	4	14%
81-90	2	7%	0	0%
91-100	0	0%	0	0%
Mean Score	66.93		56.71	

After the treatment, as indicated in Table 4.2, many experimental students achieved the highest standard minimum score between 81-90 by a frequency of 7%. In contrast, no students (0%) in the controlled class reached that score. Approximately 50% of the experimental students achieved 61–70 scores, and 20% obtained between 71-80 scores, while only 11% of controlled students reached 61-70 scores, and 14% achieved scores between 71-80. Moreover, many controlled class students still obtained the lowest post-test score (29%). In addition, the mean score result of the experimental class was (M= 66.93); meanwhile, the control class's mean score was (M= 56.71).

Furthermore, the improvement of each speaking element score was also analyzed between the experimental and control classes. The results showed that

the most improved element in the experimental class was comprehension, which reached 33 points, followed by fluency and vocabulary, which reached a similar point of 30. Meanwhile, the control class showed the most improved element was vocabulary at 18 points and grammar at 17, while pronunciation scored the lowest in this control class. Therefore, this finding indicated that native speakers modeling on social media affects students' oral skills.

The effect of native speakers' modeling on Instagram on students' speaking skills

This study examined the effect of native speakers modeling social media on students' speaking skills in the tenth grade of one senior school. The pre-test and post-test were conducted to achieve the purpose, which was compared and analyzed using the t-test by SPSS 26 version. The statistical hypothesis of this current study stated whether the null hypothesis (Ho) was accepted ($p > .05$ or 5%) means there was no significant effect of the treatment applied. In contrast, whether the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted ($p < .05$ or 5%) means there was a significant effect of the treatment applied. In addition, the effect size test was also measured to determine the experimental class's improvement size and to see how strongly the influence treatment was conducted.

Table 3. Independent Samples Test

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | T-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	1.116	.295	4.380	56	.000	10.219	2.333	5.545	14.893

Equal variances not assumed.	4.356	53.386	.000	10.219	2.346	5.515	14.923

As stated previously, the experimental and control classes had no significant difference. Furthermore, after three treatments were conducted, the t-test of the post-test showed (p= .000), which means that Ha was accepted and Ho was rejected (Table 4.3). This result indicated that there was an effect of treatment conducted. The experimental class obtained a significantly higher score (M= 66.93, SD= 8.20) than the control class (M= 56.71, SD= 9.55). Similarly, the calculation of the effect size level based on Cohen's (2007) theory represented that the experimental class achieved the 1.1 effect size, indicating a strong effect on speaking skills. In short, the post-test and the effect size test revealed that the experimental class scored higher than the control class. Therefore, this finding proves that the native speakers' modeling on social media significantly affected students' ability to describe people.

Discussion

This present study contributed to two research topics: native speakers' modeling in ELT and social media in ELT. The result revealed that integrating native speakers' modeling on social media affected students' speaking skills in describing people, as proved by the higher score of the experimental class in post-test, t-test, and effect size results. Specifically, the findings of the present study aligned with the previous studies (Alqahtani, 2019; Gibreel, 2018; Novianti, 2018; Wahyuni & Afrianti, 2021), which supported the involvement of native speakers' modeling in ELT. The hypothesis of this present study revealed that native speakers would enhance students speaking skills positively, particularly in the comprehension aspect, which was the first highest improved aspect, followed by fluency and vocabulary with a similar achievement point.

The presence of native speakers has been acknowledged as a crucial feature of teaching and learning, mainly English as a second or foreign language. It is no longer uncommon to presume that the presence of a native speaker would affect student achievement. The ongoing attraction of Applied Linguistics to the paradigm of a native speaker is related to the requirement for models, norms, and objectives. Regardless of the emphasis on teaching or assessing a first, second, or foreign language, the native speaker is a great myth; we need them as a model, a purpose, and nearly as a motivation (Davies, 2004; Wu, 2021).

Saniei (2011) stated that some researchers perceived native speakers as the role models for all language learners and how native speakers speak is the most appropriate model for learners to achieve their goals. Also, in Japan, the native speaker is regarded as the ideal model and type of language instructor for non-native pupils to aspire to linguistic understanding and pronunciation (Kavanagh, 2016; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014). Therefore, people whose native language is English continue to have a significant advantage over those for whom English is a foreign language (Medgyes, 2001). In a recent study, Sufyan et al. (2024) also reported that participants shared their perspectives on how different English teachers influence language learning. According to the findings, native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) were widely seen as effective role models for improving oral-aural skills. Respondents praised NESTs for their ability to provide authentic language experiences, helping students with pronunciation, intonation, and everyday conversational skills.

On the other hand, the study highlighted a perceived gap in Indonesian English teachers' teaching of written English skills. Participants expressed a desire for more support in this area, suggesting that local teachers could enhance their assistance in teaching grammar, writing structure, and other aspects of written English. This contrast underscores the unique strengths and areas for growth among different types of English educators, reflecting broader sentiments on language instruction and learning support.

Several previous studies also highlighted the challenges non-native English teachers face in teaching vocabulary and grammar, especially compared to their native-speaking counterparts (Sun et al., 2017). Wahyuni and Afrianti (2021) provide evidence that involving native speakers in speaking practice significantly enhances students' speaking ability and motivation, consistent with findings from other researchers (Alqahtani, 2019; Gibreel, 2018) who support this notion, demonstrating that native speakers may positively influence students' speaking skills and confidence. However, Koşar (2019) reminded us of a contrasting finding of no statistically significant difference in speaking performance between experimental and control groups. This inconsistency suggests that while native speaker involvement generally benefits speaking skills, contextual factors such as study design and participant characteristics may influence outcomes differently.

This study would also promote the idea that integrating Instagram into language learning can be a promising alternative to enhance students' speaking proficiency. Despite Koşar's (2019) findings that there is no significant difference in speaking performance between groups, the broader consensus supports the

positive impact of native speaker involvement. Furthermore, integrating platforms like Instagram into language learning offers new opportunities for improving speaking proficiency, as recent studies highlight its benefits. Several studies (Awaliyah, 2020; Devana & Afifah, 2020; Devi et al., 2020; Marleni & Asilestari, 2018; Ramadoni, 2019) supported that using Instagram could effectively improve students' speaking abilities, motivation, learning situations, and more importantly willingness to take part in the classroom. Students could feel more engaged and motivated when learning situations have been made comfortable and supportive.

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of native speakers modeling social media on enhancing students' speaking skills. The post-test and gain scores analysis revealed that experimental students achieved significantly higher speaking scores, demonstrating the effectiveness of native speakers modeling via social media. Additionally, the robust effect size of 1.1 underscored the substantial impact of this approach. Classroom observations during the treatment indicated that students were motivated and engaged, although challenges such as intermittent internet access were noted. For future research and practitioners, several suggestions emerge. Diverse perspectives and ideas could enrich and expand upon this study's findings, potentially extending the application of social media to other language skills. Integrating native speakers' modeling via social media presents a viable alternative for classroom learning, offering students ample opportunities to practice and express themselves confidently.

This accessibility can significantly enhance their speaking proficiency. Despite the empirical evidence supporting this study's findings, there are limitations to consider. Firstly, the study focused primarily on descriptive text materials in speaking skills, warranting exploration of other content and language skills. Secondly, the unstructured nature of content on native Instagram social media necessitates teachers to select suitable learning materials carefully. Future research could explore structured approaches to utilizing Instagram for educational purposes. Lastly, while Instagram was the sole social media platform examined in this study, future research could explore multiple platforms to gain a comprehensive understanding of integrating social media in English Language Teaching (ELT).

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