How Students View on Instagram in Self-Development in Mastering English Language

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to characterize the students' perspectives on the Instagram app as a means of enhancing their self-development competence and improving their English language proficiency. Six undergraduate EFL learners who were enrolled in the State Islamic Institute of Palopo, Indonesia's English Language Education Study Program served as study participants. Google forms with open-ended questions were used to gather the students' opinions about using Instagram to independently improve their understanding of the English language. The study's conclusions showed that the students appreciated using Instagram to learn English since it helped them improve their English vocabulary. Additionally, Instagram offered them a abundance of accounts that produce English-language learning materials. Additionally, Instagram helped students focus and comprehend English with ease. Ultimately, Instagram increased the students' motivation to spread knowledge to others. The findings of this study offer English language teachers and lecturers who are attempting to innovate their language teaching pedagogy useful and accessible ways to use Instagram.

Keywords: self-development, perspectives, Instagram, English proficiency

Introduction

Modern technological advancements have sped up the rise of social media, which links individuals worldwide. What was once a way to communicate with others and express oneself has grown into something greater than most people could have imagined (Iksan et al., 2022; Zarei & Rudravarapu, 2019). Due to social media's widespread use, students use it as a platform for learning and as a means of communicating with others and developing their language skills (D.P & C.O, 2014).

The introduction of novel methods of communication, including social media like Instagram or social networking, can have a profound effect, particularly on education (Aloraini, 2018; Ariel et al., 2020). If teachers include their students in the learning procedures they are studying, the students will learn more effectively. Well, teachers can use Instagram to actualize it on social media. It can serve as a conduit for information sharing between educators, parents, and students (Sanusi et al., 2021).

Students in the twenty-first century utilize Instagram as a platform to increase the efficiency of their learning. Instagram is a smartphone application that may be accessed through the Apple Store or Play Store. It makes possible for users to quickly capture eye-catching pictures and ongoing activities (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018; Zarei & Rudravarapu, 2019). In addition, Instagram is a social networking, photo- and video-sharing website that can be accessed on mobile devices and the web. As a result, it lets users record images and videos, which they can then publish on the app either publicly or privately. The demographics of social media users demonstrate that youth worldwide are keen to engage with their peers and are exceptionally skilled at doing so via smartphone use. (Wahyudin & Sari, 2018).

Instagram seems to be useful in language schools despite its limited features. Instagram provides a wealth of visually contextualized information that can be useful in EFL lessons (Krisdianata & Ena, 2022). These resources are especially beneficial because they provide visual elements that may be beneficial for those who learn best visually. Using Instagram in the classroom can also contribute to the development of a network of students who are socially connected. (Zarei & Rudravarapu, 2019).

Since Instagram posts are sometimes written in other languages, this can be a terrific way to use Instagram as a tool for self-development while learning the English language. There are hundreds of pictures on Instagram that give a quick explanation of the English grammar rules. Instagram will become a major source of grammar-related content, with one picture containing a formula (Sanusi et al., 2021). These kinds of photos can be learnt independently by the learners.

By learning English on their own, students are expected to improve their capacity for self-development and obtain English language proficiency outside of the classroom (Phungphai & Boonmoh, 2021). Self-development offers learners the chance to improve their level of qualification and competitiveness in their comprehension of English, as well as to master the language. As a result, one of the essential educational pillars for a learner's personal and professional development is self-development.

The purpose of this study is to get thorough and methodical feedback from students regarding their use of Instagram as a tool for personal development and English language proficiency.   It is therefore envisaged that this research would have a favorable impact on the process of self-development in English language learning.

Method

This study's primary goal was to ascertain how learners perceived Instagram as a tool for improving their English language skills. Six EFL undergraduate students from the State Islamic Institute of Palopo, Indonesia, who were enrolled in the English Education Study Program, participated in this study. Since each student had a personal Instagram account that they used for personal use, they were all already familiar with the platform. All students provided information using a Google Form with open-ended questions to determine how they felt about utilizing Instagram for personal development while studying English. Following the collection of all the data, the researchers coded the most important quotes and grouped them according to themes in order to do a thematic analysis on them.

Findings and Discussion

The learners' perspectives on using Instagram for self-development in learning and mastering the English language are provided below. The students are questioned on why they choose to use Instagram as a self-development tool to study English.

Enhancing the English Vocabularies

The learners' responses indicated that they could access English-language quotes, memes, and captions on Instagram, which they used on their own to help them become more proficient in the language. These Instagram features may aid in their comprehension and vocabulary learning of English. They also thought that via Instagram, one could independently learn how to pronounce words in English.

Student 4:

I found a lot of quotes in English, memes in English and other short captions that could help me little by little to understand and increase my insight into English vocabulary.

Student 5:

Because of this application, I can find out pronunciations in English easily.

These findings related to the researches by Gonulal (2019). He discovered that Instagram is said to assist English language learners in expanding their vocabulary. A student said he may pick some new vocabulary via Instagram. Also, Agustin and Ayu (2021) verified that learners vocabulary could be impacted by Instagram.. The same statement was given by Lailiyah and Setiyaningsih (2020). They looked at how many students believed that learning on Instagram was beneficial since it offered a fresh approach to language acquisition and sped up interactive vocabulary development. Then, Erarslan (2019) and Kaviani (2022) claimed that by participating on Instagram, the students could acquire new vocabulary. In addition, Sari and Wahyudin (2019) disclosed that after utilizing Instagram to learn English, learners saw improvements in their language proficiency, particularly in their academic vocabulary.

Providing Many Accounts Containing English Learning Media

Because Instagram has so many English-learning accounts that may be utilized for autonomous English learning for self-development, users use it to improve their English proficiency on their own. The student 1 makes this assertion. He stated as follows:

It's good because there are many accounts that provide English learning.

This discovery is connected to earlier research. They discovered that students' opinions on Instagram profiles with English content are often positive (Gonulal, 2019; Sanusi et al., 2021). Students' opinions on the learning activities conducted through Instagram accounts were also favorable. They believed that these activities were entertaining and accessible from anywhere at any time (Sari & Wahyudin, 2019).

Making easily Focus on and Understand English Language

Instagram has developed original and imaginative methods for teaching English that force students to focus on the images or captions. They will find it easier to grasp English as a result. Students have expressed this below.

Student 2:

I personally think it's better and easier for me to understand.

Student 3: because this media is easier to use.

This result relates to the study that suggested Instagram could put greater attention on the connection between student motivation and learning autonomy (Gonulal, 2019). Additionally, it was discovered that students focused more on the

language used than the content when it was easy to access images that had already been filtered using Instagram (Handayani, 2016). When the lecturer introduced Instagram to the class, it piqued the interest of the students in the language classroom. Additionally, it was discovered that students were working with greater independence and attention and taking greater ownership of their education (Wahyudin & Sari, 2018).

Highly Motivated to Share Information

Instagram will greatly encourage learners to engage in social interactions with their peers by disseminating knowledge and perspectives. Social media is a network that links students to their teachers and to one another. It gives them the opportunity to share knowledge and have access to focused information in a topic of interest. The student's statement lends credence to this. According to her, insights are shared on Instagram.

Student 6:

To share insights.

This is supporting previous researches. It is found that Instagram has a positive impact on learners' language proficiency. It is a helpful teaching tool that allows instructors and students to easily communicate outside of the classroom and during office hours. Instagram gives learners an enjoyable learning experience and helps them come up with ideas using content that is contextually relevant (Aloraini, 2018; Handayani, 2016; Kaviani, 2022). Also, Erarslan (2019) He discovered that Instagram offers a genuine forum for language practice and social interaction; learners were unconcerned about making mistakes when expressing thoughts or comments on the platform.

Conclusion

The study's findings showed that because Instagram allowed them to expand their English vocabulary, the learners were very driven to learn the language. Additionally, Instagram offered them an enormous number of accounts that produce English-language learning materials. Additionally, Instagram helped students focus and comprehend English with ease. In the end, Instagram increased the students' motivation to spread knowledge to others.

This study found multiple approaches to self-improvement through Instagram language learning for English language proficiency. Nevertheless, given the small sample size, further research is required to fully understand how Instagram affects students' capacity for self-development. Large-scale participant research is therefore required to improve the body of knowledge regarding self-development ability in independent English language learning.

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