The Use of Instagram to Increase Students' Motivation and Students' Competence in Learning English

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Abstract

Social media is a part of modern people lifestyle in Industrial Revolution 4.0. Furthermore, it has started to be utilized in education field as one of the learning media, for example, Instagram. It is widely known among social media users. Several studies have proved positive impacts on the use of social media in developing students' English skills. However, the studies about Instagram, specifically in relation to English lesson at schools are limited. Thus, using a case study method, this study is conducted to describe the use of Instagram to develop students' motivation and to enhance their English knowledge and skills. The participants are students in an Indonesian school of Jeddah. They come from various background yet they are lack of motivation. Results indicate Instagram has succeeded in motivating students to learn English and improving their English competence. The materials preferred are those relate to grammar, vocabulary, and writing.

Keywords: Instagram, Indonesian school of Jeddah, motivation

Introduction

In this 21st century, technology develops rapidly and even changes people's way of thinking. It has also affected the way we interact with others. People do not need to communicate face-to-face anymore, ever since the appearance of social media, that is considered as the most important product of the technology development in communication field, since it provides an environment which people can socialize, share ideas, and give feedback for the content created.Moreover, it has influenced a lot of fields, such as health, defense, banking, commerce, marketing and entertainment, and even education (Bolat, 2018). It is because there is an increase in the total number of social media websites, which enables people from around the world to access them (Kavaliauskienė & Ashkinazi, 2014). There are a number of social media sites people commonly access; Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Whatssapp, YouTube, etc. (Ali, 2018; Bolat, 2018; Kavaliauskienė & Ashkinazi, 2014).

The role of social media in education has been investigated by Alfahadi (2017). He conducted a study in Tabuk University which resulted that there was an incorporation of social media sites in English Foreign Learning syllabi. The reason was they provided combination of sound, text and videos that students can practice their English by giving comment and learn from direct feedback from others. Since it is integrated in the syllabi, teachers are expected to use the social media as well. Based on the study from Ünsal (2018), teachers tend to utilize social media, such as You Tube, Instagram, and Whatssapp as the media, lessons, and entertainment in their daily life. Furthermore, social media is cogitated to be part of sustainable and long life time learning through virtual learning communities for teachers to support their professional development (Alberth, Mursalim, Siam, & Ino, 2018).

Meanwhile, the social media commonly used by the students in his study is YouTube. Moreover, based on a research by Dunn (2013) and Handayani (2016) students obtained benefits from the use of social media in the classroom; to be more motivated and engaged in the learning process, collaborate with other students and teachers, enable them to share ideas, create their own content, publish it, as parts of 21st century skills. Most of the students interacted through Facebook site. On the other hand, Saudi students preferred Twitter as the social media utilized in English learning for its quick and simple features, so that students could freely state their opinion, engage in discussions, and even getting information from around the world (Aloraini & Cardoso, 2018).

Therefore, it can be inferred that social media is effective in English learning, since based a number studies, students benefits from the use of it as there are changes in their perceptions, attitudes, and expectations, which become positive, even though there are differences in the social media sites preference (Akhiar, Mydin, & Kasuma, 2017; Alnujaidi, 2016; Odewumi, Yusuf, & Oputa, 2018). However, the study from Dunn (2013) also revealed a fact that students mostly spent their times accessing social media for personal use rather than for researching and studying. Furthermore, even though Instagram is also popular, besides Facebook, Twitter, and You Tube, there are limited studies regarding to this issue (Al-ali, 2014; Hu, Manikonda, & Kambhampati, 2017), especially in relation to Instagram use in the English learning activities. Thus, this study investigates the use of Instagram to develop students' motivation and to enhance their English knowledge and skills, so that students will obtain the experience of learning English, not just for personal use.

A relatively current social media site and as a platform to share photos among its users, Instagram was initiated by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in 2010. It is a simple and freely downloaded from App Store online via smart phones and tablets (Ting, Cyril De Run, & Liew, 2016). This site facilitates its users to capture, filter and share any of their precious moments in life (pictures and videos), not only to their followers in Instagram, but also to their friends in other social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, it allows the users to express themselves, as in writing a caption below the photos or videos, share information, interact with others, spend their free time, and even for entertainment (Alhabash & Ma, 2017; Handayani, 2016). Since Instagram proposes the concepts of visualization as the character of the site, it is even utilized by companies to promote their products and services (Alhabash & Ma, 2017; Hu et al., 2017). Consequently, Instagram has reached millions of user accounts in a short time, because it is user friendly and very popular. There are billions of photos uploaded in this site from more than 150 million active users around the world. A year after, it was awarded App of the Year by Apple Inc in 2011 (Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016; Ting et al., 2016).

Like Twitter and Facebook, Instagram also lets its users to connect with their colleagues, relatives, and friends. However, there is a difference in the networking system. While the people connect to the users are called "friends" in Facebook, the users following an Instagram account are called "followers". In addition, the network is asymmetric, i.e., if a user A follows B, B does not need to follow A back. According to Instagram privacy settings, it allows people to freely choose who are able to see, like, or comment to their updates, whether they are open to public or only to their followers (Hu et al., 2017). In addition, Instagram is not only for sharing photos and videos, but also to create a community in any field, where the people involved may widen their networking as well as exchanging ideas, knowledge, or information (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018). Due to these distinctive characteristics, Instagram has been used for teaching general English to Arab learners since 2015 and followed by more than 48 thousands students (AlGhamdi, 2018).

As young generation who are more familiar with Instagram, teachers should be aware of this fact by integrating it into classroom activities, so that students have a chance to exchange opinions and participate in asking and giving comment on a photo of videos, engage in online discussion and as a result, the learning environment will be more fun and interesting, and furthermore, may enhance students' learning autonomy (Dewi, Fajriyah, & Salam, 2018; Handayani, 2016; Mansor & Rahim, 2017; Nagel, Remillard, Aucoin, & Takenishi, 2018; Purnama, 2018). However, teachers should

monitor the contents of students posting carefully, for example by providing guidelines about the contents should be posted. This will assist both teachers and students to keep the learning activities on track and to avoid students from being busy to choose the most attractive filter rather than thinking of the appropriate captions along with the posting (Al-ali, 2014).

A number of studies have also showed that Instagram aids students in improving their English skills, listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary along with their arguing and clarifying ability, especially in their task-related activity (Al-ali, 2014; Aloraini, 2018; Anggraeni, 2010; Handayani, 2017; Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016; Kurniawan & Kastuhandani, 2016; Listiani, 2016; Mansor & Rahim, 2017; Rinda, Novawan, & Miqawati, 2018; Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018; Vianty & Palmi, 2014). Most of them investigated the use of Instagram to improve students' writing skill. Students obtain advantages such as, the comments given by their peers in their post, even the negative ones, have encouraged them to correct their spelling and grammar, enrich the vocabularies, to produce a better essay (Akhiar et al., 2017; Anggraeni, 2010; Rinda et al., 2018; Shazali, Shamsudin, & Yunus, 2019). Besides, according to two experimental studies of Soviyah & Etikaningsih (2018) and Listiani (2016) there was a significant difference on students' writing score, between those who were and were not taught using Instagram in the learning activity. Students who were asked to write a descriptive and recount text based on pictures in Instagram gained more score compared to those who did not, which may indicate that Instagram promoted a better understanding for students. Moreover, students were more motivated to write, because Instagram provided interesting pictures which giving them ideas in writing, that were related to the context being taught (Handayani, 2017).

Regarding to students' motivation, it refers to internal and external encouragement to improve one's behavior and way of thinking (Hamzah, 2009). There are several characteristics or indicators to aid teachers to conclude if the students are motivated in learning English. According to Djaali (2009) and Hamzah (2009), the internal indicators are that the students: 1) are able to find other learning sources besides the ones teachers provide, 2) are encouraged to learn and do the tasks independently, 3) have a desire to be the best among their classmates, 4) are eager to get feedback from their peers or teacher, 5) seek problems and solve them, etc., while the external factors are: 1) interesting learning activities and 2) supporting learning environment.

Method

The method utilised in this study is a case study since it referred toan in-depth and detailed study of a small group of individuals, i.e., 93 students in the first grade of Junior High School in Indonesian School of Jeddah (SIJ) who come from various background yet they are lack of motivation. This study is typically qualitative research which resulting in a narrative description of behaviors and experiences of phenomenon on students in SIJ.

The steps of implementing Instagram in the classroom are: 1) Teacher posted a picture or a text, 2) She typed a question using "questions" feature, 3) She clicked the "poll" feature to gather responses from the followers who are also her students, 4) After 24 hours, she checked all the responses to find out how many students have answered correctly. The time to respond to the teacher's post is limited, because she posted the questions using Instagram stories, which has only 24 hours to appear in students' timeline.

Results and Discussion

This research focuses on the use of Instagram to improve students' motivation in learning English and also to increase their grammatical competence and skills especially, vocabulary and writing. As a media of teaching and learning activities, Instagram plays important tool to motivate students. These are several characteristics or indicators regarded that through Instagram, the students are motivated in learning English. *First,* students are able to find other learning sources besides the ones teachers provide. They try to find sources or texts based on the teacher's advice. *Second,* students are

encouraged to learn and do the tasks independently. They do the task in the Instagram. If teacher explains how to do the exercises, they take notes and do the exercises directly. *Third,*students have a desire to be the best among their classmates, they always want to achieve better English score than my classmates. *Fourth, s*tudents are eager to get feedback from their peers or teacher. They are pleased if teacher provides feedback about the exercises given in Instagram or gives some rewards from their friends if they are able to do the exercises given by teacher in Instagram. If the teacher praises students' work on the exercises in Instagram, their learning motivation improve. If teacher gives suggestion about how to improve their English, they will remember and follow the suggestion. *Fifth,* students seek problems and solve them. They like and curious to solve some exercises given in Instagram, they are very pleased if they are able to complete the exercises in Instagram on time. *Sixth,* students get involved in teaching and learning process through Instagram. Learning materials were clear and helpful for them to comprehend the lesson and the exercises were interesting such as games, riddle, story. Etc. *Seventh,* students find new learning environment. Instagram support learning environment to improve students' knowledge and skills. *The last,* students' grammatical competence, vocabulary and writing skills are better after learning through Instagram. They want teacher implements Instagram as learning media more.

Based on the result of the study, it is precise that Instagram has essential roles in assisting students to improve their motivation in learning English and eventually increase their English competence and skills. The findings are similar to a number of studies conducted in this field (Al-ali, 2014; Aloraini, 2018; Anggraeni, 2010; Handayani, 2017; Khalitova & Gimaletdinova, 2016; Kurniawan & Kastuhandani, 2016; Listiani, 2016; Mansor & Rahim, 2017; Rinda, Novawan, & Miqawati, 2018; Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018; Vianty & Palmi, 2014).Regarding to students' motivation, according to the findings, there are several indicators as to infer if one's motivation has developed, such as, students are willing to learn and complete the task immediately, having a desire to achieve high score and be the best among the others, etc., as what Djaali (2009) and Hamzah (2009) have explained.

Conclusions

As a new social media platform, Instagram has proved that it is not just utilized to connect with others, but also as an English learning media. Its features which allows users to upload and share photos, pictures, and videos for public or private, has attracted students' interest. Unfortunately, the use of Instagram often is for personal use. Hence, according to a number of studies, teachers have applied Instagram as an English learning media and they succeeded. The result of this study supports the previous ones, as Instagram aided students in encouraging them in learning English and even improve their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies investigates which features of Instagram which are utilised more in the learning process, and to analyse students' works which use this application, in terms of error or discourse analysis.

Acknowledgments

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