

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the study. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significances of the study.

1.1 Background of the Research

Over the last decade, there has been a rapid growth in the use of digital technologies, the internet, and social media platforms in the learning process. A current tendency that connects digital technology and language learning is Mobile-assisted Language Learning (MALL). According to Ahmadi & Tabatabaei (2021), using mobile phones and social media platforms in language teaching and learning has been acknowledged as an innovative method. However, most of the students in higher education use mobile phones and social media as a learning medium.

One of the social media platforms that has gained unprecedented numbers of users is Instagram. Based on We Are Social Digital Reports (2023), Instagram became the second level in a survey as the most active social media platform in Indonesia with a percentage of 86.5%. Instagram is not only used as a social networking platform it has also evolved into a self-learning medium. It relates to Wiktor's (2012), statement that Instagram is beneficial for learning. Instagram has various features that assist English learning, such as posting photos to feeds, writing captions, making short videos on Instagram stories, and uploading videos which are presently referred to as Instagram reels. Instagram reels are an effective feature for offering English learning since they are provided for a long duration allowing the creators to deliver English learning content. Therefore, many content creators prefer to submit English learning videos through the Instagram reels feature.

Due to that phenomenon, the researcher conducted a preliminary short interview with the students in higher education at Tasikmalaya, Indonesia. The researcher found that half of the students use Instagram as a self-learning medium. They believe that Instagram can help them to enhance their language skills. From the English learning contents shared on Instagram, they find out that many Instagram Reels contents provide English learning such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation which attracts their attention to watch and learn. So, many of them usually follow the account and take advantage to save the videos as one of the features in Instagram. It aims to ensure that English learning content can be easily found and re-watch. Meanwhile, some students watched English learning content by following the algorithm on Instagram which means they watched and learn from the content when it accidentally passes by. Considering the English learning that is accessible through Instagram reels, this could serve as an option for an English learning medium. Therefore, the idea of exploring students' perception on the use of Instagram Reels in English learning comes from there.

Furthermore, related to the use of Instagram in English learning, some studies have investigated how students utilise Instagram in their learning activities. As an example, Anindita & Noveintine (2022), conducted research that focused on how EFL students use Instagram as an English learning medium. They found that Instagram has positive roles both for learning and entertaining students. All features of Instagram can assist the students in English learning that help increase their English skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. This study has the same focus namely how Instagram is used as an English learning medium. However, their research used qualitative descriptive as their research method with open-ended questionnaires to collect the data. Meanwhile, in a recent study, the researcher focused on investigating how Instagram Reels can be used as an English learning medium, and use semi-structured interviews to collect the data. Another research was conducted by Dewi, Marsakawati, Putra,

Suwastini (2022). They investigated students' perceptions, strategies, and challenges on using Instagram Reels as an authentic tool for improving speaking skills. They found that most students agreed that implementing Instagram Reels as an authentic tool in speaking was adaptable, effective, and authentic. The similarities with this research are finding out students' perceptions on using Instagram Reels in English learning and using qualitative as a method. However, in their research, the researcher focused on speaking skills that can be learned from Instagram Reels, whereas, in this research, the researcher focuses on students' perceptions on how Instagram Reels are used as English learning medium. Their research also used McKernan's five data analysis steps. Meanwhile, this research will use Thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the data.

In conclusion, based on the previous studies and phenomenon above, the researcher is fascinated to explore students' perceptions on the use of Instagram Reels in their English learning to find a more detailed, nuanced, and updated understanding of Instagram Reels function as an English learning medium.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

In relation to the background, the problem is formulated as, "What are students' perceptions on the use of Instagram Reels in English Learning at one of the universities in Indonesia?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in the study, the researcher provides the definitions related to the study as follows:

English Learning : Is an activity to learn English through Instagram Reels content. The students usually learn English skills such as speaking, reading, and listening through videos provided by the creator that

- uploaded to Instagram Reels as an autonomous learning.
- Instagram Reels : It is one of the features of the Instagram platform that is used for sharing English learning through videos. In this situation, creators typically make English-learning videos containing samples of phrases, sentences, or how to pronounce a word.
- Students' perceptions : It is students' points of view or recognitions and interpretations on using Instagram Reels for their English learning. The students are English Education Department students who have Instagram account and learn English from the videos shared by the creators through Instagram Reels.

1.4 Aim of the Research

The study aims to explore students' perception on the use of Instagram Reels in English learning at one of the universities in Indonesia.

1.5 The Significances of the Research

1.5.1 Theoretical Use

This study enriches the literature on the use of Instagram Reels as a medium in English Learning.

1.5.2 Practical Use

This study will provide sources for teachers and students in choosing Instagram features as a medium in English Learning activity, precisely Instagram Reels.

1.5.3 Empirical Use

The study will contribute empirical evidence for the researcher about students' perceptions on the use of Instagram Reels in their English learning.