

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In the modern digital era, the learning landscape has shifted toward online learning media, which are interactive platforms offering users direct control over accessing educational resources, such as English language materials (Prabawati et al., 2021). This transformation is most clearly reflected in the use of social media, which has become an important part of everyday life where platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok serve not only as a means of communication but also as a source of information and learning (Prabawati et al., 2021). When learning English, social media offers various benefits that support the learning process, and the use of social media applications for online teaching and learning may become an alternative solution to support the use of online educational platforms. Marzuki and Santiana (2022) stated that social media in learning has positive impacts, such as facilitating interaction between teachers and students outside the classroom, enabling file sharing, quizzes, assignments, and effective feedback. In addition, social media can increase student motivation and engagement in the learning process, creating a more engaging and collaborative learning experience (Marzuki & Santiana, 2022). Digital apps are used in English language learning to increase students' interest, motivation, and activity, especially in learning vocabulary (Fatimah & Santiana, 2017). The integration of digital applications into the curriculum also ensures the use of technology as an ongoing part of the English language learning process in elementary schools (Fatimah & Santiana, 2017).

Social media can foster intercultural awareness, socio-pragmatics, audience engagement, learner identities, language user identities, and specific literacies (Reinhardt, 2019). Recent studies highlight the growing importance of social media in English language learning, noting that various platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp are frequently used by students for both general and educational purposes (Al Arif, 2019; Kadek Puspa et al., 2021; Li,

2017). These tools have been found to positively impact language skills, vocabulary, grammar, and motivation (Kadek Puspa et al., 2021). Additionally, students prefer using social media to interact with their classmates rather than with teachers, indicating an increase in student-student interactions (Li, 2017). The integration of social media in English learning has been shown to enhance communication skills and promote collaborative learning (Mubarak, 2016).

In addition to facilitating general engagement, video content on Instagram is proven to significantly improve speaking skills. A study conducted at Sultan Sharif Kasim State Islamic University found that the use of English video content on Instagram contributed 74.4% to improving students' speaking proficiency (Asiska, 2022). Social media platforms assist learners in enhancing their English proficiency through more diverse content, which motivates students in their journey of learning the language with ini these platforms. The beneficial effects of social media need to be acknowledged to elevate the quality of students' English language acquisition. For university students studying English as a Foreign Language, incorporating social media should be taken into account to boost their language abilities by selecting suitable types of social media for effective English teaching and learning. According to Al Arif (2019), social media can be successfully coordinated into English dialect learning to affect different dialect abilities emphatically. Jayantini (2021) and Hairul and Nurhayati (2003) also noted that learners generally hold favorable views regarding the use of social media as a means to enhance their English language abilities across various skills.

However, while students generally exhibit positive attitudes towards using social media for language learning (Al Arif, 2019), educators are advised to raise awareness about academic integrity and provide proper training (Li, 2017). Based on previous studies related to this topic, this research mainly focuses on the perceptions and motivations of university students who actively use Instagram; generalization of the findings to other educational settings and other demographic groups of EFL learners may be limited. There is a lack of research on how students at different academic levels and institutions perceive Instagram as a learning tool.

While this study highlights the positive aspects of using Instagram in English language teaching, it does not explore the potential challenges or negative perceptions students may have regarding its use. The study noted that although students were asked about barriers, they did not provide any insight or detailed analysis of their responses, which suggests students' lack of understanding of the wider experience with Instagram as a learning platform.

This positive sentiment has led to the emergence of specific, informal resources, such as the video uploads from influencer Zelyna Fahrani, who is widely followed for her unique fluency and use of the British accent. The urgency of this research lies in the gap between this positive view and our limited understanding of the specific informal learning mechanism. Although her followers vary from long-time fans to new followers, urgent research is needed to explore in depth how ini ini these viewers understand, interpret, and internalize the learning material presented on Zelyna's Instagram account outside of the classroom context, thereby measuring the true impact and challenges of this influencer-driven learning model in the digital era. This research has an urgency, namely, how influential English language learning is through social media, because with the development of technology, more interesting learning media can be used as a place to learn. The contribution that researchers will make in this study is to find out the impact of learning English using social media by interviewing the experiences or perceptions of people who have used it, so that the results of this study can be used as a reference for further research.

This study aims to know the audience's perceptions after the audience watches English language educational videos uploaded by Zelina Fahrani on her Instagram account, by following the suggestions of previous researchers, namely, examining the potential barriers students face when using Instagram to learn English. Understanding ini these challenges can help develop better strategies for integrating social media into language teaching. Overall, these studies suggest that social media can be an effective tool for improving English language skills in various educational contexts.

B. Formulation of the Problem

According to the background of the study above, the problems can be identified as follows: “How do followers of Zelina Fahrani's Instagram account perceive the effectiveness of the English language educational video content she uploads in the context of informal English language learning?”

C. Operational Definitions

The researcher provides four definitions of each keyword related to the investigation to prevent misinterpretations. These are:

- 1. Social Media** : Social media is an Internet-based platform or application that allows users to create, share, exchange content, and interact with each other. Social media includes various forms of communication, such as text, images, video, and audio, and is often used to build social networks, share information, and participate in discussions.
- 2. English Learning** : English learning refers to the process in which a person learns and masters English as a first and second language.
- 3. Perception** : Perception is a mental process in which an individual organizes, interprets, and gives meaning to sensory information from the environment. Each person's perception is different, depending on background, experience, and situation. This explains why people can see and

feel the same thing in various ways.

- 4. Zelina Fahrani** : Zelina Fahrani, known on social media as @zelynafah, is an Indonesian content creator active on platforms like TikTok and Instagram. She is known for creating educational content with a particular focus on learning English with a British accent.

D. Aim of the Research

This research aims to find out the perceptions of Instagram followers of Zelina Fahrani's account regarding the effectiveness of the English educational video content uploaded by her in the context of informal English language learning.

E. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This study contributes theoretically by expanding the existing literature on Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), specifically by providing empirical insights into the pedagogical role and effectiveness of the influencer-driven learning model (Zelina Fahrani) and the influence of authentic video content on audience perception and skill mastery in the context of informal English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

2. Practical Significance

This research will provide an experience of English learning media to know more about English that is commonly used in the surrounding environment.

3. Empirical Significance

This research will add to the literature on the English learning videos uploaded on the Zelina Fahrani account.