Play with social media 'Instagram' in EFL Writing and Critical Thinking Skill: how can?

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana sosial media Instagram dapat di terapkan dalam kemampuan menulis dan kemampuan berpikir kritis pada EFL. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian perpustakaan. Data diperoleh dengan cara menganalisis data informasi. Terdapat beberapa aplikasi sosial media yang populer seperti Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, WhatsApp, Line, and Google+, akan tetapi aplikasi yang paling sering digunakan adalah Instagram. Instagram menyediakan beberapa fitur yang dapat membuat guru dan siswa menikmati proses pembelajaran. Disamping itu, Instagram memungkinkan siswa untuk menghindari rasa bosan dan tekanan mental. Selain itu, Instagram juga dapat digunakan untuk mendukung ke empat kemampuan berbahasa. Beberapa penelitian menemukan bahwa Instagram digunakan untuk mengembangkan kemampuan menulis. Selain itu, dengan memberikan komentar pada foto dan video yang di unggah ke Instagram, dapat membantu siswa dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berpendapat, meluapkan ide, dan kemampuan berpikir kritis.

Kata Kunci: Instagram, kemampuan menulis, kemampuan berpikir kritis

Abstract

This paper aims at explaining how social media Instagram can be implemented in EFL writing competence and critical thinking skill. This paper is library research. The data were collected by analyzing the data information. There are several trending social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, Line, and Google+, however the most popular application used is Instagram. It provides features that can make both teacher and students enjoying the learning process. Besides, it enables students to avoid their stress and boredom. Rather than that, Instagram can be used to support the four language skills. However, some studies found that Instagram is used for developing writing skill. Additionally, by commenting the uploading photos and videos on Instagram, it can help students in increasing their opinions, ideas, and critical thinking skill.

Keywords: Instagram, writing competence, critical thinking skill

Introduction

One of the activities that is often done by people nowadays is playing with their smart phones, especially with their social media. As supported by a Pew Report (2018), 42% from 100% of the world population is detected as social media users. For the most popular social media to visit are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, and many others (Aydin, 2012; Hsieh, 2017). However, among all the existing social media, Instagram has become one of the most popular applications used in the world (Smith & Anderson, 2018), though it is launched in October 2010 with over 300 million active users in 2015 (Kelly, 2015). Knowing these issues, some educators try to utilize this application as a powerful tool for educational purposes (Alsharidi, 2018). As its definition, Instagram is a social media application which allows the users to share their photos, videos, and story gram with the followers. Nowadays, Instagram has improved their features which enables the users to have live video, uploading video with more than one minute duration and it is called IG TV, highlighting the story gram, having communication with the follower through video chat, making group chat, and so on (Moreira, Ferreira, Pereira, & Durão, 2016).

As one of technology productions, the use of social media has been legalized as a learning platform especially in the field of foreign language teaching and learning (Krutka & Carpenter, 2016). It is because social media provides some features that can attract students' enthusiasm in the learning. As claimed by McCarroll & Curran (2013), social media platforms can avoid students' stress and boredom, even it creates an enjoyable circumstance in the teaching and learning. In terms of language learning, Instagram can be used to practice the four language skills, such as grammar and reading activities through photos, listening and speaking activities through videos, and writing (Handayani, 2016). However, some studies associate Instagram for developing writing skills (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018). Related to its function which are enable users to post contents of photos and videos, add captions, tag users, add location, add hashtags, follow other users, check feeds, add comments, send direct message, and many more (Handayani, 2018), it can help both teacher and students in having a fun writing teaching and learning practice. Other than that, Instagram is easy to access (Al-Ali, 2014).

By using Instagram in writing teaching and learning is an alternative technique to apply 21st century skills. As claimed by Ledward and Hirata in Fandino (2013), 21st century skill should be consisted of an integrated knowledge, particular skill, and literacy of technology which includes critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. Meanwhile, in relating the use of Instagram in writing teaching and learning can be in form of submitting writing assignments. It can be done by uploading a post of images (Anggraeni, 2017). From the submitting assignment, the other students are asked to comment or giving their opinions, and or critical thinking. Indirectly, they are building an online interaction through writing the comment.

Thus, this paper aims at explaining how social media Instagram can be implemented in EFL writing competence and critical thinking skill.

Problem Identification

Nowadays, people are less competent in writing skill. Even, undergraduate learners face the same problem. It is because there are several things that must be considered in writing such as grammatical correction, spelling, vocabulary chosen, and many more (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016). Whereas writing skill must be improved and need to be acquired by students. Besides being able to produce a written work, students are able to express their thought, ideas, opinion, and critical thinking through writing. Therefore, there must be a tool used in order to solve this problem.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to describe how social media Instagram can be implemented in EFL writing competence and critical thinking skill.

Literature Review
Critical Thinking

The ability to think critically has been identified as an essential life skill (Galinsky, 2010). Critical thinking can be developed through online interaction. It can be done by giving feedback. The impact of online critical thinking in writing activities especially in argumentative writing is very significant. According to Innis (2015), critical thinking involves several steps such as identify the issue, think about the goal, brainstorm possible solutions, think through possible results, try one of the solutions, and finally evaluate thr outcome. Therefore, critical thinking can be defined as a mental process (Costa and Kallick, 2014). Critical thinking is an intellectual process of conceptualizing, analyzing, and criticizing information (NCECT, 2017).

Writing Competence

Writing is one of language skills and it is categorized as language production. It also can be defined as the most difficult skill compared with other language skill (Khan & Bontha, 2014; Richards & Renandya, 2002). However, writing competence must be mastered by language learners. Writing is a form of manifestation of the ability and language skills that mostly mastered after listening, speaking, and reading (Nurgiyantoro, 2001). In addition, writing can be claimed as a complex process in which the writers are enables to explore their thinking and ideas. Another expert is also defined writing as an essentially series of words that are prepared as well so it can be easily to read and understood (Gunantar & Transinata, 2019). In the world of English language teaching, the indicators that must be mastered in writing are tittle, topic sentence, grammar, diction, development, arrangement and mechanic. By writing, a person can express their thoughts and ideas about something.

In general, writing is an activity expressing ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings by the writer to the reader in the form of writing or language written. To support the aforementioned definition, Khasanah (2015) states that writing is an activity to express ideas, events, feelings or thought in written form that can be the medium to interact with other people. Writing competency is defined as a set of attitudes, knowledge, and skills in writing. Na Phuket (2015) found that there is previous research discovered students are weak in writing and often make mistakes in the word choices, verbs, and prepositions. It is because there are so many things that must be considered in writing. Therefore, it cannot be denied writing is one skill that must be mastered besides listening, speaking, and reading.

Social Media Instagram

Social media has become a trend in society nowadays. As stated by a Pew Report (2018), there are 42% of the world population is detected as active social media users and 53% of the world population is detected as active internet users. Regarding these phenomena, some studies are legalized social media as a learning platform in order to support foreign language teaching and learning (Krutka & Carpenter, 2016; Manca & Ranieri, 2016;). Among social media exist such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Line, Google+ which heavily accesses by younger generation (Counts & Fisher, 2010; Dunn, 2013; Lunden, 2014; Oliveira, 2014), Instagram is one of the most popular to access. Even though, it is not specifically designed for learning needs, but the features provided can be utilized to support the learning. As maintained by Vivakaran & Neelamalar, (2018), social media Instagram can replace the conventional teaching through its interactive features. In terms of

language learning, Instagram can be used to support the four language skills such as reading and writing through the photos, listening and speaking through the videos (Ali, 2019). In addition, Instagram can give any other beneficial for the learning such as increasing students' motivation and engaging students' participation (Purnama, 2018).

Instagram has not design as learning tool or learning needs. However, the features in Instagram can be used to support language learning especially in EFL writing competence and critical thinking skill. It is evidence by some studies which is found that social media can be used as a learning platform (Krutka & Carpenter, 2016; Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Among the social media exist such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and many more, Instagram is chosen as the most popular used. Related to these phenomena, some educators try to utilize the Instagram for educational purposes. In this case, Instagram will use as a platform in teaching writing competence and critical thinking skill. The following are the features which are commonly used by users (Handayani, 2016);

1. Instagram profile interface
   In this part, there are user profiles such as biography, profile photo, feeds, users' follower and following count.
2. Profile content
   In this part, there is a display for the viewers to scroll down the profile in order to see the photo posted.
3. Instagram's photo content
   In this part, the viewers can display the photos or video in order to see it clearly and or give a love, leave a comment, and read others' comment posted. In addition, viewers can see how many loves obtained and its caption.
4. Navigation tools
   In this part, there are five icons provided such as home page, explore page, posting page, notification page, and user's profile page.

Regarding the previous features, Instagram provides some advantages as a tool in teaching language (Handayani,

2016). First, it can help in increasing communication skills and it facilitate the shy students. As commonly known, there are some students who have problems with their confidence. In this case, Instagram can be used as an alternative way to involve those students. Second, it can improve students' writing skills. Related to the features provided, Instagram more relies on written word by creating a caption, commenting on others' post, and or having chat with friends (followers). Third, it enables students to have collaboration and peer feedback among students. This activity can be realized by doing commenting each other's work in a post. Fourth, it can promote interpersonal skills among students. By using a trend social media, there must be an individual interest about someone's privacy. It can trigger the students to know more information about the others by following them, then continue with love and comment on their post. Through this, there will be an interpersonal relationship. Thus, teacher can apply this application in order to engage students and increase their motivation in the learning process.

Method

This paper is designed in form of library research. Library research is conducted to collect the necessary data through reading the literature sources. The data were taken from several sources, such as research article, electronic book (e-book), and any other relevant sources. The collected data were analyzed through qualitative data analysis. The data collection was analyzed by adapting the process of analyzing data by Burns (1999: 157), which consisted of five procedures, i.e., assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, building interpretations, and reporting the outcomes.

Findings and Discussion

How Instagram can be implemented in EFL writing and critical thinking skill?
The most popular and the most accessible sites in the world today is social networking. According to a Pew Report

(2018), there are 42% from 100% of the world population is detected as social media users and 53% of the world population is detected as active internet users. However, among all the existing of social media, Instagram become one of the most popular applications used in the world (Smith & Anderson, 2018). This application is launched in October 2010 with over 300 million active users in 2015 (Kelly, 2015). Instagram is a social media application which allows the users to share their photos, videos, and story gram with the followers. Nowadays, Instagram has improved their features which enables the users to have live video, uploading video with more than one minute duration and it is called IG TV, highlighting the story gram, having communication with the follower through video chat, making group chat, and so on (Moreira, Ferreira, Pereira, & Durão, 2016). Furthermore, Instagram can be defined as a communication tool which uses in the form of advertisements and news (Gunantar & Transinata, 2019). This application can be used for teaching the four language skills. However, some studies associate Instagram for developing writing skills (Soviyah & Etikaningsih, 2018).

There are several reasons of using social media Instagram for students' writing skill improvement. First, students and teachers can easily access the internet anywhere and anytime. Second, nowadays people are claimed as smartphones' active users. Third, Intagram become the most popular social media used in students' circle. Fourth, Instagram provides fun features which avoids people's boredom. One of the features is photo or picture posted. Harmer (2004) states that picture helps students in developing their creativity in writing and expressing their ideas. By using Instagram, teachers don't need to handle the whole learning process, meanwhile they can take a responsibility as a facilitator and a guidance. It means, students must be given opportunity to think critically and increase their creativity about the issues trend which shares online.

Regarding the previous statements, Instagram can be used as a platform for teaching news item in senior high school.

News item is a kind of material which encourages the readers to give a respond through finding the solution and using their critical thinking. In order to implement Instagram in EFL teaching and learning, especially in teaching critical thinking and writing skills, there are several steps include;

1. Instagram Account
   Instagram account must be the first thing to have. Make sure it is a real account and using the real name of the users. In this case, the teacher can create an Instagram account which can be considered as group class account. This account must be handled by the teacher, as admin.
2. Following the others
   Ask the students to follow the group class account and their classmate's account. This aims to make them knowing each other. Rather than that, by following the group class account, they can know the latest information or post of the teacher.
3. Posting the Material
   There are so many ways to provide the material. It can be done by uploading photos, videos, and story gram. It depends on the topic given.
4. Comment
   Ask the students to comment the post. Let them have an argumentative writing and sharing their ideas, opinions, even critical thinking skill. Indirectly, they are building an online interaction.
5. Feedback
   For the teacher, don't forget to join in. Play the role as a teacher by giving feedback, suggestion, and criticism to the students' discussion.
6. Assignment
   Ask students to post their writing competence. It can be more than 10 sentences. This assignment can be written in caption and images or photos relates to the topic given.

The implementation of Instagram in EFL Teaching and Learning

This application can be applied for teaching news item in the twelfth-grade

students. News item is a text which informs the readers about an important event of the day. It aims to inform the readers about newsworthy of the day. News item has three generic structures namely, main event (newsworthy event which recounts the event in summary form), elaboration (background event which elaborates what is happened, to whom, and in what circumstance), and resource of information (contains comments by participants and witnesses). The following are the learning steps;

1. The teacher as facilitator and guidance asks students to be ready with their Instagram.
2. The teacher tags a post on students' Instagram account. The post is a kind of video about teacher charged with child abuse for slapping students.
3. The students are asks to watch it carefully, then continue with leaving some comments by using their critical thinking and writing skill.
4. The teacher involves in the comments section in order to give feedback on students' comments.
5. The students are asks to have discussion through the comments section.
6. The most participated students, the highest score (activeness) reached.
7. For the task, teacher posts a material through photos or videos about a trend issue nowadays, as for example about Garuda Indonesia airplane scandal. Teacher tags students' Instagram account, and in description section, teacher writes a caption which instructs students to give their opinions related to the material given.
8. Students are asks to re-post the material (teachers posted), and write their opinion in description section. In order to make it clear, students must tag the teacher account.
9. Teacher scores students' progress through these activities.
10. For work grouping has quite same activities in which students must show their identification in the post. For example, there are four students in a group. Make sure that those four students tag their personal account.

11. For variations, teacher instructs students to find, read, and watch a current issue which needs to be discussed in the next meeting.

The Expected Effects of Using Instagram in EFL teaching and learning

From the implementation above, students are expected to obtain a positive impact as follows;

1. Students can improve their writing skill
2. Students can enjoy the learning process
3. Students can practice their critical thinking
4. Students can be more active in the learning
5. Students can utilize their social media in a right way
6. Students can be more confidence in showing themselves
7. Students can share and exchange their opinion with others
8. Students can enhance their knowledge about the current issues
9. Students can respect on important event happened around them
10. Students can build an interpersonal skill with other students and teacher.

Conclusion

There are 42% of the world population which claims as active social media users and 53% of the world population which claims as active internet users. It means, people are addicted by the technology production. However, it is not a big problem because some experts and some educators try to utilize it in order to support the learning needs. Among several social media appeared such as Facebook, Line, YouTube, WhatsApp, and many more, Instagram become the most popular usage. Though, despite it has not design as a learning tool, but its features can be used to support learning needs such as writing competence and critical thinking skill. As its definition, Instagram is a social media which enables users to post photos, videos, story, IG live, IG TV, making group chat, sending direct message, and having video call with the follower. It has improved time by time.

However, the most features used in supporting EFL writing competence and

critical thinking skill are by uploading photos and videos. It is because photos and videos posting will be saved for long time without duration, unless the post is intentionally deleted by the users. It can be seen through its implementation for writing and critical thinking. There are several steps that can be done in order to apply this application as a learning platform, they are (1) creating an official account (class account which is handled by the teacher), (2) it must be followed by the students in order to know the latest information or post, (3) providing the material by uploading photos,

stories, or videos, (4) ask students to comment the post, it aims to enhance students critical thinking by expressing their ideas and opinion, additionally it can practice students' argumentative writing, (5) providing feedback to students, it can be in form of suggestions, criticism, and support, and (6) submitting assignment by posting their writing, it can be written in caption or photos. Related to these steps, Instagram can be claimed as an effective learning platform in teaching EFL writing competence and critical thinking skill.

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