

## Embracing Students' Self Confidence: Bringing Instagram Into English Speaking Classroom, Why Not?

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### Abstract

As one of the four English skills that has to be mastered, English learners still see that speaking mastery is challenging. Many of them are difficult to speak, although their writing, reading, and listening skills are good. This research presents a classroom action research of using Instagram in English speaking classroom with students in a private senior high school in Surakarta. The purpose of this research is to propose the use of Instagram as a social media to teach speaking as well as to find out the students' attitude towards the use of Instagram in enhancing their speaking skills. The study revealed that Instagram used in English speaking classroom brings effective meaning for them in learning English. Instagram also brings a positive attitude to students so that they can learn to speak English more easily.

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### Introduction

English is used widely around the world to communicate cross-culturally with each other. According to Crystal (2003), a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country (p.3). It can be seen, English is widely used in almost every aspect, such as government, law courts, media, and educational system. In the communication process, which is done at least by the sender and the recipient through a channel/media. Information is exchanged not only through written text (indirect conversation), but also direct conversation. In direct conversation, it is important to express opinions directly, that what makes the words used are important and hold the meaning. This fact leads English language teachers to always find a way on how to teach English speaking effectively for students, so that they will be able to have a better English speaking skill.

Speaking itself is considered as one of the four important skills that should be mastered in English as a foreign language learning. As English teachers, we expect the students to be competent and to develop speaking skills in both formal and informal situations. Speaking is considered as an interactive process of oral interaction between a speaker and listener, which involves producing, receiving, and processing speech of sound as the instrument using the right patterns of rhythm, intonation, and right order to convey the right meaning (Underwood, 1996; Bailey, 2005; Brown, 2001; Weir, 1993; Chaney and Burk, 1998; Byrne, 1997; Magiono, 2007).

In making our speaking skills are improving, it is important to know how we should convey our messages in the right meaning. In fact, as one of the four English skills that has to be mastered, English learners still see that speaking is challenging. Many of them are difficult to speak, although their writing, reading, and listening skills are good. Some of them think that speaking is a difficult subject, even though the teacher sees that they are smart enough in English. As a result, the English teaching and learning process does not achieve minimum criteria for speaking task completeness. The cause of incompleteness for students when speaking can be from internal and external factors. Mahmoudi and Mahmoudi (2015) stated that internal factors imply cognitive and affective factors

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such as motivation, intelligence, anxiety, risk-taking ability, and etc. Whereas the external factors can refer to such variables such as social class, first language, teachers, early start, and L2 curriculum.

Based on the researcher's observation for the current study in a private senior high school students in Surakarta, the students' English speaking skill is still needed to be improved. A freshman speaking class in a senior high school in Surakarta shows that they had a low speaking ability. The first revealing problem is that the students were not accustomed to speak in front of the class, so when they do, they feel shy and reluctant to speak. This problem in the researcher's point of view is caused by the students' lack of confidence. He and Chen (2010) stated that the main cause of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking English. According to the assigning lecturer, the problem that students are facing is that they thought that their English speaking skills is not good that makes them reluctant to speak in English. It is essential to give students some encouragement such as by creating class atmosphere that is comfortable and supportive, so that the students are eager to speak. By giving the students that encouragement and showing that they will be able to communicate well in English may be beneficial for their language learning success, since encouragement becomes a vital thing in order to build the students' confidence (Brown, 2001).

As the previous paragraph stated, in the process of building students' confidence, it is important for teachers creating such learning situation atmosphere to make students feel comfortable to speak, unless they will be shy and anxious. Juhana (2011) stated that shyness is an emotional thing that many students suffer from at some time when they are required to speak in English class. The researcher found that most of the students in the class tended to speak in Indonesian instead of English during the lesson. When they were asked to practice in front of the class, they seemed to be shy and hesitate to speak in English. Saurik (2011) identified that most of English students feel shy when they speak the language because they think they will make mistakes when they talk. In addition, the students were afraid to be laughed at by their friends. Based on these actual reason, when shyness is neglected in the process of English learning activities, there could be a problem in the speaking class. Paying attention to this aspect is also quite important in order to help the students do their best in their speaking performance in the classroom (Gebhard, 2000).

The other reasons why the students were reluctant to speak English is that they were afraid of making mistakes. Some scholars stated that fear of mistakes becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak English in the classroom (Nunan, 1999; Yi Htwe, 2007; Kukurs, 2010). The students were afraid of making mistakes so that they speak hesitantly. They thought that English is difficult to learn. The students also thought that they were afraid of being bullied by their friends when they are making mistakes. Some scholars confirmed that the primary reason for fear of making mistakes is linked to the issue of correction and negative evaluation that leads the students are afraid of looking foolish in front of other people and concerned about how others will see them (Kurtus, 2001; Aftat, 2008). Therefore, the lecturer has an important role to convince his/her students that making mistakes is not trivial because by making mistakes the students can learn and not repeat it again in the future.

The researcher also found many linguistic problems when the students were trying to express their ideas. They tended to apply Indonesian grammar on their sentence, such as 'I am yesterday go to my grandmother house'. This means that the students were not quite familiar to apply English grammar in their speech. Furthermore, they also tended to mispronounce words.

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Besides linguistic problems which are described above, the students' eagerness to learn English was also affected by the psychological factor. During the learning process, they did not give positive responses to the teacher's explanation. They were busy with their own activities since the learning tasks were boring.

The phenomenon explained above gives a question to the teacher to reduce the students' anxiety when students learn to speak English. Therefore, teaching English especially speaking skill should be distributed to the students by using many creative techniques. To help students perform well in speaking, certain criteria should be applied. In speaking there are some indicators criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, content, and comprehension (Nurkasih, 2010; Cohen, 1994; Iwashita, 2008; Hughes, 2003; Brown, 2010). Through that way, the students will be interested in studying English.

To promote students' achievement in speaking skills, teachers can apply a different technique that implements technology. Technology has become an increasingly influential factor in people's life. Unconsciously, the way technology sneaks into people's life has also influenced in the education field. Digital devices are used both to facilitate education aids and develop ways of learning. Digital devices such as computers, smartphones, and the internet are used to support the learning system. Technology offers powerful learning and teaching tools that demand to understand and also new skills both from teachers and students.

One of the technology parts that has increasingly become unavoidable is social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. On Twitter, its users may share pictures or written stories in 160 characters. Besides, on Facebook its users can share not only pictures and videos, but also written stories more than 500 words. It does so on Instagram. Social media or technically called as social networking sites is defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system as a platform, articulate a list of other users with whom they share an online connection, view and transverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system, to establish social relations to share information and knowledge relative to individual experiences activities in real life (Tyson, 2009; Gremu, 2012; Alassiri, 2014).

The use of social media in our life gives impact on several aspects, one of them is communication. Alassiri et al (2014) stated that social networking sites provide an interactive platform which enables its users to communicate with other members to establish social relations to share information and knowledge relative to individual experiences activities in real life.

One of the most interactive social networking sites that commonly used is Instagram. Instagram is a free online application that brings features such as picture and video. It is a photo hosting for uploading and sharing photos, as well as adding messages and uploading short (up to 60 second-long) videos (Khalitova and Gimaletdinova, 2016). Instagram allows its users to mark other users on the photos or videos, allow who can see their posts, post comments below the photo or video, and look for new people. By using Instagram people who try to catch up with others do not necessarily call them through a phone call or a message. In addition, by only writing a status or uploading a picture or video on their Instagram account, their friends or family will know what they do. What makes Instagram different from other social media platforms like Twitter or Facebook is on Instagram the users can share their pictures or videos include with their written story (captions). Compared to Facebook whose every user have limitation in their friends/

followers 5000 only, on Instagram the user's followers can be more than a million users, and what makes it more interesting is that user can only follow people they know/ want to.

In Indonesia itself, Kompas (2017) announced that Indonesia has been categorized to be the largest Instagram users in Asia Pacific, where 45 million of it is from Indonesia (p.1). This phenomenon describes how Instagram as a social media platform in many ways influencing people's lives as it expands our social circle and changing the approach of communication (Belal, 2014).

Students' speaking mastery in English non-speaking countries has been one of teachers' most challenging things to promote. Dealing with this phenomenon teachers are expected to create such ways in which students get involve in speaking activities more actively. Bringing social media platforms such as Instagram into English classroom activities can bring new atmosphere for students in learning English more effectively. There have been several findings that successfully promote students in engaging students to learn English more. Handayani (2016) stated that Instagram is an innovative tool that gives beneficial effect in improving students' language skills. Yet, Khalitova (2016) also mentioned of the efficiency a mobile application Instagram as an educational environment for learning English as foreign language.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of Instagram also brings some changes in the way people communicate with others since they seem to like snapping their moment by making a short video telling what they do. This, unconsciously influence people to be confident to express what they feel, even though through social media. Using Instagram, users try to make less mistakes in what they snap before they upload it to their account. This kind of phenomenon can be used for language teachers to make a speaking class to be more exciting and challenging. Instagram can bring a new atmosphere to the language learning system since it is not only used by language teachers, but also the students. Thus, it can provide better results of teaching effectiveness compared to traditional teaching method. From the previous explanation, the researcher wants to conduct a study to propose how Instagram can be beneficial for students in enhancing their speaking skills.

## **Methodology**

This research involved 26 participants in Al Abidin Bilingual Boarding School in Surakarta whose age are vary from 13-15 years old. The researcher only took one class of freshmen students to conduct the study in order to ease the researcher collecting the data. The class was held once a week for about 90 minutes each meeting. Classroom action research was conducted during the research. Action research in education itself is defined as the process of studying a school situation to understand and improve the quality of the education process which provides practitioners with new knowledge and understanding about how to improve educational practices or resolve significant problems in classrooms and schools that uses a systematic process (Hensen, 1996; McNiff and Whitehead, 1996; McTaggart, 1997; Dinkelman, 1997; Stringer, 2008; Mills, 2011; Johnson, 2012). The data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Observations were carried out to know how Instagram should be designed for the participants in speaking class. Furthermore, pre-test and post-test was conducted to know how effective Instagram in students' participation during speaking class.

## Results and Discussion

The outcome of observations during the speaking class activities describes that the learning process situation was more one way teaching rather than two way teaching. It was also found though the teacher delivered the material quite interesting, but the students tended to be quiet and reluctant to participate. Those who participated in class discussion were they who considered as the smart ones. The students who were considered as the less smart ones would tend to choose being quiet and not to participate in the discussion. It was also found that the teacher did not utilize technology in the class.

Speaking is still considered the hardest skill that students need to master. Lacking of motivation and interest can be one of the reason that make them being passive in the classroom. Implying technology inside classroom to create fresher atmosphere in learning activities can be an alternative. Instagram offers an alternative way to promote students improving their English speaking skills. Teacher can use Instagram to develop and increase the students' motivation to speak English better.

Researcher proposes some speaking activities which can be adapted by English teacher in the classroom by using Instagram:

### a. Capture your moments

Most people like to share their moments to their friends in social media by posting their photos on their Instagram account. Thus is also applied for students. Teachers may develop activities to promote students in learning English more interesting by creating certain topics then ask them to post a picture and explain why they chose that picture and what the picture is about in the caption section. This way, students can practice to write in English more interactive. In making this activity more challenging, teachers may ask students to make a two-minute presentation about the picture they have chosen. This way, teachers can promote students' motivation to speak English better. Hence, to differentiate the first and second activities teacher can use hashtag as general clue about the topic given that day.

Ali in Handayani (2016) supported the idea of using Instagram in language teaching. From his research, it is also stated that students did not waste a lot of their preparation time trying to look for pictures and relating them to their experiences. The activity of using Instagram made students focus on the language used rather on content. It can be shown when presenting their holiday experience, students felt proud to share pictures they took themselves, and classmates were encouraged to check pictures on Instagram to like them.

### b. My idol/ hero

Another idea using Instagram in English class especially in speaking is by assigning students to make three collages consisting of three pictures of someone famous/ known that features from time to time. After posting these pictures students will tell the story behind those collages in turns, and of course they have to provide short relevant explanation about the person then and now. Furthermore, to make the activity more interactive other students may give their opinion about the person their friend is talking about.

### c. Role Play

Implementing social media in education is not a new thing, but somehow this technique is still handy in today's condition. However, using Instagram, especially in English speaking class is still

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new. Usually the teacher will use Instagram in writing activities where they are asked to post some pictures and then write captions about those pictures.

In speaking class activities teacher can use Instagram video feature for role play activities. Teacher can assign students by making a big topic such as 'making a request'. This role play can be used as main activity since students will be working in pairs or groups. Teacher has to explain to students that their role play activity will be uploaded on Instagram. When this activity finishes teacher may also use those students' posts as evaluation about the class activity that day. Teacher may discuss about their expressions, pronunciation, grammar, etc related to the topic. This way, students can understand better about the goals of the role play given, therefore they can perform better in the future.

d. Impromptu speech (15 seconds)

Mostly, people will share their real time activity by making Instagram stories on their account. Making use of this feature in English class is a fresh idea. Teacher may assign students by designing an activity by making several topics in lottery and let students make their 15-second impromptu speech using the lottery that they get. This activity will be exciting, since students are only allowed to speak in 15 seconds. In that short time, they are probably have no time to think. Teacher may make this impromptu speech more challenging by providing topics that 'debatable'.

e. Impromptu speech (60 seconds)

People also like to make use of Instagram by posting some videos on their account. However, this video only limited to 60 seconds. More than that, their video will be cut into several parts. Making use of this feature in English speaking class, the teacher can assign students by creating an activity that let students speak in 60 seconds or more. Teacher may ask students to make another impromptu speech activity that is developed to be more challenging than the previous impromptu speech. This speech can be used after warmer activity. Teacher may make a topic that should be started by a student. He/ she has to speak in a minute about the topic given, then after finish another student will continue making a speech. The speech has to be about the last word the previous student said. This activity will continue onward until the turn ends.

f. Pronunciation

There are a lot of Instagram posts that can be explored as English speaking materials. Before class begin, teacher can do some little research which Instagram accounts that can be used for class activities. Of course when the activity is about to explore students' pronunciation, teachers may use some celebrities/ actors accounts and use one of their posts as learning material. Teacher may use one example before beginning the activity, and ask students to watch the video. After students finish watching the video, ask them to listen again. This time, ask students to write what they hear. Processing the audio to written text needs time. Students will adapt with the voice from the video. Then teacher can ask what words that students can hear. This time students' answer will vary, and teacher can explore again to lead students to the main activity. Teacher may ask them to work in groups and this time they have to write transcript of the video. When all the group finish this activity, ask one or two groups to come forward and perform as if they are the artist from the video.

As the main activity, teacher can assign students to split from their group and work individually. Then, using different video, teacher can tell students by following the previous activity

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students will perform another pronunciation activity that they have done with their group. What makes it different is that in this activity students will work individually. For this activity the teacher should have prepared another video from actors that can be shorter/ longer enough for students to listen. This way, the activity will be more challenging.

g. Mini diary

Mostly, people use Instagram to share their experiences or thoughts or even opinions of something. Usually they prefer to share it on their Instagram stories. However, stories only last for 24 hours. Even though they can keep it if they want by making highlights, if stories they want to share are video format, the videos are limited up to 15 seconds only. Longer than that, the videos will be automatically cut into several parts. Making use of this Instagram feature for English speaking class, the teacher can create some activities and use Instagram at the end on the activity as students' mini diary. Through this activity the teacher can ask students to share their thoughts and put it on their Instagram highlight. Students can name the highlight using the date of the task given.

On the other hand, despite using Instagram stories, teachers can use video format and let students to post it on their Instagram feed. This way, students can post more than one 60-second video in one post. Using this activity in diary format, students not also can follow their English progress from time to time, but also the teacher can also use this as students' feedback for better teaching improvement and evaluation in the future.

There are twenty six female students aged 13-15 who participated in this study. The participants had two speaking assessments: a pre-test during the first week and a post-test during the last week of the experiment. From the pre-test it reveals the language problems faced by the participants. In the pre-test students were asked to upload a 60-second video using mini diary format. For the task, students had to tell what they felt when using Instagram to learn English. From Table 1, it can be seen from the pre-test result that students having problems on their vocabulary. Their vocabulary points are 2.96 which means they only master basic vocabulary and limited. This points also means that their choice of words seems to inaccurate and limited that can be used only for survival rates.

**Tabel 1. Speaking Assessment**

No	Competence assessed	Points (max)	Pre-test	Post-test
1	Accent/ pronunciation	6	3.64	4.13
2	Grammar	6	3.24	4.21
3	Vocabulary	6	2.96	4.38
4	Fluency	6	3.44	4.29
5	Comprehension/ content	6	3.56	4.92
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>16.84</b>	<b>21.93</b>

**Conclusion**

The study revealed that the use of Instagram in English speaking classroom not only can build their confidence, awareness of their pronunciation, and fluency to speak, but also create an interactive atmosphere among students in learning English. Instagram also brings a positive attitude to students so that they can learn to speak English more easily. Instagram facilitates

students to speak more in English in a condition that students will be fully participated and are involved in self-study.

The current study also revealed that Instagram can be utilized as a good online educational learning tool to support learning English as a foreign language. The academic achievement in speaking assessment was shown in the pre-test and post-test results. By implementing the use of Instagram in English speaking class, students show higher results gradually. Hence, Instagram use in speaking class should be continued to make students perform better.

The implementation of Instagram in teaching speaking improves the products and process of learning speaking. That can be formulated as follow:

1. Teaching speaking should be arranged to create interesting and meaningful activities. In this case, Instagram provides activities to cover major aspects in speaking.
2. Patience, creativity, interesting material, good managing the class, and clearness of instructions are needed to control the class situation in teaching learning process. It is useful to make students do all tasks on time and achieve the goal of learning process well. This also leads students to have positive attitude towards speaking.  
Teaching speaking has to consider students' motivation and enthusiasm by giving encouragements, reinforcements, advices, and rewards in order to make them motivated to improve their speaking skill.
3. The research has implication that Instagram as a social media which provides teaching speaking activities using smartphone and internet may improve students' speaking skills. Therefore, teacher could consider the use of smartphone and internet in teaching speaking activities to improve students' speaking skills.

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