

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING INSTAGRAM REELS AS MOBILE-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS

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**Abstract:** Instagram is one of the mobile apps to assist language learning. The most widely used social networking platform globally right now is Instagram. This study aimed to investigate the perspective of university students on using Instagram reels as mobile-assisted language learning to improve speaking skills whether they had a negative or positive perception of it. This study utilized a descriptive qualitative approach and the research instrument used a closed and open-ended questionnaire with 66 respondents from the first until the seventh semester. This study found that the majority of students have a positive perception of using Instagram reels in speaking skills. Students believe that this tool is comfortable and fun to develop a new atmosphere in learning to speak, it also increases their motivation because Instagram reels provide interesting content for improving their speaking skills, they can find many Instagram accounts that post more about English lessons with short duration even though students sometimes get a distract cause of random video but they already know their own goals to practice consistently every day and everywhere. Through this tool, students gain a lot of vocabulary from the video, quotes, caption, or comment section that is very helpful for them to improve their speaking performance especially when they are engaged in communication with other people both inside or outside classroom practice.

**Keywords:** *Instagram reels; Mobile Assisted Language Learning; speaking skills; student perceptions.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Speaking is one of the language skills that is crucial in communication. many communities in many nations across the world utilize it in every element of human life, including social, economic, educational, scientific, and technological fields. (Aprian et al., 2023; Dona Donny & Hafizah Adnan, 2022; Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023; Pitura, 2022). Students are expected to be able to communicate effectively with others, therefore speaking is one of the critical skills that English students, especially those who are in an English study program should learn (Ilyas & Putri, 2020). Speaking skills are a form of communication that a person can use to transmit ideas and thoughts to a listener (Aidah, 2022; Baron, 2020; Rasyiid et al., 2021; Zou'bi, 2021). Students who can communicate effectively have mastered the goal of acquiring speaking skills, which also involves a lot of work and attention (Dilafruz et al., 2021; Wahyuni, 2021).

Based on several studies conducted, students still find problems in mastering speaking skills. Jaelani (2022) for example, reported that most students feel insecure when they have to speak English in front of many people. There are many worries that students feel when speaking English, such as a lack of vocabulary, wrong pronunciation, wrong grammar, less accuracy, and fluency. Mukminin et al (2018) argued four common causes of speaking difficulty were inhibition, having nothing to say, limited participation, and using one's mother tongue. While Wahyuni (2021) stated several things make speaking English difficult, such as getting bored with the media used for teaching and learning. Students need media that will grab their attention and make speaking English more comfortable. Therefore the researcher have to find out the best strategy to overcome those problems due to the importance of speaking, without mastering speaking skills, the students will encounter difficulties when they are communicating with each other (Mitu, 2020).

The researcher tries to use Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) as a learning medium to address those problems. Mobile-assisted language learning is a method that uses handheld mobile devices to improve language acquisition (Fithriani et al., 2019; Lee, 2022). In higher education contexts, students attach more value to the communication and entertainment aspects of mobile devices than they do to their potential as useful learning platforms (Hoi & Mu, 2021). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, is a method

for learning English is a promising technology for teaching a language due to its accessibility and universality (Cholis et al., 2021; Goldenthal et al., 2021; Nuraeni et al., 2020). The term MALL, which stands for "mobilized anytime, anywhere learning," refers to the use of mobile devices for language learning that is not constrained by time or place (Rajendran & Md Yunus, 2021). As a result of technological improvements, several institutions have started using MALL programs to help students improve their language learning skills (Ishtiaq Khan et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2021; Pikhart, 2021; D. Zhang & Pérez-Paredes, 2021). Almadhady et al., (2021) confirmed that the majority of students prefer to use MALL applications for speaking skills improvement.

In this modern era, technology has become necessary worldwide, including in the education sector (Baruti & Subekti, 2023; Mohamed Hashim et al., 2022; Qureshi et al., 2021). A current trend that combines digital technology and language learning is mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). Through MALL-oriented students use information and communication technology as digital learning tools (Dağdeler & Demiröz, 2022; Misnawati et al., 2022; Teng et al., 2022). The ICT such as Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, WhatsApp, LINE, Twitter, Workplace by Facebook, Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Yammer, Snapchat, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, Slack, Skype, Zoom, and Google Meet (Gonulal, 2019). The applications that are connected via smartphone make it easier for students to explore knowledge about English (Athoillah, 2022; Kaysi et al., 2021; Şad et al., 2022). More often than not, students utilize their cellphones for English speaking and listening exercises rather than reading and writing exercises. Additionally, they think that cellphones almost never have a negative impact on English language acquisition (Şad et al., 2022). Through practice, access to language resources, and real-time communication with native speakers, technology helps students learn a language. Students can practice their language skills both inside and outside of the classroom, which helps them develop as independent learners. (Kusmaryani et al., 2019; Su & Zou, 2022; R. Zhang & Zou, 2022).

Instagram is one of the fastest growing mobile apps that help students enhance their speaking skills (Obeso et al., 2023; Rohaizat et al., 2021). The Mobile Assisted Language Learning strategy will likely be supported by language learning exercises on mobile devices using Instagram, one of the most well-known social networking sites

(Amalia, 2022; Misnawati et al., 2022) Instagram reported having one billion monthly active users in June 2018, according to *statista.com*. With 94.2 million viewers, Indonesia ranks fourth among the nations with the most Instagram users (Jamilumkillah & Miftakh, 2022). The Instagram Reels feature is a function of Instagram. Instagram Reels films will help students acquire new content quickly (Saputri, 2021). Instagram reels have the potential to be a powerful teaching tool that enhances the educational process and adds depth and meaning (Dewi et al., 2022; Siritheeratharadol, P., Tuntivivat, S., Intarakamhang, 2023).

Numerous studies have been done on Instagram reels. Influential outcomes have been found in earlier research on the use of Instagram reels. With a total of 219 university students studying English, Erarslan (2019) performed research on the Use of Instagram as a Mobile-Assisted Language Learning Tool. Based on the accomplishment scores, the study indicated that Instagram had a beneficial influence on students' language learning. Furthermore, a study on students' perceptions and motivations about EFL learning using Instagram was carried out by Saputra et al. in 2023. According to this survey, 76% of TEFL students are inspired to use Instagram to learn English and advance their vocabulary, writing, speaking, and listening abilities. Additionally, Aprian et al.'s study from 2023 on the usage of Instagram reels to improve speaking skills revealed that the majority of students had a favorable opinion of the app. In a 2019 study, Sari & Wahyudin also looked into Instagram as a tool for blended learning. Their findings showed that most students had very good opinions of the platform and that it had a positive impact on their motivation, engagement, and attitudes.

This study explores how Instagram reels affect students' speaking abilities and students' perceptions of utilizing them as mobile language learning tools. Researchers must first comprehend the opinions and perceptions of the students regarding the use of Instagram reels before doing any research. Perception is a way of looking at a situation or a perspective used to describe a phenomenon. Perception is an outside factor that concentrates on a person's viewpoint, comprehension, trust, and response to an innovation (Rasita et al., 2020). Students' perceptions are how they consider circumstances or issues that arise in a logical and smart approach. Responses from respondents, whether favorable or unfavorable, can be used to describe students' perceptions (Aprian et al., 2023).

The study set out to find out what the students thought about utilizing Instagram Reels as a mobile language learning tool to help university students with their speaking. This study has two research questions, which were the aim of conducting this study. First, what are student's perceptions of using Instagram reels to improve their speaking skill? Second, what is the student's strategy to overcome the difficulties in learning speaking skills?

## METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach that is best suited for documenting experiences from a phenomenological perspective in a real-life context (Hawkins, 2018). The research conducted a study focusing on university students from the first until the seventh semester. There were 66 students taking part who had smartphones and Instagram applications. Open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires are used in the data collection procedure to get the students' opinions about the use of Instagram reels as mobile-assisted language learning tools to enhance speaking abilities. Miles et al. (1994) carried out 75 data analysis steps, including data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification-drawing. Data is gathered through the use of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. The process of classifying and summarizing the information required to address the research issue is known as data reduction. Data display uses charts, tables, and other visual components to show findings. Data verification is the process of confirming the study by drawing inferences from the data. In light of the study's shortcomings, the researcher draws conclusions here (Baron, 2020). The assignment and their experiences utilizing Instagram to practice speaking were questioned of the pupils. Their opinions about Instagram's value in helping people learn to talk were assessed by looking at their answers.

The research utilize 10 close-ended and 4 open-ended questions adapted from Dewi et al (2022) and Aidah (2022). The indicators of the open-ended questioner such as; Ask about students' speaking skill levels in English students, students' challenges in learning to speak, Students' opinions on using Instagram reels to improve their speaking skills, and students' strategies to overcome difficulties in learning speaking skills through Instagram reels. The indicator was utilized in close-ended questioner such as; asking the students if Instagram is comfortable for learning speaking skills, contents on Instagram reels are interested in

learning speaking, enjoy learning speaking through Instagram reels, spending time practicing speaking outside the classroom by utilizing Instagram reels, feel no pressure in making mistake on Instagram reels, Instagram reels is one of fun and innovative way to learn speaking, feel confident to speak by utilize Instagram reels, feel motivated to practice speaking every day through Instagram reels, try pronounce each word in Instagram reels, get a lot of vocabulary to improve speaking skill performance on Instagram reels. Open-ended questionnaires were used to gain a deep knowledge of students' perceptions. The following scales were used to grade respondents' responses to the close-ended questionnaire: SD=strongly disagree (1.00-1.80), D=disagree (1.81-2.60), N=neutral (2.61-3.40), A=agree (3.41-4.20), and S=strongly agree (4.21-5.00). For open-ended questionnaire were used 3 (three) assessment criteria; 1) Fluency (how many solutions each students produce). 2) Flexibility (how many different ideas students discover. 3) originality (the level of authenticity of students' ideas regarding unique ideas.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Student's response based on a close-ended questionnaire*

Figure 1 below shows the demographic of respondents regarding their gender, out of the 66 questionnaire respondents in this study, 73% were female and 27% were male. The respondents were from the first to the seventh-semester university students. They conducted the questionnaire based on responses derived from their individual experiences.

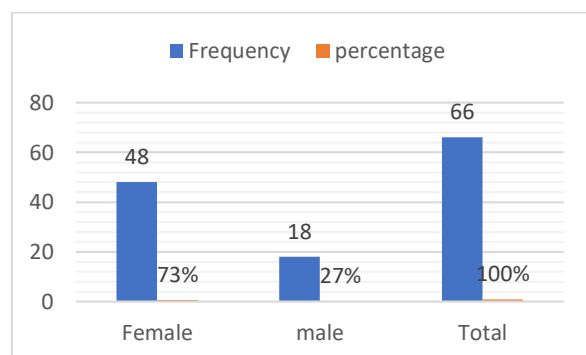


Figure 1. *Distribution of males and females*

After dividing the data into two sub-sections—closed-ended and open-ended questions—the questionnaire findings were examined (Alotaibi, 2023). A survey with 10 questions was used to collect the data, and 66 students were involved. The accompanying Figure and data show the

outcomes. The following figure explains how the proportion of survey responses on students' perceptions of using Instagram as Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) to improve speaking skills was calculated in Figures 2 and 3.

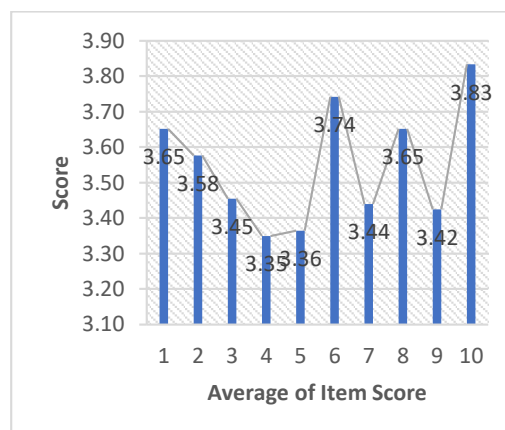


Figure 2. *The result of students' score*

Each respondent answered the question differently, as seen in Figure 2. Based on the result of the questionnaire students gain a minimum score is 21, a maximum score is 50 and an average score is 35.48.

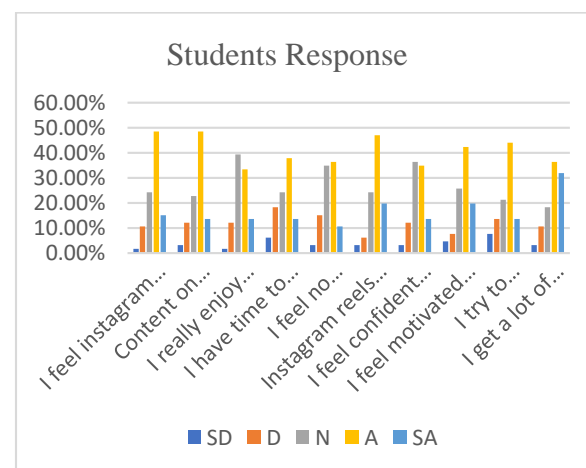


Figure 3. *The analysis of the student's response to the questionnaire*

Based on the Figure 3 shows 66 students provided different responses to the inquiry. The first indicator, *Instagram is comfortable for learning speaking skills*. The higher score is 48.48% “agree” scale which indicates that the majority of students feel Instagram is comfortable for learning to speak. The second indicator, *content on Instagram reels is interested in learning to speak*. The higher score is 48.48% “agree” indicates that the majority of students have a perspective that content on Instagram reels increases their interest in learning to speak. Third indicator, *enjoy learning to speak through*

*Instagram reels*. The higher score is 33.33% “neutral” which indicates that the majority of students have a neutral perspective and enjoy learning by speaking through Instagram reels. For the fourth indicator, *have time to practice speaking outside the classroom by utilizing Instagram reels*. The higher score on is 37.88% “agree” scale indicates that the majority of students spend their time practicing speaking outside the classroom by using Instagram reels. For the five indicators, *I feel no pressure to make mistake on Instagram reels*. The high score is 36.36% “agree” indicates that the majority of students don’t feel pressured to make mistakes on Instagram reels.

For the sixth indicator, *Instagram reels are a fun and innovative way to learn to speak*. The high score is 46.97% “agree” indicates that the majority of students believe Instagram reels are a fun and innovative way to learn to speak. For the seventh indicator, *feel confident to speak by utilizing Instagram reels*. The higher score is 36.36% “neutral” indicating that the majority of students still do not feel confident enough to speak by utilizing Instagram reels. For the eighth indicator, *feel motivated to practice speaking every day through Instagram reels*. The high score is 42.42% “agree” indicates that the majority of students feel motivated to practice speaking every day through Instagram reels. For the ninth indicator, *try to pronounce each word in Instagram reels*. The higher score is 43.94% “agree” which indicates that the majority of students try to pronounce each word in Instagram reels. For the tenth indicator, *get a lot of vocabulary to improve speaking skill performance on Instagram reels*. The higher score is 36.36% “agree” indicates that the majority of students believe that Instagram reels can enrich vocabulary to improve speaking skill performance.

According to the close-ended questionnaire, the data shows two high scores. First, the result of indicator one shows the majority of students choose to agree. Second, indicator two shows the same result as indicator one which means the students believe that Instagram reels are comfortable and one of the interesting tools for learning a speaking skill, the score is higher than enjoy learning speaking through Instagram reels as pointed out in indicator three with the lower score compared to another. Based on all of the data above, the researcher concluded that the utilization of Instagram reels makes the students feel comfortable in learning to speak because Instagram reels provide much interesting content to improve their speaking performance.

#### *Students' responses based on an open-ended questionnaire*

The researcher employed the 4 indicators in the open-ended questionnaire in addition to disclosing the contents of the questionnaire mentioned above. The researcher shared the open-ended questionnaire with the 10 students (Student1, Student2,...Student10) an emphasis on the university students who were active users of Instagram and applied Instagram reels for learning English. The researcher classified the data based on the research question and then identified the data to find the similarities and the differences, the data will be presented below.

#### *Student's speaking level*

The first question on the questionnaire was about *students' speaking level*. Some students provided different responses. S1, S2, S3, and S4 reported their speaking skill were not very good but still understood when someone spoke, still good enough to communicate with people, some students from first grade also pointed out their speaking skills were quite poor because they were still in low level. Another student clarified that their speaking is not fluent and still lacks vocabulary. But S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, and S10 mentioned their speaking skill is good because they always practice making it perfect, they feel better when speaking than before and there is an improvement as proven in the script below.

“I’m not good at speaking but I understand when people are talking and always try to practice my speaking, my speaking skills right now isn’t that good, but still good enough to communicate with people, still not fluent in speaking because my vocabulary is low. I think my speaking is better when speak, my speaking skill is better than before and there are improvements, My speaking is good”

#### *Student's speaking difficulties*

Some students provided different responses. S1 and S2 mentioned several challenges that they face in speaking such as grammar errors. S3, S4, and S5 mentioned that they still struggle with the pronunciation of each word correctly, and difficulty pronounces the same words. S6 and S7 mentioned that the biggest challenge in learning to speak is vocabulary mastery. S8 and S9 mentioned that they still feel unconfident and anxious when speaking in front of many people. S10 mentioned that the biggest challenge in speaking is less motivation.

"I still grammar errors. I still struggle with pronunciation. I don't know how to pronounce each word correctly. When increasing my vocabulary. Not Confident, feel insecure, and nervous to speak English in class. I think the challenge is I have less motivation"

#### *Student's experiences in learning English using Instagram*

Concerning the use of Instagram in learning English students perceived that their English skills were improved. S1, S2, and S3 mentioned that the use of Instagram is good because can allow students to find many sources to learn to speak because there are a lot of Instagram accounts that post short videos about English make them always practice. S4, S5, S6, and S7 mentioned that content on Instagram reels is interesting and helpful to engage their motivation in learning English, especially speaking skills, but sometimes they feel distracted by random videos that make them unfocused with the goals. S8, S9, and S10 mentioned that Instagram reels are very easy to understand, and can quickly and efficiently increase speaking to make it better.

"There are so many Instagram accounts that post videos about English to improve speaking skill., It is one of the best ways to improve our skills and the duration of the video is short. Instagram reels can help me learn to speak because the content is interesting. There are so many videos that provide English lessons but sometimes I get distracted by random videos and make me unfocused with my goal. It can improve English speaking skills quickly and efficiently because it is easy to understand, and it is easier for me to speak English better"

#### *Student's strategy toward speaking difficulties*

Some students provided different responses. S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, and S6 mentioned their strategies such as learning intensively with Instagram reels and always practicing everywhere and every day because it is easy to access. S7, S8, S9, and S10 claimed that using Instagram to learn English can increase a lot of vocabulary then write it down to memorize, get used to speaking, and try to apply what you focus on what you learn.

"I always practice every day to make it perfect, I learn anytime and anywhere, my strategy is I can learn intensively with unlimited time, don't think too much just believe in my skill and active learning. I need to find vocabulary on Instagram reel videos and write them down, by increasing my vocabulary and getting used to speaking

English, try to apply what I learn from Instagram reels more often"

After analysis, the data of the students' responses to the close-ended questionnaire indicate that the result of the student's perception of using Instagram reels as mobile-assisted language learning to improve speaking skills shows that they had a positive perspective based on the item most students prefer to choose "agree" scale. There were two high scores as shown in Figure 3, according to indicator one indicating that using Instagram reels is comfortable for learning to speak. The result is consistent with the previous study conducted by (Anindita & Noveintine, 2021; Utomo & Bastiar, 2020) Utomo & Bastiar (2020) pointed out that Instagram can help students become more proficient speakers both inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, communicating on Instagram makes passive students in the classroom more comfortable. According to Anindita & Noveintine (2021), Instagram's cost, capacity to connect individuals internationally, and ability to promote self-improvement make it a pleasant and effective medium for learning English.

In addition, students are using Instagram to speak English with greater confidence than they did before. Likewise, indicator two shows the same score as indicator one which means the students believe that a lot of content provided in Instagram reels is interesting to help them learn to speak. This finding is consistent with earlier study by Laela Nisa Indriani et al. (2023), which found that students are open to utilizing Instagram as a language learning tool and believe the platform's material will sufficiently increase their language proficiency.

Additionally, a high score implies that students are highly motivated to learn how to talk using Instagram reels. This learning tool can both increase students' interest in practice speaking English and inspire them to do so (Azlan et al., 2019). A research on Instagram reels was also carried out by Wulandari (2019), and the findings had to do with improving speaking abilities in terms of fluency, vocabulary acquisition, confidence, and motivation. Additionally, most students try to pronounce each word that they find in Instagram reels to gain better fluency when speaking. According to Jamilumkillah & Miftakh (2022), the use of Instagram is helpful for the student to increase their motivation to have intelligible English pronunciation ability.

The lower score is shown at indicator three, most students choose neutral indicates that

students have a neutral perspective to enjoy learning speaking through Instagram reels, which means they sometimes feel enjoy and feel unenjoyable when learning. Besides that, the majority of students still feel confident to speak even though learning speaking through Instagram reels with a neutral score higher than agree which means that students still struggle with those challenges in improving their speaking skills. As the research mentions above, students still feel anxious and insecure about speaking because lack of vocabulary, wrong pronunciation, wrong grammar, less accuracy, and fluency (Jaelani, 2022). Four common causes of speaking difficulty were inhibition, having nothing to say, limited participation, and using one's mother tongue (Mukminin et al., 2018). Cause of they have lack of practice in their speaking skill as shown in Figure 3, the indicator is still lower compared to another indicator, so the researcher has to pay attention to it to know the students' attitudes toward the lower indicators, therefore future researchers conduct a study to gain deep knowledge about it and expected to develop a better researcher.

Furthermore, the analysis of student's response to the 4 open-ended questionnaires, indicates that students' speaking levels is good because they always practice making it perfect, they feel better when speaking than before and there is an improvement, this result is in line with a study conducted by Rao, P (2019) that speaking skills require constant practice and additional time, as they are challenging to learn without it. This is especially true for English language learners. Thus, emphasizing speaking practice both inside and outside of the classroom is the best strategy to help English language learners become more fluent speakers. Moreover, there were students still not good at speaking but they still be able to understand when someone spoke, still good enough to communicate with people, some students from first grade also pointed out that their speaking skills were quite poor because still at a low level. Another student clarified that their speaking is not fluent and still lacks vocabulary.

Additionally students' perspectives about the use of Instagram reels in improving speaking skills as they mentioned above that the use of Instagram reels is a good idea, it can allow students to find many sources to learn to speak because there are a lot of Instagram accounts that post a short video about English. Gonulal (2019) reported that Instagram reels provided many unique resources for learning, Instagram can be a good platform for learning English such as reading, writing,

speaking, and listening. Some students mentioned that content on Instagram reels is interesting and helpful to engage their motivation in learning English, especially speaking skills, but sometimes they feel distracted by random videos that make them unenjoyable and unfocused with their goals. The student's strategy to overcome those challenges in learning to speak through Instagram reels such as increasing a lot of vocabulary and then writing it down to memorize, in concert with a study conducted by Laela Nisa Indriani et al (2023) that the use of social media Instagram can help university students learn English and enriching students' vocabulary in which the foundation of language mastery. Furthermore try to apply what you focus on your goal to learn and intensively learn with Instagram reels. Additionally getting used to speaking, and always practicing everywhere and every day, is related with a study conducted by Damaryanan & Subektiġ (2023) that using Instagram reels can encourage students to keep practicing English every day and motivate students to develop their speaking fluency.

This study focuses on investigating student's perceptions of using Instagram Reels as mobile-assisted language learning to improve speaking skills. To expand this research, Further research could aim to measure the direct impact of Instagram Reels on language proficiency, particularly speaking skills, using pre-and-post-tests or other assessment tools. The future researcher also could Investigate the effectiveness and experiences of Instagram Reels or other social media for language learning methods could provide further evidence of its utility and limitations in language education. Furthermore incorporating teacher perceptions and experiences toward Instagram Reels or other social media for language teaching could offer a more holistic view of educational value and implementation challenges. Moreover, future studies could explore how students with different learning styles or proficiency levels perceive and benefit from using Instagram reels for language learning. In addition future research, perhaps comparing different social media platforms or exploring longitudinal impact on language proficiency.

## CONCLUSION

Speaking is one of the language abilities that is essential for communication in English, as was previously said. English is an international language. One of the most important abilities that English language learners, particularly those



enrolled in study programs, should acquire is speaking. Students who do not have proficiency in speaking will find it challenging to communicate with one another. The purpose of this study was to find out whether university students thought positively or negatively about utilizing Instagram reels as a mobile-assisted language learning tool to improve speaking abilities from the first to the seventh semester. The results of the examination of the closed- and open-ended questionnaire data indicate that most students see the use of Instagram reels to improve their speaking abilities favorably. Instagram reels have been shown to be a useful teaching tool for students learning English, particularly speaking, based on the statistics. Although students occasionally become distracted by random videos, they already know that practicing consistently every day and everywhere is one of their own goals. Students believe that this tool is comfortable and one of the fun ways to develop a new atmosphere in learning to speak. It also increases students' motivation because Instagram reels provide interesting content to improve their speaking performance. Students may enhance their speaking skills by using this tool, which helps them obtain a lot of vocabulary from the video, quotations, captions, and comment area. This is especially useful when they are interacting with others, whether inside or outside of the classroom.

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