CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a background of the research, the research issues, the research goals, the scope and limitations, the research significance, and the definition of the key term.

1.1 Research Background

In the fourth industrial revolution era, also referred to as Industry 4.0, there has been a significant transition towards technology integration in the educational landscape. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students have embraced the opportunity to adapt to instructional strategies that incorporate technology. The convenience and effectiveness provided by these technological tools have revolutionized how students access information and interact with learning materials. Social networking sites have emerged mainly as valuable platforms for English language acquisition. By utilizing social media, students can improve their language skills and connect with a global community of English learners. Besides, learning through social media can train students to learn independently (Mitu, 2020).

Social media is related to social networks. Both have differences that only some know and understand. According to Zhao et al., (2021), social networks are broader and more complex than social media in marketing research. Social networking is also a subcategory of social media in the form of blogs and websites. YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, and LinkedIn are prominent

examples of prevalent social networks in the present day. The target market for these sites is regardless of gender, even from children to adults. The recognition and comprehension of the distinctions between social media and social networks contribute to a deeper understanding of the digital landscape and its impact on communication and social interactions.

Learning a language requires a long process and time for EFL students, especially in speaking skills. Hamad and Alnuzaili (2022) said that writing and speaking were output skills, while listening and reading were input skills. As a fundamental aspect of human communication, speaking requires that students effectively convey themselves and ensure mutual comprehension. However, this skill can be challenging to master due to the need to learn grammar principles, increase vocabulary, enhance pronunciation, and achieve fluency. Students must continuously learn and employ different techniques to improve their speaking abilities over time.

Several platforms offer valuable opportunities for learning and information exchange in the field of education. Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook are platforms that provide a suitable environment for practicing speaking skills for EFL students by developing social interactions through group discussions (Mushtaq et al., 2022). Despite all three offering potential advantages, Instagram is the most prospective platform for educational purposes. However, Instagram is often used to seek entertainment, information, and social interaction (Anisah et al., 2021). It has become an integral component of people's daily lives, often used during leisure time. By utilizing the appropriate platforms, students can engage in interactive and

meaningful learning experiences that increase their language proficiency and contribute to their overall educational development.

Like the previous statement, where Instagram is an entertainment medium, its use needs to be examined more deeply to determine whether it affects the learning process of speaking skills so that the learning media used is precise and produces the desired output. Instagram provides numerous tools and features that can be used for educational purposes, such as the "Reels" feature, which enables users to create and share brief educational videos. By analyzing the benefits and drawbacks of Instagram as a learning medium for speaking skills, valuable insights can be obtained regarding selecting and applying suitable learning media. This research is crucial because it investigates Instagram's potential as a platform to enhance the learning experience and facilitate effective language acquisition.

Research conducted by Devi et al., (2020) was related to perceptions of using Instagram social media, which was believed could motivate students to speak and improve their speaking skills. This descriptive research was supported by a questionnaire that involved two classes. The participants were students from the fourth semester majoring in Communication Science in the 2019/2020 academic year who took vocational English through a purposive sampling technique. The research results indicated a positive response to the utilization of Instagram as a tool for developing speaking skills. Furthermore, the results revealed significant enhancements in the students' learning motivation, interests, and self-assurance. These results demonstrate Instagram's potential as an effective language-learning tool, particularly for fostering student engagement and improving speaking skills.

Krisdianata and Ena (2022) investigated the perspectives of vocational students on speaking skills through Instagram vlogs. This qualitative research involved thirty-two vocational students, 22 females and 10 males. The questionnaires used for data collection contained both closed and open-ended questions. The researchers included three open-ended questions to understand better students' perspectives regarding using Instagram vlogs to acquire speaking skills. The results proved that vocational students feel helped by Instagram vlogs in learning English, expanding their knowledge, and expanding their vocabularies. The research offers valuable insights into the practical application of social media platforms, such as Instagram, for enhancing language learning outcomes among vocational students.

In line with previous research, Narasati (2022) researched the use of the Instagram Live feature to improve students' speaking skills during a pandemic. This research used control classes and experimental classes and was supported by Descriptive Statistics methods. The subjects of this research were all first-semester students majoring in Systems Information and Software Engineering at STMIK IKMI Cirebon, with a total of 66 students. This research indicated that using Instagram Live could improve speaking skills, which can be seen from the difference in scores before and after using Instagram Live during the learning process.

Therefore, Instagram is one of over 65 social networking sites that have been introduced and have different advantages and characteristics. Additionally, Instagram is one of the great free platforms where people can share photos and

videos. Instagram has a feature to view, like, and comment on other people's posts. Other supporting features were Instagram TV and Reels. Users can create digital content and publish it through their Instagram accounts. Hence, these features can train users' self-confidence, creativity, and activity (Ihsan & Aulia, 2020). With these features, EFL teachers and students can collaborate on learning objectives and use Instagram as an alternative way to learn speaking skills.

Due to research limitations and gaps in the results of previous research, EFL teachers and students must thoroughly comprehend the benefits and drawbacks of using Instagram as a platform for learning speaking skills. The strengths are higher, liked, and valued quality compared to anything else. The weaknesses are things that bad companies do not do or have. Rajani and Chalak (2021) found that the results of interviews with selected participants revealed strengths, namely increased student motivation, student pronunciation and listening skills, and the latest materials or variations. Nonetheless, the research revealed several weaknesses that must be addressed. These weaknesses included teachers with less familiarity and experience using Instagram, too focused on vocabulary, and no syllabus.

Over the years, research on using Instagram to help improve speaking skills has expanded in scope and variety. Dewi et al., (2022a) found a positive response from students to the application of Instagram as an authentic tool for speaking that can be customized and effective in learning. Instagram has been found to be effective in enhancing multiple language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, language awareness, and cultural knowledge. One of Instagram's features, the face filter, makes students more relaxed and motivated to speak English (Rohaizat et al.,

2021). In addition, the atmosphere in the class is more interactive and can build student confidence (Mutiara et al., 2021).

1.2 Research Problems

The researchers discovered a scarcity of research on using Instagram as a platform for acquiring speaking abilities. The selection of appropriate characteristics plays a crucial role in enhancing the speaking skills of EFL students, as it directly affects the learning environment and comprehension of the subject matter. By considering the strengths and weaknesses in this research, teachers can benefit from this vital information to help further development.

Based on the research background above, the identification of problems are as follows:

1. What are the strengths of incorporating Instagram as a medium in learning speaking in EFL classrooms at SMAN 7 Malang?
2. What are the weaknesses of incorporating Instagram as a medium in learning speaking in EFL classrooms at SMAN 7 Malang?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, this present research aims to determine the strengths and weaknesses of incorporating Instagram as a medium in learning speaking in EFL classrooms at SMAN 7 Malang.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

This research concentrated entirely on the strengths and weaknesses of incorporating Instagram as a medium in learning speaking in EFL classrooms, explicitly focusing on the eleventh-grade students at SMAN 7 Malang. The research data was gathered via closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

1.5 Research Significance

This research is anticipated to provide valuable insights for English teachers, students, the wider community, and prospective researchers seeking to employ Instagram as an instructional tool to enhance spoken communication abilities in educational settings.

1. For English Teachers

This research is intended to provide valuable insights to English teachers by proposing a learning innovation that implements social media as a platform for learning speaking skills in the classroom.

2. For Students

The findings of this research are expected to benefit students by presenting a complete picture of the advantages and disadvantages of Instagram as a means of learning speaking in the classroom. Thus, the learning atmosphere is expected to be more engaged and innovative for students.

3. For Future Researchers

This research is expected to be a helpful contribution to future researchers exploring similar topics. In addition, this research can also be an essential reference for in-depth analysis in the context of education that integrates technology as a support for the implementation of learning activities.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Instagram: It refers to an application and a free social media platform that allows users to upload photos and videos.

2. Medium: In this context, medium refers to the tools or instruments used to transmit information in the teaching and learning process.

3. Learning Speaking: The process of acquiring and improving oral communication skills.

4. EFL Classrooms: EFL, English as a Foreign Language, refers to English as a second language being learned by non-native individuals.

5. Strengths and Weaknesses: In general, this term refers to both positive and negative aspects. It refers to evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of Instagram in the context of learning to speak.