

**THE EFFECT OF ENGLISH CAPTIONS IN INSTAGRAM
ON VOCABULARY MASTERY TO THE NINTH GRADE
STUDENTS OF SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 7 PALEMBANG**

THESIS

BY

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372022002



**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PALEMBANG
APRIL 2026**

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THESIS

Present to

**Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Sarjana in English Language Education**

BY

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**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
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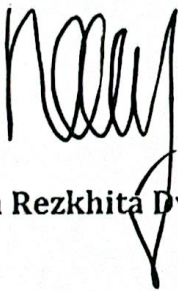
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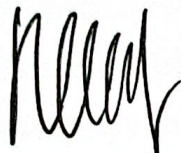


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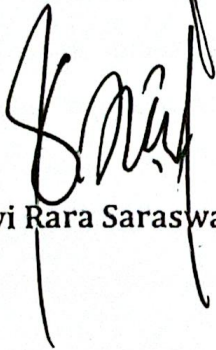
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Menyatakan bahwa skripsi berjudul:

The Effect of English Captions in Instagram on Vocabulary Mastery to the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang

Beserta seluruh isinya adalah benar merupakan hasil karya sendiri dan saya tidak melakukan penjiplakan atau pengutipan dengan cara-cara yang tidak sesuai dengan etika keilmuan dalam masyarakat ilmiah.

Atas pernyataan ini, saya siap menerima segala sanksi yang berlaku atau yang ditetapkan untuk itu, apabila di kemudian ternyata pernyataan saya tidak benar atau ada klaim dari pihak lain terhadap keaslian skripsi saya.

Palembang, April 2026

Yang menyatakan,



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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Motto:

“Cause there were pages turned with the bridges burned, everything you lose is a step you take. So, make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it, you’ve got no reason to be afraid. You’re on your own, kid.” – Taylor Swift

Dedication:

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the people who have always been special in my heart and who have supported me throughout this journey:

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ABSTRACT

Az-Zahra, Z 2026. *The Effect of English Captions on Instagram on Students' Vocabulary Mastery at the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang.* This thesis was completed in the English Education Study Program, Sarjana Degree (S1), Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang. Advisors: (I) Hj. Asti Gumartifa, S.Pd., M.Pd (II) Nadya Rezhita Dwiana, S.Pd., M.Pd

The title of this research is The Effect of English Captions on Instagram on Students' Vocabulary Mastery at the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang. The problem of this study was whether it is effective to use English captions on Instagram to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The objective of this study was to find out whether or not the use of English captions on Instagram is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. This study applied a quasi-experimental method. The population of this study was the ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang, and the sample consisted of 47 students, divided into 24 students in the control group and 23 students in the experimental group. The experimental group was taught by using English captions on Instagram, while the control group was taught by conventional methods. The data were collected through pretest and posttest analyzed using SPSS 25. The result of the independent sample t-test showed that the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05, meaning that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. The mean score of the experimental group was higher than the control group, which indicates that the use of English captions on Instagram had a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. In conclusion, the use of English captions on Instagram is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery and can be used as an alternative teaching media in English learning.

Key Words: Instagram, English Captions, Vocabulary Mastery

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

“In the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful’

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Palembang, April 2026

The Reseacher,

ZA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, formulation of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, and hypotheses of the study

A. Background of the Study

Vocabulary mastery was a fundamental aspect of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students would experience difficulties in other language skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In the context of formal education, many students still had limitations in vocabulary mastery, both in terms of the number of words they know and their ability to use those words in the right context. This had a direct impact on students' low communication skills in English.

This vocabulary problem arose for several reasons. Students were not exposed to the use of vocabulary in real contexts, limited learning time in class meant that students are only exposed to a small number of new vocabulary words. According to Nation (2001), intensive and repeated exposure to vocabulary in various contexts is necessary for deep retention and understanding. Research showed that vocabulary mastery was a crucial aspect in improving English language skills, especially reading skills.

According to Akbar (2022) vocabulary mastery contributes significantly to students' reading ability. This indicated that better vocabulary mastery would improve reading comprehension. This suggested that limited vocabulary could be a major obstacle in developing reading skills. Based on the results of a hypothesis test in a study at MAN 3 Bekasi, it was found that vocabulary mastery significantly influences students' ability to read English texts. This meant that the higher the vocabulary mastery, the better the students' reading ability. Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery was considered a primary focus in English learning so that other language skills can also develop optimally (Akbar, 2022; Rizki & Lengga, 2023). This is important

because vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Beside exposure and media, learning strategies also played a crucial a role in vocabulary development. Vocabulary was the first step that learners must memorize when speaking English as a foreign language. This was important because vocabulary mastery is a fundamental component of all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There were two kinds of vocabulary learning strategies: breadth vocabulary (recognition) and depth vocabulary (recall). A study by Li and Kirby (2014), found that both dimensions (breadth and depth) have a moderate correlation, and both contribute to L2 reading ability. In the study, breadth had a stronger effect on “word reading,” while depth was related to more in-depth text processing (e.g., writing summaries). Luo (2021), found that the contribution of these two dimensions to listening comprehension differed depending on the task type suggesting that depth plays a greater role when the task is inference, while breadth may be sufficient for literal comprehension. Besides exposure and media, learning strategies also play a crucial role in vocabulary development. According to Gumartifa et al., (2020) vocabulary learning strategies help students become more active, independent, and responsible in their learning. Students who implement appropriate learning strategies tended to remember vocabulary more easily, use it accurately in various contexts, and develop stronger language skills overall. In enhancing L2 vocabulary knowledge, students needed awareness of these strategies. Active use of learning strategies could increase language skills, self-confidence, and motivation during the learning process. Learning strategies encouraged students to learn independently, responsibly, and actively, which led to greater confidence and motivation when applied consistently in daily learning activities.

On the other hand, social media had become an integral part of students' daily lives. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter were not only used for entertainment, but also influenced the way students learn languages, especially English. One of the most prominent features on social media was the use of captions in English. These captions, which accompany images or videos,

contained a variety of vocabulary, expressions, and grammatical structures that indirectly enriched students' exposure to language in an authentic context.

According to Prastyo et al., (2022) the use of English captions on Instagram has a positive influence on students' vocabulary mastery. This study was conducted on 12th grade students at Al-Azhar 3 Senior High School in Bandar Lampung using a mixed method. Students were divided into two groups: one group used traditional learning methods, and the other group used Instagram captions as a learning medium. The results showed that the group using Instagram captions experienced a significant increase in their science mastery compared to the control group. This medium could increase student engagement and interest in learning due to its visual and contextual nature. Thus, using Instagram as a learning medium, particularly through English text, has proven effective in enriching the vocabulary of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. This reinforces the view that social media, when used appropriately, can support informal yet meaningful language learning.

According to Krisifu (2021), English captions help students acquire new vocabulary in a more interesting and contextual way. Students often encountered captions that are short, creative, and grammatically diverse, exposing them to the use of English in real life. Captions could also serve as writing models, as they contained examples of language use for communication, persuasion, humor, and narration. In addition, Lubis and Pirzada (2023) highlight students' intrinsic motivation in using English texts, especially in digital and social media, which makes them feel more expressive, aesthetically pleasing, and connected to a global audience. This intrinsic motivation was crucial in second language learning, especially in informal environments such as social media. Regularly reading and writing translated English texts could contribute to students' writing fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension. Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery and utilizing social media with intrinsic motivation should be a primary focus in English learning so that other language skills can also develop optimally.

However, although the academic potential of this phenomenon was quite promising, its impact in the context of formal education had not been widely studied. Students might enjoy using captions in their online activities, but the extent to which this habit contributed to academic skills such as vocabulary mastery and writing ability needed to be explored further. Oktoma et al., (2025) found that using Instagram texts as a learning medium significantly improved students' descriptive writing skill. Thus, Instagram texts not only develop writing skills but also actively motivate students in the learning process. Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery and utilizing social media with intrinsic motivation should be a primary focus in English learning so that other language skills can also develop optimally.

In addition to cognitive aspects, affective benefits also emerged. Hutasuhut et al., (2024) revealed that writing captions on Instagram in English can increase students' comfort in practicing writing skills. This activity provided them with a space to express themselves, built confidence, and allows their writing to be read by a wider audience. This suggested that social media, particularly Instagram, could be a more relaxed, personally relevant, and socially interactive learning medium, thus creating a more emotionally supportive learning environment. This means that social media can provide a more emotionally supportive learning environment. In keeping with the researcher interviewed with some of the EFL learners especially with student of Faculty Teacher Training and Education, it was found that most students from non-English Education study programs at the Faculty of Teacher Education and Training still faced significant limitations in their command of English vocabulary, as seen from their difficulty in understanding English reading texts, limited variety of word usage when writing, and inability to express ideas fluently and accurately when speaking. These findings indicated that vocabulary remains one of the main challenges in English language learning for students from non EFL backgrounds. Given this problem, the use of English captions on social media especially Instagram has emerged as a potentially effective medium to support vocabulary development, learning motivation, and writing skills through more contextual and engaging language

exposure. However, to understand the real impact of this phenomenon in an academic setting, empirical evidence is needed.

Non-native English students often face various challenges in mastering English vocabulary. According to Wang et al., (2023) revealed that low vocabulary mastery among non-native English students is caused by several main factors. First, they tend not to have an environment that supports the active use of English, so opportunities to practice and reinforce the vocabulary they have learned are very limited. Second, the vocabulary learning is often carried out in isolation, namely by memorizing lists of words without context, which makes it difficult for students to remember and use the vocabulary functionally in sentences.

This method causes them to quickly forget words and makes it difficult to apply them in conversation or writing. Furthermore, according to Odlin (1989), the influence of students first language can become a significant barrier in learning a foreign language, especially when the thinking patterns and word structures in their native language differ from those English. This study suggests that vocabulary learning should be made more engaging, not just through memorization, but also with exercises relevant to real-life situations to make it easier for students to remember and use vocabulary appropriately. The researchers concluded that Instagram captions not only present vocabulary in an authentic context but are also engaging and easily accessible to students in everyday life. Based on the explanation stated, the researcher was interested in conducting research under title. "The Effect of English Captions in Instagram on Vocabulary Mastery to The Ninth Grade Student of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang"

B. Formulation of the Problem

In this research, the researcher formulated the problem into the following question:

Is it effective to use English Caption in Instagram on Vocabulary Mastery to the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang?

C. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to find out it was effective or not to use English Caption in Instagram on Vocabulary Mastery to the ninth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang.

D. Significance of the Study

The results of this research were expected to be useful both theoretically and practically for the following parties, as follows:

1. For Students

This study was expected to help students improve their vocabulary through an engaging and authentic learning experience using Instagram captions.

2. For Teachers

Teachers could gain insight into how social media especially Instagram could be integrated as a supplementary medium in teaching English vocabulary.

3. Other Researchers

These findings could serve as a reference for researchers interested in Investigating social media-based language learning or similar experimental studies.

E. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study were formulated as follows:

1. H_a : English captions on Instagram significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery to the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang
2. H_o : English captions on Instagram did not significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery to the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang

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