# UTILIZATION OF INSTAGRAM AS A DIGITAL-BASED COMMUNICATION MEDIA IN READING JAPANESE STORIES

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**Abstract**

In the era of growing social media, Instagram is one of the platforms that can be utilized to facilitate interactive foreign language learning. The purpose of this study is to utilize Instagram as a digital-based social media in reading stories using Japanese so that it is expected that students can be more active, brave and expressive in reading so that the content of the story can be conveyed properly, students can also be more creative in making interesting videos by utilizing the many features contained in Instagram. This research method adopted a descriptive qualitative approach involving 22 students. Students were given texts in Japanese writing, chose one of the texts to study which then had to be read out in the form of a video that was uploaded to each student's Instagram account according to the conditions that had been given. Research data were collected through participant observation, questionnaires, and analysis of the results of the tasks uploaded to Instagram. The results showed that learning to read Japanese stories on Instagram provides benefits in the development of reading skills. Students demonstrated comprehension of the text in their target language. There was also high motivation and satisfaction with the Instagram learning experience. This study provides insight into the potential of Instagram as one of the learning media in reading Japanese stories.

*Keywords:* reading, Japanese, Instagram, digital, media

## Introduction

In the current era of globalization, foreign language learning is increasingly developing in Indonesia along with the community's need for the importance of language skills. Foreign language learning has far-reaching implications in the era of globalization. Foreign language skills expand career opportunities, enhance cross-cultural understanding, and open doors to rich learning and social experiences. In this increasingly connected world, the ability to communicate and understand people from different cultural backgrounds is invaluable. This is also in line with the rapid development of technology with the emergence of social media networking sites. The rapid development of technology is directly proportional to the development of social media. This has an impact on the learning process of students in the classroom. According to McGraw-Hill, the President of Higher Education, learning effectively and with the right type of technology is one of the best ways to ensure students succeed in the classroom, besides the focused attitude of learners is also the key (Belardi, 2013).

The development of social media is seen as influencing students academically. Social media has become one of the alternative learning media. In the academic world, Social networking sites (SNS) are considered very useful in language learning because their community-centered design supports the

dissemination of foreign languages and encourages interactions that occur outside the classroom where learning can be done not only face-to-face. It can be done by distance learning, or blended learning. According to Zainudin and Keumala (2018) blended learning is the integration of conventional teaching methods with the digital world. This learning model aims to change the teacher-centered teaching and learning culture into student-centered learning. Learning activities are carried out actively and interactively and are more practical than listening to passive lectures in the classroom. In addition, the teacher acts as a classroom facilitator for students in solving problems. According to Fatimah and Sari (2018), the learning process must be accompanied by learning strategies, learning strategies, and language skills strategies including listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills. Therefore, it can be concluded that learning is a process that involves various variables including educators and learners to achieve goals, both knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which are realized in learning experiences.

Kiryakova (2009) states that the emergence of distance education is related to changing conditions in economic, social, and technological aspects. It can be concluded that the use of information technology is needed as a means of distance learning, because the learning process does not meet face-to-face. This is part of the difference between distance learning and conventional learning. As Puntoadi (2011) states that there are three aspects to social media, including sharing, collaborating, and connecting. Meanwhile, according to Nasrullah (2015), special characters such as information, interaction, social simulation, archives, and content by users are owned by social media. Thus, seen from these characters, social media can be utilized in the teaching and learning process, either as media, learning resources, or assignment platforms.

Of the various kinds of social media, Instagram is an unavoidable part for students to access. According to Hu (2014), sharing photos or videos is a form of communication that can be used by Instagram users. Instagram is a learning media that can be utilized and easily reached by all students because students can already use Instagram well. Instagram can also be categorized as having features that are complete enough to support the learning process. How to use Instagram as a learning media can be made on Instagram feed, Instagram story, and live. Instagram, which was originally only used to post photos or videos, can now also be developed to be used as a learning media. The use of Instagram which is very accessible and provides a variety of interesting features is very suitable to be used as an alternative language learning media in this era. One of them is in the aspect of learning to read Japanese stories. Language is a symbol for communicating and expressing human thoughts, feelings, and attitudes by using oral, written, number gestures, facial expressions, and art. One of the language skills that need to be developed is the ability to read and tell stories.

Reading is an activity of perceiving, analyzing, and interpreting carried out by readers to obtain messages to be conveyed by the author in written media. Reading is one of the processes carried out and struggled by the reader to obtain the message to be conveyed by the author through words or written language. If this is not fulfilled, the explicit and implied messages will not be captured or understood, and this reading process will not be carried out properly. The reading process begins with visual sensory obtained through the disclosure of graphic symbols through the sense of sight. The sequence aspect in the reading process is the activity of following a linearly arranged series of writings. Experience is an important aspect in the reading process. Someone who has a lot of experience will have a wider opportunity to develop vocabulary understanding in reading. Concrete experience and indirect experience will enhance conceptual development. The affective aspect is a reading process that deals with the activity of focusing attention. Reading then retelling the story in Japanese.

Japanese is one of the courses in the Business Administration study program, Medan State Polytechnic. As a foreign language, learning Japanese is almost the same as learning other foreign languages. Having skills in various languages can be an added value in communication and when in the

world of work. In the implementation of language learning, including Japanese, students must be more active and be able to directly practice the material that has been learned. Courage in practicing foreign language learning is certainly not an easy thing to do, one of which is in reading. Students tend to be afraid of being wrong, so they are not confident in reading Japanese letters (Hiragana, Katakana) and visualizing them into something interesting for others to hear. Reading Japanese stories through Instagram can be an interesting and creative way of literacy activities to improve Japanese comprehension and fluency. The purpose of this study is to utilize Instagram as a digital-based social media in reading stories using Japanese so that it is expected that students can be more active, brave, and expressive in reading so that the content of the story can be conveyed properly, students can also be more creative in making interesting videos by utilizing the many features contained in Instagram. Students are trained to appear confident, practice reading Japanese letters, pronounce them, then present them well according to the intonation and storyline delivered.

## Method

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. By departing from the literature review regarding the utilization of media for learning and project presentations presented by students and knowing their responses. The data source used in this research is a Japanese story reading presentation video that has been uploaded to Instagram which is a project from the Japanese language course. Data collection techniques used in this study include questionnaires/surveys submitted to students to find out student responses regarding the use of Instagram in learning to read Japanese stories. The data analysis technique used by processing research data by listening, selecting data, analyzing data, reviewing data, and concluding results. After the survey, the researcher conducted a focus group discussion to find out more about the use of Instagram as a medium for learning Japanese language courses.

The respondents selected were fifth semester students of the Business Administration Study Program, Medan State Polytechnic who were taking Japanese Language courses in the 2020/2021 academic year. Respondents totaled 22 students.

## Result and Discussion

Instagram is a social media that can be utilized in classroom learning. Given that Instagram has a variety of features, it is very supportive of students to be creative through uploads. The current learning process uses a distance learning system, where lecturers and students do not meet in person, but use the Google Meet platform. Explanation and discussion of the material is done through Google Meet, while the story text is given through the Sipadi Polmed account. Digital Learning System of Medan State Polytechnic or abbreviated as Sipadi Polmed is a website-based online learning application officially launched by Polmed as a learning platform since the covid pandemic occurred. In this Sipadi account, several text examples are given. Each student is required to choose one of the available texts.
Conditions:
1. Choose one of the four texts that have been provided.
2. Understand the story and the meaning in the text in order to be able to retell the content of the story properly.
3. Perform self-recording using polite clothes. The face is clearly visible and the voice is clearly audible.
4. The method of delivery and video can be made according to your own wishes, but there are several things that need to be considered, namely: pronunciation, reading procedures (hatsuon), and also the tone that suits the storyline and reading patterns of Japanese text. For reference examples can be seen on Sipadi.

5. Record and upload the video on Instagram using the hashtag #rodokupolmed #dokkaipolmed #polmed #bahasajepangpolmed #administrasibisnispolmed and tag @alisahasibuan Instagram. In addition to the above hastags, you can also add other hastags, you can also tag other accounts such as polmed instagram accounts, kajur, polmed business administration, etc.
6. Deadline for uploading videos is at most H-1 before the next meeting. 1 week.
7. Do not private your Instagram account.
   Do the steps:
   a. Opening greetings
   b. Introduction
   c. Reading the content of the story
   d. Closing greetings

Sample text:

# うそつき の こども

ひつじ の ばん を していた こども が おおかみ が ひつじ を たべ に きた といって むら の ひとたち に よびました。

［ たすせて、 おおかみ が きた。 ］むら の ひとびと は はしっていて みると。こども が うそ を ついた という こと が わかりました。こども は なんども なんども そうしたもの ですから、あの こ は うそつき だと いう ことに なりました。

しばらくして、おおかみ が きたので、こども は 「きてください。おおかみだ。」 と さけびましたが、だれ も しんじないで たすけに いく ひと が いません でした。そこ で おおかみ は あんしんして ひつじ を みんな ころしてしまいました。

**Anak pembohong**

Seorang anak yang sedang menggembala domba berteriak memanggil orang-orang dan mengatakan bahwa ada serigala (yang hendak memakan) dombanya.

[Bantu aku, serigala datang.] Orang-orang datang hendak menolong tetapi ternyata anak itu berbohong. Anak itu seringkali berbohong sehingga mereka menjadi tak percaya lagi kepada anak pembohong itu.

Setelah beberapa saat, serigala datang dan anak itu kembali berteriak, "Tolong kembali bantu aku, ada serigala," tetapi tidak ada yang mempercayai dan datang membantu anak itu. Serigala merasa lega dan memakan semua domba.

Picture 1. Video by Student 1



Picture 2. Video by Student 2

Picture 3. Video by Student 3



Picture 4. Video by Student 4

The implementation steps are as follows:

1. The educator provides reading text material, where the text has been discussed previously.
2. Educators provide and explain the project task of making videos to students. The video will be entered via Instagram using the specified hashtag.
3. Learners make videos at home or outside the classroom and upload them to Instagram using the specified hashtags on the requested time limit.
4. Educators watch the video, give an assessment and if possible give feedback online. If not, feedback will be done during the next meeting.
5. Giving questionnaire/survey.
6. Focus group discussion

Based on the research results, Instagram social media has the potential to be used as a learning media because it has interesting features besides that it also supports communication needs. In this study, 22 college-level respondents were interviewed. The results and discussion in this study are 80% of people have used Instagram as a learning media option. The results show that many people are more interested in learning using social media than using books. In addition, this social media is also easily accessible and provides its own value as a learning media. With the advancement of technology that really helps us in making a constructive creativity, many content creators choose Instagram platform as one of the utilization of learning media. This social media is effectively used as a learning media because in using this social media we can easily access learning because we can be creative by doing learning.

The results of the survey questionnaire that has been carried out at the end of the activity are as follows:

1. Learners were asked for their opinions on how much they liked to use Instagram for structured assignments. 13 people (59%) really like it, 6 people (27%) like it, 3 people (14%) dislike it and 0 people dislike it.
2. The reasons they gave for their level of liking varied. Most of them stated that they were happy to be able to exist on Instagram by posting Japanese videos as well as having the opportunity to be assessed, where the tasks given were not always writing but could also make them more creative. Another reason is also because this technique is like practicing the Presentation and Negotiation Techniques course so that the application can be in line with other courses. There were some learners who stated that they did not like it because they were shy and did not like to expose themselves.
3. 18 people (82%) stated that there were no obstacles at all to completing a task like this. The rest gave the reasons that they forgot and network problems.
4. When asked whether the task of posting videos on Instagram can help and improve Japanese story reading skills, 86% stated that it can help (19 people), less like posting videos on social media (3 people).

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, conclusions can be drawn about the use of Instagram social media in learning to read Japanese stories. Instagram is a social media that is widely used by all circles of people. So Instagram social media is very possible to be used as a learning media. In addition, according to the results of research that more than 80% of people are more

interested in learning using social media and there are many platforms that provide us with the material or things we want to learn. The results show that learning to read Japanese stories through Instagram provides benefits in the development of reading skills. Students showed comprehension of the text in the target language. There is also high motivation and satisfaction with the learning experience through Instagram. However, there are advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that students' assignments can be accessed easily, reading skills are more developed, they become more creative and innovative, brave and wiser in using social media. Meanwhile, the disadvantages are that there is a length limit in writing captions, it takes a long time to design content and consumes more internet quota. Recommendations for future research include involving a larger sample, considering variations in students' reading levels, variations in other abilities, and exploring more specific teaching strategies to improve students' skills in Japanese.

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