

***Perception of Using Social Media in Improving Art Education Students'
English Language Skills***

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Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of life, including in education. This study investigates the effectiveness of using social media as learning media to improve students' English as a Foreign Language (EFL) skills from the learners' perspective. The research covers two fundamental issues: the extent to which social media affect students' language skills and how social media can improve students' English language skills. The research was done at three universities in Indonesia. A questionnaire was distributed to 45 undergraduate students enrolled in the Department of Art Education. Results show that Art Education students believe that social media improves their English language skills positively. They also reported that students use a lot of social media in learning EFL through various activities, for instance, by describing their artwork in English. The findings also reveal what kind of social media which have been frequently used as English learning media. Therefore, social media can be one of the learning media for EFL students to improve their English language skills.

Keywords: Social Media, Learning Media, Language Skills, EFL, Art Education Students

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Introduction

The development of linguistic skills comes from regular, practical practise. The lack of practise is one of the difficulties in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). There are not enough chances for pupils to accomplish this outside of the classroom, though. They lack the time and a friend they need to practise. It takes place in Indonesia, a country where English is not often spoken. As a result, there is still much to learn in order to speak English fluently.

With 2.95 billion users worldwide, social media use is increasing in popularity and accessibility, especially among younger people (Pikhart and Botezat, 2021). Social media use allows for two-way communication between users. It is more often known as "viral communication," a shared discussion among online users, and it makes use of the social media network itself. Websites for social networking have taken the place of other means of contact and are now necessary for preserving a social life (Li and Croucher, 2020).

Students in Indonesia frequently utilise social media, in contrast to how regularly people use English. The level of consumption is always rising. Indonesia is third in the Asia-Pacific region behind China and India (Nurhayati-Wolff, 2021). Indonesia had 191.5 million social media users as of January 2022, which is 68.9% of the country's total population (Cultural Insights in Asia, 2022). Due to social media's pervasiveness in daily life, Indonesians primarily use it for communication, entertainment, and even education.

Along with the development of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), language instruction and learning have also been greatly impacted. Social media consequently became a viable tool for language acquisition. Social media can be used to practise English because of its features and content. Depending on their demands, individuals have various options thanks to social media. Social media can be used to directly (synchronously) or indirectly (indirectly) communicate in addition to verbally and in writing (asynchronous). Social media allows for the use of text, photos, audio, video, animation, simulation, and even interactive multimedia. Some of the content on these social networking sites is in a foreign language, primarily English, which is a widely spoken language around the world.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) describe six different social media categories. First, use social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn to communicate and mingle. Second, social media platforms like Google Talk and Skype allow for conversation and discussion. Third, use social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram to exchange files like images or movies. Fourth, publishing tools like blogs and WordPress Fifth, there is microblogging for socialising, but it has limitations similar to Twitter. The final category includes social games such as Koongregate and Cafe.com.

For instance, students from the Art Education department can practise their English by describing their artwork on social media in English. In fact, they also frequently use English to write their work's description when they do work exhibitions, even if it is merely on a daily assignment or a scale between classes. It piques interest as to why they did it. Moreover, how intensely do they use social media to learn EFL? What are their activities on social media? Do they believe social media helps them get better at English?

This study investigates, from the viewpoint of the learners, the effectiveness of social media as a learning aid for improving students' EFL abilities. The two main goals of this study are

to ascertain (1) the extent to which social media affect students' language skills and (2) how social media can improve students' English language skills.

Methodology

The current study aims to determine whether adopting social media as a learning tool will enhance students' EFL proficiency from the learners' viewpoint. The information is self-reported to reveal people's viewpoints and behaviours (Driscoll, 2011). During the academic year 2022–2023, a questionnaire integrating quantitative and qualitative methods was delivered to three universities in three provinces in Indonesia: East Java, the Special Region of Yogyakarta, and Papua. The quantitative data were used to determine the percentage of the influence of social media on the EFL, while the qualitative ones were used to explain that influence and its relation to the students' works of art as well as their networks due to the impact of using foreign languages in their work.

Forty-five undergraduate students from the Art Education Department participated in the survey study. As seen in Figure 1, most participants were 20 years old. The pupils had been learning English for almost eight years, beginning when they were 13 years old, and were formally introduced to the subject in junior high school. English has been inserted into the Indonesian curriculum since 1947 (Alfarisy, 2021).

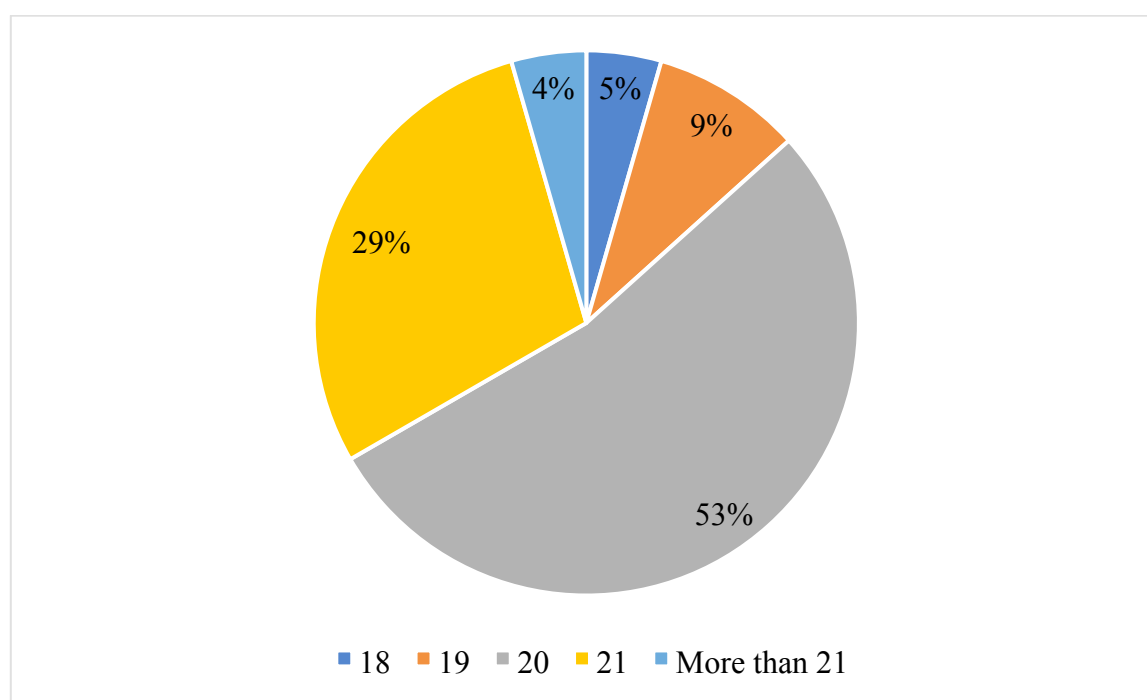


Figure 1: Age Distribution of Participant

Findings and Discussion

This study brought to light how social media, as seen from the perspective of the learners, affects students' English language skills. The appeal of social media as a learning tool is examined, as is the efficacy of each skill individually and together. There is also a difference in how much people use social media to learn English.

Speaking, reading, and writing are the four linguistic abilities. Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Telegram are all considered forms of social media in this study. Social media are online platforms that enable spontaneous communication between users and make themselves available to both specialised and general audiences who value user-generated content and the appearance of social interaction (Carr and Hayes, 2015). not social media sites like Google (chosen eight times) and Duolingo (mentioned once), where data was taken from answers. The popular social media sites are shown as learning mediums in Figure 2.

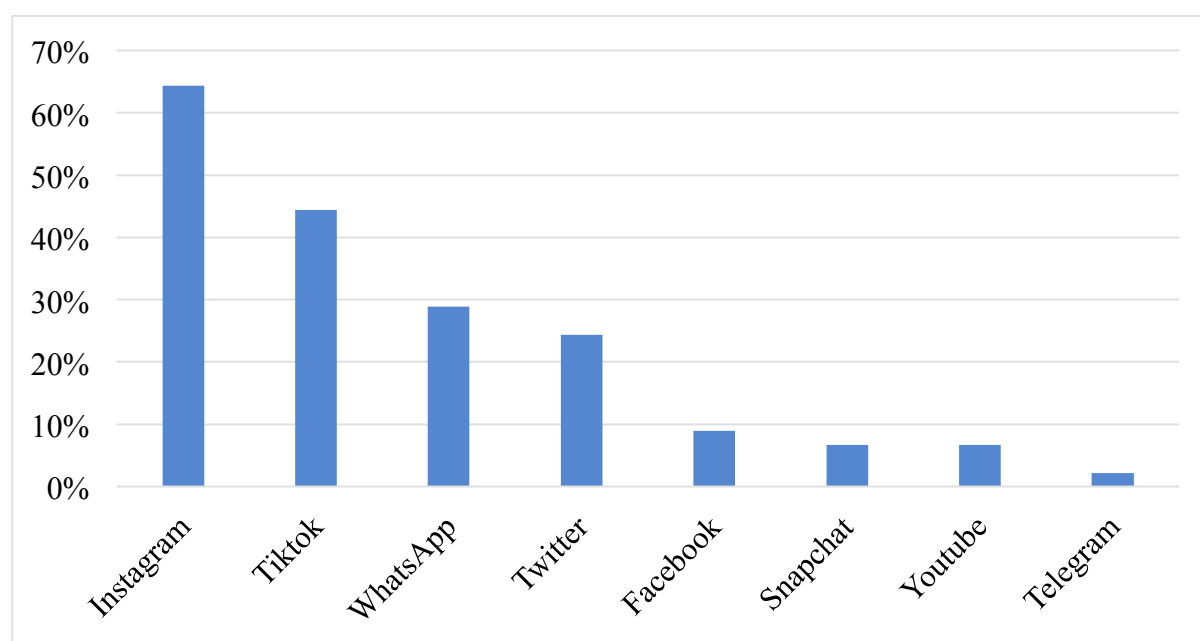


Figure 2: The Frequently Used Social Media as Learning Media

Instagram became the most popular learning media with more than sixty percent, while Twitter had the lowest proportion with about two percent. TikTok's percentage was revealed to be greater than that of WhatsApp, in which TikTok earned about forty-five percent and WhatsApp gained almost thirty percent. Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Telegram shared a similar portion, below ten percent.

According to the outcomes of this study, Instagram is extensively employed as a learning tool by university students in art education, in contrast to research results from Noori (2022), which found that Facebook and WhatsApp were among the most popular social media platforms used in higher education. The findings are also at odds with a study by Van et al. (2020) that found Twitter to be one of the most popular social networking platforms for EFL learning and teaching in Iran. In Turkey, however, Instagram is mostly used for educational and language learning (Erarslan, 2019).

Instagram and TikTok are the two social media platforms that people use the most regularly, which may have something to do with how creative students who study art education tend to be. By encouraging all students to use their creative abilities and foster their imaginations, art education may play a significant role in our society's growing emphasis on visual communication (Zimmerman, 2009). Moreover, the emerging image-based social media platforms Instagram and TikTok allow language learners to creatively utilise their technological characteristics for informal language learning (Lee, 2022).

Figure 3 demonstrates the intensity of using social media in learning English. According to the intensity, more than half of the participants spent 57 percent of their time practising English on social media. Most students—exactly 38 percent—often utilise Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, and Telegram, while only nine percent never employ those to exercise their English skills. The undergraduates who always visited social media to acquire English exposure were inferior to those who sometimes exploited the media, with 19 percent and 34 percent, respectively.

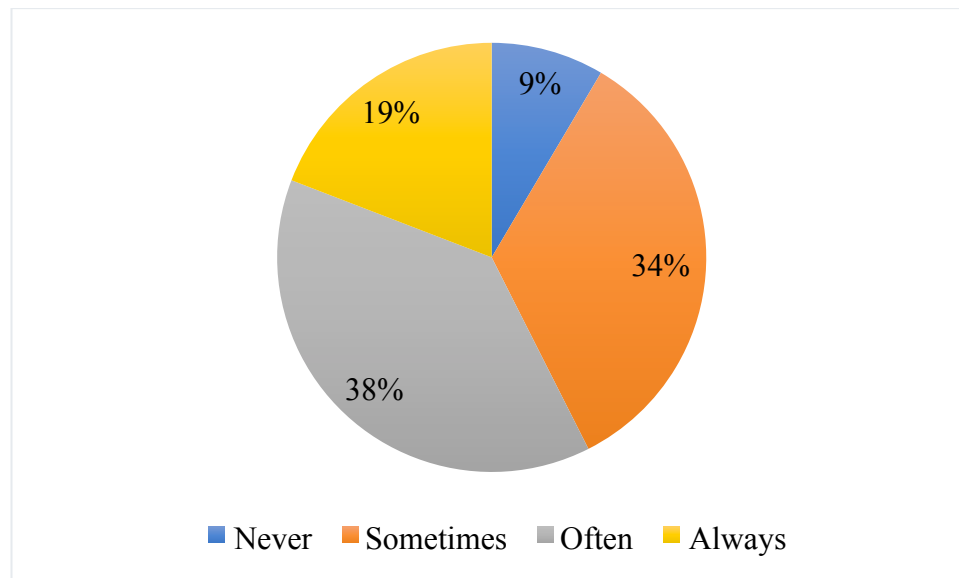


Figure 3: The Intensity of Using Social Media in Learning English

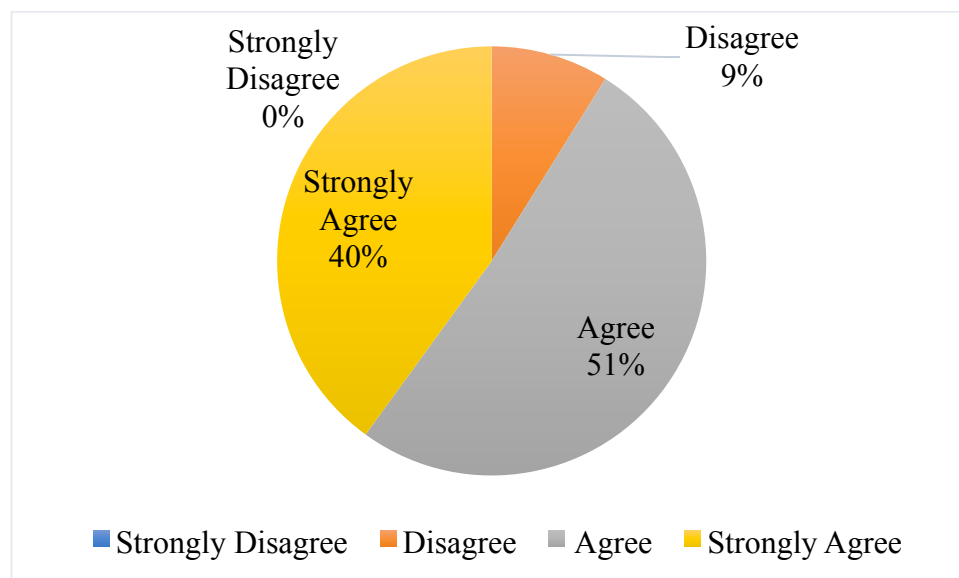


Figure 4: Learners' Views of Social Media's Contribution to the Development of English Language Skills

In general, students believed that social media could help them improve their command of the English language. Figure 4 shows that 47 percent of students strongly concur that using social media does improve one's command of the English language. According to 51 percent of pupils, social media significantly boosts English language skills. In general, 91 percent of students believe social media improves their ability to learn English, particularly in terms of developing their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

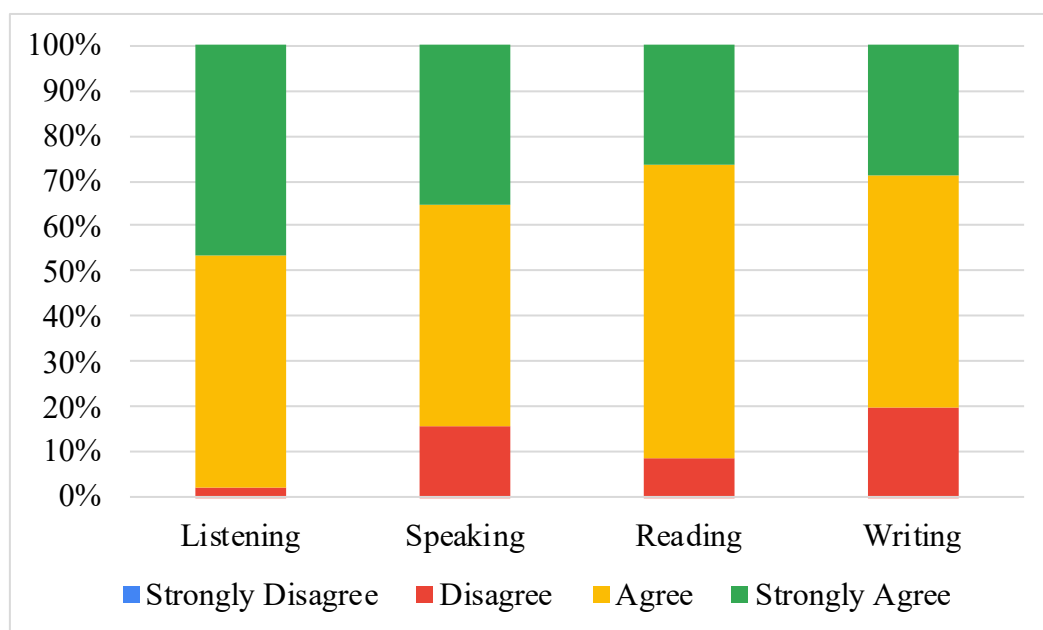


Figure 5: Learners' Perception of the Effectiveness of Social Media in Improving Each English Language Skills

The majority of students think that social media has a big impact on listening abilities, as shown in Figure 5. Twenty percent of students disagree that social media impacts their writing abilities. Learning English through social media improves receptive skills more than productive ones. Songs comprise most of the English content students (68.9%) access on social media. The following most-accessed materials are films (44.4%), status (37.8%), and posts (31.1%). Due to the engaging atmosphere that social media offers, students have the chance to develop their language skills. This was proven by one of the participants' answers: "When listening to songs in English, sometimes I also want to know what the song means."

To demonstrate how social networking improves English proficiency, the student's favourite social media content should be identified (see Figure 6). The most prevalent types of content to study EFL on social media were songs and posts, with 31 learners selecting them, while the most detested form of that was articles, with only one person preferring them. Film received more votes as a learning medium than news, with twenty and seven students aided in learning English, respectively. Finally, news, game, and article all shared the fact that their contents were chosen by fewer than ten people.

Figure 7 demonstrates the activities carried out on social media, such as reading text in English, listening to songs, communicating in English, describing artwork in English, writing something on social media, and listening to quotes in English. The students mostly read text in English during their learning on social media, about 75 percent of the time. Listening to quotes in English, on the other hand, accounted for only about 2% of the endeavours. Listening to songs provided a more sophisticated experience than communicating in English, which they acquired exactly sixty and around fifteen percent of the time, respectively. Under ten percent of undergraduates described the artwork in English, posted something on social media, or listened to English-language quotes.

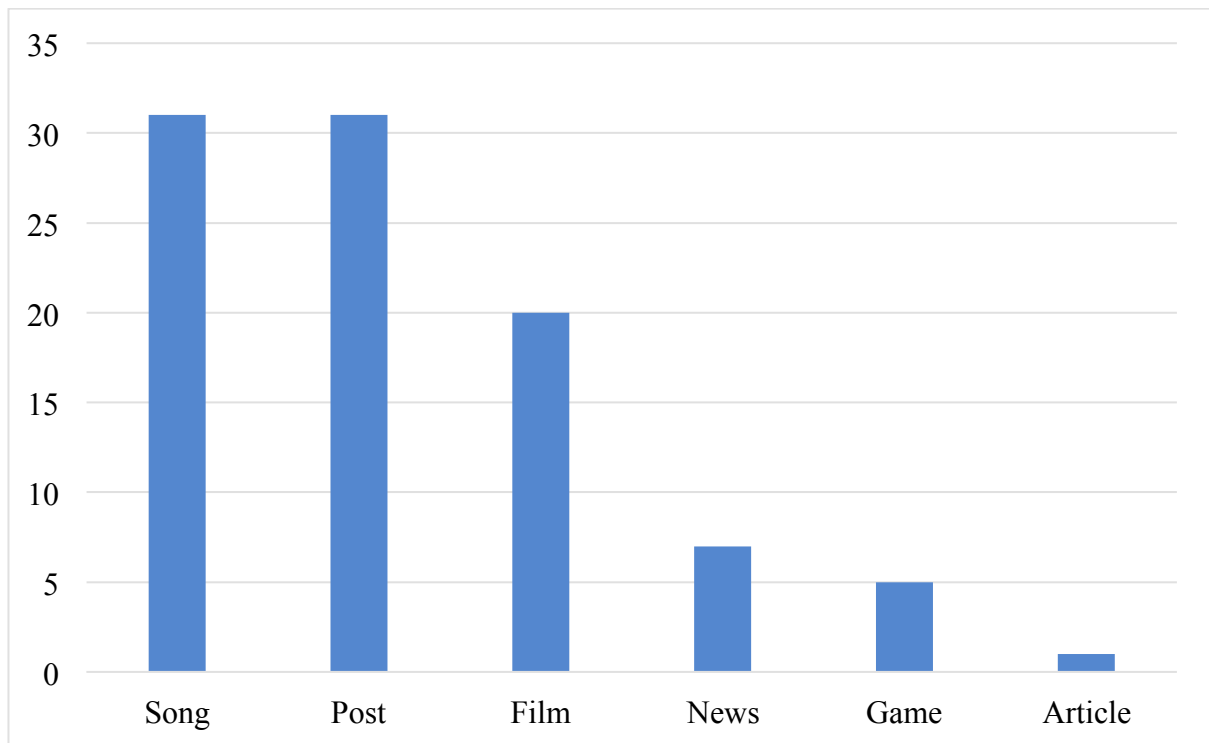


Figure 6: The Content in Social Media to Learn English

Additionally, the pupils' interest in using or reading an art piece's title or description in English is a further intriguing finding. Nearly 70% of them cast affirmative votes. One of them mentioned that because she occasionally wondered what the masterpiece's title meant and wanted to read it. Furthermore, some students stated that there are many things we can learn by describing a work in English, including how to improve our English. For this reason, it is crucial to study English thoroughly.

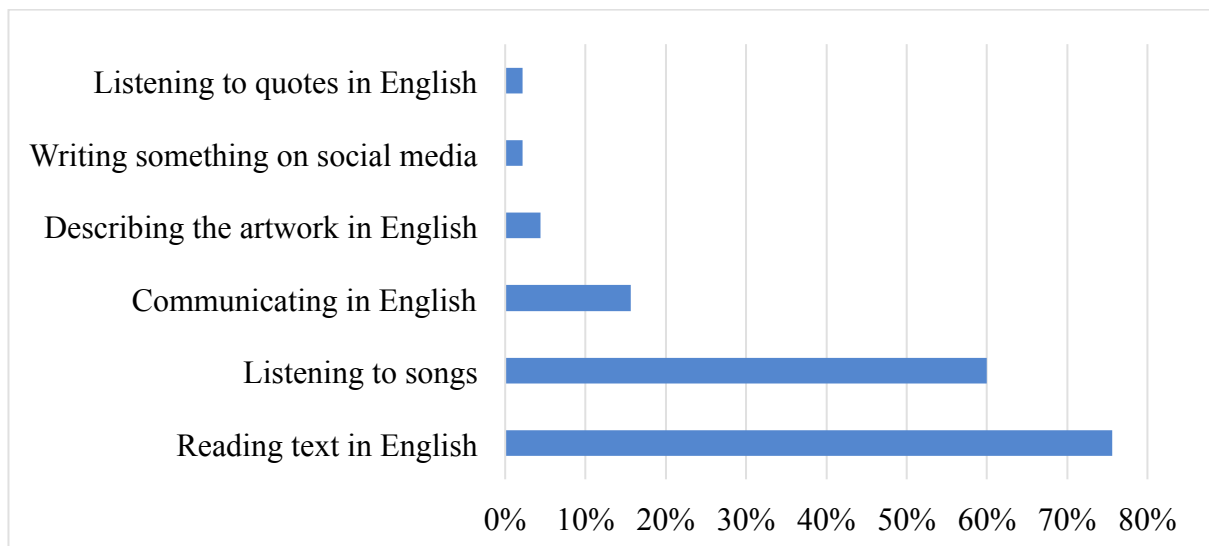


Figure 7: The English Learning Activities on Social Media

According to the aforementioned results, the majority of students consume English-language texts and music from social media, primarily in the form of Instagram and TikTok posts. Because so many creators on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube generate videos or other content using English vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, the participant claimed that

social media could aid in improving English competence. Additionally, they offered activities like English courses, which piqued the attention of several social media users to sign up for the course.

The results are similar to those of previous research, in which students frequently utilised social media to explore vocabulary, develop their vocabulary proficiency, learn from and connect with native speakers, and access foreign language music and other entertaining media as part of their foreign language learning (Malik and Asnur, 2019). Instead of learning vocabulary from mobile vocabulary apps (e.g., MVAs) downloaded from the Google Play or App Stores (Al-Jarf, 2022), reading English text on social media is a more preferred learning activity to progress the students' vocabulary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, pupils' English language skills will advance if they use social media. Social media can aid students in improving their English language skills because of its motivating environment. When students are intrigued by English song lyrics and an artwork's English title or description, they are motivated to learn the language. Social networking sites can be used as a learning tool for EFL students who want to improve their English. The English-language materials may include posts of music, images, and films.

To add more, social media is not just a tool for entertainment; it is important in the sphere of education. EFL teachers in higher education are recommended to use social media when planning activities for the classroom to increase their students' willingness to learn. Using diverse social media should be advantageous for students. However, considering the students' characteristic, such as their interest in visual because of the nature of their subject is also important. For Art Education students, Instagram and TikTok can serve as the perfect social media to assist in learning English.

Finally, it is advised to include additional stakeholders such as the head of the study programme, English lecturer, and Art Education lecturer in next research because this study only takes into account the viewpoint of the students, not the teachers. Additionally, it will be fascinating to explore in greater detail how social media might promote artists' works to wider audiences because of the description given in English. Additionally, the other researcher should consider the relationship between the length of content—such as a clip or video—and the students' interest in media learning.

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