

**Social Media as a Tool for Improving Writing Skills and Vocabulary: A Case Study on 8th Graders at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan**

<sup>1</sup>Cynthia, <sup>2</sup>Merry Kristian Ndruru

Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

[cynthiaatanmn@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiaatanmn@gmail.com), [Kristiana31des@gmail.com](mailto:Kristiana31des@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

Referring to connectivism theory, it is understood that knowledge is distributed across a network where connections facilitate the dissemination of information. In this context, students are seen as actively engaged in creating their own networks, leading to the development of new, beneficial understanding. The study examines the unique contributions of each social media platform in improving students' writing and vocabulary skills. This research adopts a qualitative approach with interview and observation. The findings show that the use of social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok can improve writing skills and English vocabulary mastery among 8th grade students of SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan. Through the various types of content they access, students can practice writing in English in informal and formal contexts, which allows them to develop better writing skills. Although there are variations in how students use social media, all students showed improvements in their writing skills, especially in terms of sentence structure and the use of more varied vocabulary.

**Keywords:** Social media, Vocabulary, Writing skill

**ABSTRAK**

*Mengacu pada teori konektivisme, dipahami bahwa pengetahuan didistribusikan melalui jaringan di mana koneksi memfasilitasi penyebaran informasi. Dalam konteks ini, siswa dipandang terlibat aktif dalam menciptakan jaringannya sendiri, sehingga mengarah pada pengembangan pemahaman baru yang bermanfaat. Studi ini menguji kontribusi unik dari setiap platform media sosial dalam meningkatkan keterampilan menulis dan kosakata siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan wawancara dan observasi. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan media sosial seperti Instagram, YouTube, dan TikTok dapat meningkatkan keterampilan menulis dan penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris pada siswa kelas 8 SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan. Melalui berbagai jenis konten yang mereka akses, siswa dapat berlatih menulis dalam bahasa Inggris dalam konteks informal dan formal, yang memungkinkan mereka mengembangkan keterampilan menulis lebih baik. Meskipun terdapat variasi dalam cara siswa menggunakan media sosial, namun seluruh siswa menunjukkan peningkatan dalam keterampilan menulisnya, terutama dalam hal struktur kalimat dan penggunaan kosakata yang lebih bervariasi.*

**Kata Kunci:** Media Sosial, Kosakata, Keterampilan Menulis

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background of Study**

As a fundamental element of human life, social media’s role in modern society has strengthened significantly due to the growing need for communication. Communication enables individuals to connect with each other and foster continuity in daily interactions (Marchellia, 2022). Social media enhances this need by creating new opportunities for individuals to interact with others, regardless of distance, through a single touch on their screen (Ikhsan *et al.*, 2024).

This phenomenon is evident worldwide, including in Indonesia. In early 2024, Hootsuite (We Are Social) published official data showing trends in internet and social media usage in Indonesia (Figure 1.1). The data indicates that, of Indonesia's 276.4 million population, there are 353.8 million mobile devices connected (128%). Active internet users make up 77% of the population (212.9 million), and 60.4% (167 million) are active social media users, illustrating that social media has reached nearly all demographic groups, regardless of status, age, or social class.



**Figure 1.** Trends in Internet and Social Media Usage in Indonesia  
Source: Hootsuite (We are Social, 2024)

Social media usage is primarily driven by users aged 12 to 34. According to a 2024 survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), this demographic utilizes a wide array of platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, and LinkedIn (Figure 1.2).



**Figure 1.** Distribution of Social Media Users in Indonesia by Age and Platform  
Source: APJII, 2024

The APJII data indicates that social media usage now spans all age groups, including children. Beyond concerns about potential drawbacks, social media is also seen as a significant educational tool for fostering collaborative learning. Ansari and Khan (2020) suggest that social media is often utilized as a learning resource at both secondary and higher education levels, enabling students to access information anytime and anywhere. With its interactive features, social media offers students not only formal learning opportunities but also informal skill enhancement. This contributes to youth learning, particularly in building English language skills.

English language skills include four essential skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing which are interrelated and essential for effective communication. (Rita, 2022). Social media has significantly influenced English language learning, both formally and informally. For example, many Indonesian teenagers use English terms like "followers" instead of the Indonesian equivalent

In this case, "followers" are the widespread use of English on social media, highlighting its role in supporting language acquisition among young people. (Nafisah & Budiarmo, 2020). This phenomenon can be observed through platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, which are widely used by the younger generation and serve as valuable supplementary tools for developing English language skills.

Instagram, a photography-focused mobile application, serves as a significant platform for fostering creativity due to its emphasis on visual aesthetics. It provides features for sharing photos and videos with captions, making it a powerful tool for visual and contextual expression. Since its introduction in 2010, Instagram has grown to become the second most popular social media platform in Indonesia, particularly among Generation Z (APJII, 2024). Its interactive features facilitate user connections, offering students opportunities to enhance their creative and contextual writing skills through caption creation. Additionally, these features aid in vocabulary development, as students engage with captions from others and receive feedback through comments, fostering language growth (Atmoko, 2012).

YouTube, established in February 2005 by Jawed Karim, Steve Chen, and Chad Hurley, ranks as the third most popular platform. With its slogan "YouTube Broadcast Yourself," it functions as a repository for user-generated experiences and daily activities. Similar to Instagram, YouTube includes interactive comment sections that encourage communication among users. However, YouTube distinguishes itself by providing English-language video content, which helps students expand their vocabulary and improve sentence structure comprehension through exposure to native speakers. In some cases, students gain not only writing skills but also speaking skills by recording and uploading videos (Nursobah, 2021).

In the meantime, TikTok has emerged as one of the leading social media platforms, frequently surpassing Instagram in popularity. According to APJII (2024), TikTok ranks as the fourth most-used app in Indonesia by active users. Launched in 2016 by Zhang Yiming, TikTok quickly became viral due to its interactive features that enable users to create and share short videos with musical backdrops (Frizka and

Listyaningrum, 2023). Compared to YouTube, TikTok offers shorter, more engaging video content, providing a unique advantage for students to develop their vocabulary through concise, impactful content. The platform also includes features such as text overlays, hashtags, and captions, which encourage students to write and engage with English in creative and dynamic ways.

WR Supratman 1 Junior High School in Medan, a private institution founded in 1960, is widely regarded as one of the leading junior high schools in the region. It has maintained an A accreditation status since 2016. Renowned for its innovative teaching strategies, the school emphasizes student-centered learning, creating a supportive and engaging atmosphere for both academic and non-academic pursuits. This study focuses on eighth-grade students from WR Supratman 1 Junior High School, specifically those aged 12 to 13, to explore the influence of social media on young users. The research investigates how platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok can serve as effective informal learning tools, particularly for enhancing writing skills and vocabulary during the 2024/2025 academic year.

Based on previous research conducted by Sinaga *et al.* (2023); Tampubolon *et al.* (2023); Syachsalsabillah & Hamid (2024); and Rahmanova *et al.* (2025) this research aims to fill gaps in the existing literature by analyzing the educational potential of these popular platforms commonly used by students. The study examines the unique contributions of each social media platform in improving students' writing and vocabulary skills. The findings are expected to not only provide new insights into the use of social media for informal language education but also demonstrate a significant impact on students' language proficiency.

## **The Assumptions**

Referring to connectivism theory, it is understood that knowledge is distributed across a network where connections facilitate the dissemination of information (Siemens, 2004). In this context, students are seen as actively engaged in creating their own networks, leading to the development of new, beneficial understanding. Connectivism outlines four core principles, offering not only a novel learning model but also insights into the knowledge, skills, and tasks necessary for students to keep up with technological advancements in education (Tschofen dan Markness, 2012).

*Firstly*, connectivism embraces autonomy, emphasizing individual self-regulation. This assumes that eighth-grade students at WR Supratman 1 Junior High School in Medan possess independent learning skills, managing their digital learning activities and behaviors. In this case, students are expected to be capable of selecting relevant connections and information sources without direct guidance from teachers.

*Secondly*, connectivism emphasizes connectivity, linking students and teachers through collaboration among peers and between students and teachers, who share opinions, knowledge, ideas, and information. Students in this setting are assumed to be able to share and distribute content from social media as a source of

information and knowledge, both among themselves and with their teachers.

*Thirdly*, diversity within connectivism represents unique perspectives and overall creativity. Students are encouraged to express opinions, suggestions, and ideas with others, moving beyond relying solely on the teacher as the primary source of knowledge. This leads to the *fourth* principle is openness, which enables students to exchange views, ideas, and insights to gain knowledge and information as needed. Students in this case are assumed to engage in sharing information and receiving feedback from both peers and educators.

This analysis assumes that eighth-grade students at WR Supratman 1 Junior High School in Medan independently build connections via social media. These connections create opportunities to enhance English proficiency, such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills through exposure to information on social media and feedback from peers and teachers.

## **Problem Identification**

Based on the background presented, this research addresses the following questions:

1. How does the use of Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok in improving English writing skills among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan?
2. How does the use of Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok in improving English vocabulary mastery among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan?
3. What factors influence the effectiveness of using social media as a tool for improving writing skills and vocabulary mastery in English among 8th-grade students?

## **Objective of the Research**

Aligned with the identified problems, this study aims to:

1. To examine how Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok contribute in improving English writing skills among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan.
2. To assess the role of Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok contribute in improving English vocabulary mastery among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan.
3. To identify the factors affecting the effectiveness of using social media as a learning tool for improving writing skills and vocabulary mastery in English among 8th-grade students.

## **Scope of the Research**

This study centers on analyzing the role of social media in students' daily activities, specifically targeting eighth-grade students at WR Supratman 1 Junior High School, Medan, during the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants are identified

as active social media users, specifically on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. The research aims to assess how social media usage contributes to enhancing students' English language skills, with a focus on both receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing). These language skills are expected to develop through students' engagement with English-language content on social media. Additionally, the study will explore challenges that students encounter during this interaction, which may hinder their English proficiency improvement. To capture students' perceptions and experiences, a qualitative approach will be employed, incorporating in-depth interviews and participant observation. By examining social media use in students' everyday lives, this research seeks to reveal the potential role of social media in advancing English language skills among young learners in an educational context.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This research adopts a qualitative approach, aiming to gain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of study participants through language and expression within a natural, specific context. According to Cresswell (2012), qualitative research is research that aims to understand the meaning of a number of individuals or groups of people related to social problems. In descriptive qualitative research, the objective is to capture the situation as it occurs in the field, without intervention, manipulation, or alteration of the variables being studied (Sukmadinata, 2011). This approach is deemed suitable for examining the experiences and challenges of eighth-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan in utilizing social media as an informal learning tool to enhance English language skills. By using this method, the researcher can explore each student's unique experience without the need for generalization.

### **Location and Time of Research**

This research was conducted at WR Supratman Junior High School 1, Medan, located at Jl. Asia No.143, Sei Rengas I, Medan Kota District, Medan City, North Sumatra. The research was conducted for three months, starting from the end of October 2024 to January 2025.

### **Subject and Object of the Research**

In qualitative research, research subjects are the parties targeted in data collection. In this case, the total number of grade VIII students enrolled at SMPN 1 WR Supratman Medan in the 2024/2025 school year is 30 students. In qualitative research, the minimum number of samples that must be studied is not determined. According to Heryana (2018), generally qualitative research uses a small sample size, even in certain cases using only 1 informant. Therefore, due to limited time, money, and energy, the subject of this research, namely conducting interviews with 3 grade

VIII students enrolled at SMPN 1 WR Supratman Medan in the 2024/2025 school year.

On the other hand, the object of research is the nature, condition of an object, person or the center of attention and research targets. The object of this research is the utilization of social media such as Instagram, Youtube, and Tiktok to improve writing skills and vocabulary mastery in English.

### **Instrument of Research**

The research instrument is defined as a tool used by researchers to accurately, systematically, and comprehensively gather data that is easy to process (Arikunto, 2006). In practice, the research instruments are divided into primary instruments, namely the researcher themselves, and supporting instruments, specifically observation and interview guides.

1. Researcher

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher. As a human instrument, the researcher directly engages with and assesses various interactions in the field. This role involves planning, executing, collecting data, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting research findings.

2. Observation

The first supporting instrument is observation. This instrument involves developing an observation guide through the following steps:

- a. Identifying variables relevant to the research title and questions;
- b. Breaking down these variables into smaller components (sub-variables);
- c. Defining indicators for each variable component;
- d. Organizing descriptors into elements or items for the research instrument; and
- e. Completing the instrument with a guide containing instructions.

3. Interview Guidelines

The second supporting instrument is the interview guidelines. Its development follows the same steps as those used for the observation instrument, ensuring a systematic approach to data collection.

### **Technique of Collecting Data**

The data collection methods outline how researchers gather data and information to produce valid and reliable results (Bungin, 2003). This study employs two data collection techniques, which are interview, observation, and Documentation.

1. Interview

Sugiyono (2010) defines interviews as a method for gathering data that provides in-depth answers, typically with a smaller number of participants. The interview will target three eighth-grade students currently enrolled at WR Supratman Junior High School 1 in Medan for the 2024/2025 academic year who have previously used or are currently using social media

platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. In this study, semi-structured interviews are used to gather research data. This method involves a flexible question-and-answer process that is not strictly bound to an interview guide, allowing for an accurate and relevant data collection aligned with initial guidelines while providing respondents with the opportunity to elaborate on their responses in depth (Gunawan, 2013). This choice aims to create a comfortable environment for students, reducing the sense of a 'test' atmosphere and encouraging more thoughtful responses while still ensuring that the interview process aligns with the established flow of the guidelines.

2. Observation

Observation involves researchers directly observing relevant elements, such as space, time, activities, goals, participants, objects, and feelings (Almanshur, 2012). This method systematically records all phenomena related to the research subject while maintaining the relationships between observed aspects. Non-participatory observation is utilized in this study due to the participants' young age, allows for an objective stance while minimizing any potential discomfort or intimidation felt by the participants.

3. Documentation

The documentation method is a data collection method used to trace historical data about a person or group of people, events, or occurrences (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, researchers used personal documents in the form of notes, interview results, and photos during the interview.

**Technique of Analyzing Data**

The data analysis technique in this research follows a structured process of organizing data into patterns or categories (Moleong, 2004). The data analysis technique in this study was carried out using the Miles and Huberman data analysis model through three stages, namely data collection, data reduction, and conclusion drawing (Bungin, 2003).

1. Data Collection

Data collection is an essential part of the analysis process, aimed at gathering all necessary information to answer the research questions. This process is conducted iteratively to ensure credible results. For this research, data collection will involve interviews and documentation techniques.

2. Data Reduction

Data reduction involves selecting and retaining only the relevant data that aligns with the research focus. This step helps the researcher filter out key information, making the findings easier to interpret. Non-essential data is discarded, while critical information is categorized to provide a clear view of the research outcomes. This step serves as an initial sorting process, allowing the researcher to identify and refine raw data for further analysis.

3. Verification and Conclusion Drawing

Verification and conclusion drawing are the final stages of the analysis. After gathering and reducing data, relevant information is synthesized to derive comprehensive conclusions from the research observations. During this stage, the researcher verifies each emerging interpretation with the source data, clarifying with participants if necessary to confirm accuracy. Once verified, conclusions based on the research findings are drawn systematically.

**Trustworthiness**

Each research study generally requires a standardized approach to assess the validity of its results, commonly referred to as trustworthiness. In qualitative research, where reality is seen as complex and fluid, consistency and repetition as seen in quantitative methods are not expected. Data validity in this context is achieved through data triangulation. Data triangulation is a data collection technique that involves integrating various types of data and sources (Sugiyono, 2015). This research employs two forms of data triangulation:

1. Source Triangulation

Source triangulation involves verifying data credibility by cross-checking information from different sources. In this study, data are collected through observations and interviews with eighth-grade students at WR Supratman 1 Junior High School in Medan, who serve as key informants. The study then compares secondary data on the contribution of social media to English language skills with the responses provided by these key informants.

2. Technique Triangulation

Technique triangulation tests data credibility by employing various data collection techniques from the same source. In this research, the researcher uses both observation and interview techniques to gather data from eighth-grade students at WR Supratman 1 Junior High School in Medan.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

In this section, the results of the study related to the use of social media (Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok) in improving English writing skills among 8th grade students will be discussed. The data obtained came from semi-structured interviews with three students and direct observation of their activities on social media. The results of the interviews provide insight into the experiences, types of content, and efforts made by students to ensure grammatical accuracy in their writing, while observations provide a deeper picture of the social and personal contexts that influence the way they write.

**The use of Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok enhance English writing skills among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan Findings Experience in Using Social Media to Write in English**

All students in this study admitted to using social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to write in English, although the ways they did it varied. Each student utilized the platforms they chose to write in English for different purposes, which influenced how they developed their writing skills.

Student 1 as respondent said that they often wrote captions on Instagram in English. Usually, the captions were related to travel or photos with friends. This activity allowed them to write short sentences and use English in a more relaxed and informal context. They felt that writing captions helped them understand the use of words in sentences more naturally. Student 2, on the other hand, wrote scripts for TikTok videos more often, especially for English tutorials. Writing scripts for TikTok requires a more structured understanding because they have to convey messages clearly and concisely in a short time. This requires them to use English in a more formal and precise manner. Furthermore, student 3 revealed that although they rarely wrote captions on Instagram, they wrote comments on YouTube more often. Writing comments on YouTube gave them the opportunity to practice writing in a shorter and more practical form. They also mentioned that they started writing short blogs inspired by the YouTube videos they watched, which helped them practice their writing skills further.

Based on the interviews, we can see that although social media is often used in a more casual social context, students utilize various platforms to write in English according to their interests and habits. Student 1 is more comfortable with writing short and informal captions, which may focus more on self-expression and personal experiences. On the other hand, Student 2 tends to focus on writing more structured scripts for tutorial videos, which shows a more seriousness and specific learning goals. Student 3, although more frequent in writing comments, also started writing longer blogs, indicating a progression from writing short comments to a more detailed form of writing. Each student showed diverse uses of social media, but all of these forms of writing provided a space for them to experiment with English freely, improving their writing skills in a fun and unpressured way.

During the observation time, the researchers gave students writing assignments that required them to organize jumbled words or phrases into acceptable structures, as well as produce a narrative text based on video prompts uploaded on Youtube. The researchers looked at how students responded to these activities on social media networks. Student 1 was actively engaged in assignments such as rephrasing captions and writing short personal writings. Student 2 concentrated more on correctly organizing English phrases in response to the researchers' video lectures, which helped them write more coherently. Meanwhile, Student 3 took advantage of the chance to produce longer blog articles inspired by YouTube videos. The results showed that these exercises improved their writing

skills. Students experimented with several writing forms, ranging from spontaneous captions to organized narratives, and shown improvements in sentence organization and word use.

### **Types of Content Written in English**

In this study, the types of content written by students were mostly short sentences. However, they also wrote with variations depending on the platform and their respective purposes. The types of writing they produced reflected how they utilized social media to improve their writing skills, while adapting to different audiences and contexts.

Student 1 often wrote short captions on Instagram. The captions were usually related to travel photos or other social activities. This activity helped them become more familiar with simple and informal English sentence structures, thus providing a better understanding of the use of English in everyday contexts. Moreover, student 2 focused more on writing scripts for TikTok videos. These scripts required a more formal structure because they were teaching English tutorials. In this process, they learned to write more organized and clear sentences so that the audience could easily understand the information conveyed. Writing scripts on TikTok also challenged them to develop their writing skills in a very short time limit, demanding higher creativity. Furthermore, student 3 tended to write comments on YouTube, but also tried to write short blogs inspired by YouTube videos. The comments they write are usually short responses to the videos they watch, but blogging gives them the opportunity to practice more in-depth writing skills, paying attention to sentence structure and idea development.

Writing a variety of content types, from short captions to longer blogs, allows students to practice various aspects of English writing skills. Student 1, who writes captions more often, can hone their ability to construct concise and direct sentences. Meanwhile, Student 2 who writes video scripts on TikTok takes the opportunity to learn to construct more structured and formal sentences. Student 3 who writes comments and blogs shows how they have progressed from writing short sentences to longer and more detailed forms of writing, which shows the growth of their writing skills. This indicates that social media gives them the freedom to develop their writing skills in various contexts and purposes that suit their interests.

During the observations, the researchers provided targeted video content that included narrative prompts (e.g., "Write a short story using these words") and vocabulary exercises (e.g., "Use these new words in a sentence"). The researchers closely monitored how the students performed these activities. Student 1 was able to produce concise and expressive texts quickly, while Student 2 demonstrated a more analytical approach by carefully constructing their English sentences, especially for educational content. Student 3 initially focused on writing shorter, reactive comments but progressed to creating more in-depth blog posts, showing improvements in both length and complexity of writing. As they completed the tasks, it became clear that the

combination of informal writing activities such as texts, and more structured exercises such as narrative writing had helped them improve their writing fluency. Their written responses gradually became more accurate and aligned with the type of content intended both informal or formal.

### **Efforts to Ensure Grammatical Accuracy**

To ensure their writing is free from grammatical errors, students showed different ways of checking and correcting their writing before posting. Although there were variations in the methods they chose, all three students made great efforts to reduce grammatical errors in their writing.

Based on the interview, student 1 was very thorough in checking their writing using tools such as Google Translate and Grammarly. They stated that these tools helped them to check for grammatical errors and correct inappropriate sentences before posting. This approach shows that they were very careful and thorough in correcting errors, resulting in their writing being more accurate and error-free. Furthermore, student 2 admitted that they rarely checked their writing before posting. Instead, they relied more on feedback from others, such as friends who provided comments or suggestions regarding errors in their writing. This shows that they learned more through social interaction and social learning, even without direct checking before writing. On the other hand, student 3 always checked the words they used using an online dictionary to ensure that the words they chose were grammatically correct and in context. They stated that this habit helped them to be more confident in their writing and reduce the potential errors.

Unlike Student 1 who was more careful in checking each of their writings before posting, Student 2 relied more on feedback from their friends who gave suggestions or comments. This approach shows that they rely more on learning from social interactions than checking individually. Student 3, who always used an online dictionary to check the accuracy of words, showed a disciplined attitude in ensuring the accuracy of the use of words in their sentences. Although there were differences in the way they checked for errors, all students had a high awareness of the importance of ensuring grammatical accuracy in their writing, reflecting an effort to continuously improve their writing skills in English.

As part of the observation, the researchers created content that encouraged students to review and correct grammar using digital tools like Google Translate or Grammarly, and also encouraged them to engage in peer feedback in comment sections. The researchers observed that Student 1 took great care in revising their posts, showing a high degree of self-correction, while Student 2 was less focused on error correction and relied more on social interaction and feedback. Student 3, on the other hand, habitually checked their word choices using an online dictionary to ensure accuracy. Through these observations, the researchers saw that Student 1's writing became almost flawless due to their careful use of grammar tools. Student 2's reliance on peer feedback helped them learn context-specific language, and Student

3's use of the dictionary ensured that their vocabulary was not only grammatically correct but also contextually appropriate.

**The use of Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok enhance English vocabulary mastery among 8th-grade students at SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan  
Discovering New Vocabulary on Social Media**

The first question aimed to explore how often students encountered new vocabulary while using Instagram, YouTube, or TikTok, and whether they could provide examples. Students reported that the frequency and types of new vocabulary they encountered varied across platforms.

Based on the interview, student 1 mentioned that they encounter new words on TikTok almost every day, especially idioms or popular phrases. TikTok, which focuses on short, viral videos, often introduces casual and popular expressions used in everyday communication, which may not always be covered in formal learning. Meanwhile, student 2 said that they encounter new vocabulary quite often on YouTube, especially related to technology and science. YouTube, with its wide range of educational content, provides an opportunity for students to learn more technical and academic terms that are often used in videos explaining complex concepts in various fields. Furthermore, student 3 stated that they encounter new vocabulary occasionally, usually through Instagram Stories or YouTube videos. Their frequency of encountering new vocabulary was lower, which may indicate that they are more exposed to content that uses simpler language or that they are not consuming content as intensively as other students.

The frequency of encountering new vocabulary largely depended on the type of content consumed by students. Student 1, who used TikTok more often, encountered popular and informal expressions, while Student 2, who accessed educational videos on YouTube more often, encountered more academic and technical vocabulary. Student 3, who accessed Instagram and sometimes YouTube, tended to encounter simpler and less frequent vocabulary. This variation suggests that each social media platform introduces different vocabulary based on the type of content and user preferences.

Based on the observation, the researchers gave pupils specialized instructive YouTube movies that included new language. These videos contained subtitles to assist pupils connect pronunciation and spelling. The researchers discovered that Student 1, who frequently watched YouTube video linked to leisure and education, came across slang and idioms that are typical in casual situations. Student 2, who viewed YouTube videos with academic content, encountered more technical jargon. Student 3, who used YouTube less frequently for studying, profited from instructive videos when they viewed them. The exposure to a diverse vocabulary depending on the sort of information ingested. Educational information, particularly videos with subtitles, can assist all students develop their vocabulary, especially if the films use more organized, academic language.

### **Types of Content Most Helpful in Improving Vocabulary**

Students were asked to name the types of content on social media that they found most helpful in improving their English vocabulary. Based on the interview, student 1 highlighted that tutorials and educational videos, especially those with captions or subtitles, were most helpful in improving their vocabulary. This suggests that students preferred structured and informative content, where they could see and hear new vocabulary used in a clear context. Moreover, student 2 agreed, emphasizing that educational content with subtitles was the most useful, compared to regular vlogs. The inclusion of subtitles in educational videos provided students with two modes of learning (audio and visual), which improved comprehension and retention of new vocabulary. Furthermore, student 3 preferred short videos with live examples, as they found real-life examples most helpful in understanding vocabulary usage. This suggests that students valued content that demonstrated the application of vocabulary in everyday situations, which made vocabulary more relevant and understandable.

All students preferred educational or tutorial content, clearly showing a preference for videos that included subtitles or captions. This indicates that students value content that provides both auditory and visual input, as it can help them better understand and retain new vocabulary. Short videos with live examples are also highly valued, as they give students firsthand experience of seeing vocabulary in action. Based on the observation, the researchers presented instructional materials on YouTube that was vocabulary-rich and included subtitles to help with understanding. The researchers discovered that Student 1, who often accessed instructional content with captions, had superior recollection of new terms, particularly idioms and informal phrases. Student 2, who watched YouTube instructional videos on more formal and academic themes, was able to expand their vocabulary with more technical phrases. Student 3 profited from tutorial-style videos on YouTube because they allowed them to see terminology in practical, real-world circumstances, which helped them learn both the meaning and application of the terms. By offering access to instructional information on YouTube with subtitles and practical examples, the researchers discovered that all students were able to enhance their vocabulary by recognizing new terms in context and reinforcing learning via both aural and visual means.

### **Using New Vocabulary in Writing and Conversation**

Lastly, the researchers explored whether students had used the new vocabulary they learned from social media in their writing or conversation. Based on the interview, student 1 confirmed that they had used the phrase “on cloud nine,” which they learned from TikTok, in their writing assignment. This shows how vocabulary from social media can be applied in a more formal academic context, enriching the language students use in writing assignments. Moreover, Student 2

reported that they often try to use the new vocabulary in everyday conversations with their friends. This shows that vocabulary learned from social media is used in informal communication, making it part of their active vocabulary in social interactions. Furthermore, Student 3 mentioned that they used the new vocabulary both in school work and in Instagram posts. This shows that they applied the new words in academic contexts as well as in informal online communication.

Based on the observation, the researchers saw students employing new terminology from YouTube in a variety of settings, both official and casual. The researchers encouraged students to write brief tasks and engage in conversations that used new terminology gained from YouTube videos. Student 1 used colloquial terms from YouTube videos in their writing assignments. Student 2 employed new, technical terminology in talks with classmates, demonstrating how vocabulary gained from instructional YouTube videos was used in everyday situations. Student 3 demonstrated adaptability by applying newly learned vocabulary in both academic and casual situations. The researchers found that using new vocabulary in writing and speech helped pupils recall and internalize the terms. It also encouraged students to explore with new terminology in other forms of communication, so reinforcing their grasp.

### **Factors affect the effectiveness of using social media as a tool for improving writing skills and vocabulary mastery in English among 8th-grade students**

#### **Motivation and Engagement in Learning English Through Social Media**

Students' motivation and engagement in learning English through social media are greatly influenced by how social media presents content. Based on the interview results, Student 1 felt that they enjoyed learning through social media more because it felt like playing, so it didn't feel like they were studying. This shows that students feel more interested and motivated when learning activities are not too burdensome or too formal. Meanwhile, Student 2 felt that the content presented was interesting and easy to understand, so they felt motivated to continue learning. This motivation can come from the content format that suits the students' needs and interests. On the other hand, Student 3 felt that learning English through social media was fun because it didn't feel boring. This shows that social media can create a more relaxed and enjoyable learning experience.

During the observation, students were more interested in tasks that involved interactive and fun content, such as arranging words into correct sentences or writing narrative texts. Students showed higher engagement when they felt free to be creative in a non-pressuring environment. They were also more active in working on tasks that focused on vocabulary development and writing skills, further demonstrating that social media is an engaging and effective tool for improving their English skills.

#### **Obstacles in Using Social Media for Learning English**

Although social media offers many advantages for learning English, it is not

uncommon for students to face obstacles that reduce its effectiveness. The interview results showed that Student 1 expressed the problem of slow internet connection, which made it difficult to access longer videos or more in-depth learning materials. On the other hand, Student 2 complained about distractions from other irrelevant content, such as entertainment videos, which could distract them from focusing on learning English. Meanwhile, Student 3 also felt that they were often distracted by excessive scrolling and did not focus on content that was useful for learning.

During the observation, obstacles such as poor internet connection often interfered with the smoothness of accessing videos or content that was needed. In addition, several students were seen often distracted by irrelevant or entertainment content, which affected their concentration. Several students also seemed to have difficulty in limiting time to focus on more productive materials, which created challenges in effective learning.

### **Type of Content and Its Effectiveness for Learning English**

The type of content used in social media plays a major role in determining its effectiveness as a tool for improving English skills. Educational content, which provides clear and structured information, tends to be more effective than entertainment or overly informal content. Interview results showed that Student 1 said that entertainment content alone is not effective for learning English, but educational videos or tutorials really help them understand English better. Meanwhile, Student 2 thought that distractions from irrelevant content were the biggest obstacle in learning English. On the other hand, Student 3 stated that content that is too informal is not effective for learning formal English writing.

Observations showed that educational content, such as tutorial videos and exercises that teach vocabulary or how to construct sentences correctly, is very effective in improving writing skills and vocabulary comprehension. Students who engage in educational videos or structured content show significant improvements in their writing skills, both in writing more structured sentences and in understanding the correct use of vocabulary. In contrast, entertainment or overly informal content tends not to have a significant positive impact on formal English learning, especially in writing.

### **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion of this study shows that the use of social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok can improve writing skills and English vocabulary mastery among 8th grade students of SMP WR Supratman 1 Medan. Through the various types of content they access, students can practice writing in English in informal and formal contexts, which allows them to develop better writing skills. Although there are variations in how students use social media, all students showed improvements in their writing skills, especially in terms of sentence structure and the use of more varied vocabulary. In addition, students' efforts to ensure grammatical accuracy also show

their awareness of the importance of improving their writing. Factors that influence the effectiveness of social media as a learning tool include high motivation, appropriate types of content, and challenges such as distractions from irrelevant content and technical problems such as slow internet connections. Therefore, social media can be an effective tool in English learning if used wisely and in the right context.

### **Suggestions**

The suggestions in this study are as follows.

1. For Teachers

Teachers are advised to utilize social media as a structured learning tool by selecting educational content that can support the development of students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery.

2. For Students

Students should be more selective in choosing content that is relevant to learning objectives so as not to be distracted by content that is not related to English learning.

3. For Further Researchers

Future researchers can expand the research subjects that not only focus on class VIII students, but also all classes, namely classes VII, VIII, and XI. This is done so that the results of the study can represent the subject as a whole so that the data can be more valid.

**DAFTAR PUSTAKA**

- Almanshur, F. (2012). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media.
- Ansari, J.A. & Khan, N.A. (2020). Exploring the role of social media in collaborative learning the new domain of learning. *Smart Learning Environments*, 7(9). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-020-00118-7>.
- Arikunto. (2006). *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Atmoko, D. B. (2012). *Instagram Handbook Tips Fotografi Ponsel*. Jakarta: Media Kita.
- Bungin, B. (2003). *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Friska, et. al. (2023). Media Sosial Tiktok Sebagai Sumber Belajar Informal Bagi Orang Dewasa. *Jurnal Pembelajaran, Bimbingan, dan Pengelolaan Pendidikan*, 3(4), 345-354. DOI:10.17977/um065v3i42023p345-354.
- Gunawan, I. (2013). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Teori dan Praktik*. Jakarta: PT Bumi Aksara.
- Ikhsan, et. al. (2024). Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Hubungan Sosial di Era Digital. *Jurnal Motivasi Pendidikan dan Bahasa*, 2(1), 30-34.
- Marchellia, R. I. & Siahaan, C. (2022). Penggunaan Media Sosial dalam Hubungan Pertemanan. *JISIP: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, 11(1), 1-7.
- Moleong, L. J. (2004). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2007). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Rita, D. (2022). Peningkatan Keterampilan Berbahasa Inggris Menggunakan Gallery Exhibition Project dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris pada Topik Report Text. *Journal of Educational Learning and Innovation*, 2(1), 96-120. DOI: 10.46229/elia.v2i1.
- Siemens, G. (2004). *Connectivism: A Learning Theory for a Digital Age*. [http://www.itdl.org/journal/jan\\_05/article01.htm](http://www.itdl.org/journal/jan_05/article01.htm).
- Sugiyono. (2009). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2010). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Sukmadinata, N. S. (2011). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: Remaja Rosadakarya.
- Zuldafrial. (2012). *Penelitian Kualitatif*. Surakarta: Yuma Pustaka.
- Heryana, A. (2018). Informan dan Pemilihan Informan pada Penelitian Kualitatif. Universitas Esa Unggul.
- Rahmanova, G., Eksi, G. Y. N., Shahabitdinova, S., Nasirova, G., Sotvoldiyev, B., & Miralimova, S. (2025). Enhancing Writing Skills with Social Media-Based

- Corrective Feedback. *World Journal of English Language*, 15(1), 252-252.
- Sinaga, R. S., Sinaga, A. P., Simanungkalit, H. R. B., Sihombing, C. R., Gultom, Y. W., Gultom, Y. V. L., ... & Sianturi, R. (2023). Meningkatkan Keterampilan Mendengarkan & Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Siswa Kelas XI IPA SMAS Umum Sentosa Melalui Aplikasi Instagram. *Beru'-beru': Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat*, 2(1), 9-15.
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metodelogi Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif Dan R&D*. Bandung: ALFABETA.
- Syachsalsabillah, S., & Hamid, A. I. R. (2024). English Education Student's Perception And Motivation in Learning Descriptive Writing Skills Through Instagram. *Journal of English Language Learning*, 8(1), 506-517.
- Tampubolon, N., Turnip, G., Simanungkalit, H., Turnip, A. N., Sirait, S. G. A., Bulu, A. G. D., ... & Situmeang, S. A. (2023). Sosialisasi Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Sebagai Alat untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berbahasa Inggris Siswa Kelas VII di SMP Negeri 2 Siantar. *Pengabdian Masyarakat Sumber Daya Unggul*, 1(2), 126-131.
- Tschafen, C., & Mackness, J. (2012). Connectivism and dimensions of individual experience. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 13(1), 124-143.