

## **Students' Perceptions of Tiktok as An Alternative Media to Enhance Speaking Skills**

**Olivia Farisca Adhani<sup>1</sup>, Silih Warni<sup>2</sup>**

Prof. Dr. HAMKA University, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup> oliviariscaadhani22@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup> silihwarni@uhamka.ac.id

### **ABSTRACT**

*In language learning, the ability to communicate orally plays a vital role, enabling individuals to interact and understand others in different social situations. Oral communication in language learning is crucial due to its relevance in daily interactions and academic endeavors. The research aims to investigate EFL students' perceptions on using TikTok as a learning tool, particularly its impact on speaking abilities. The study explores the effectiveness of TikTok in enhancing speaking proficiency. Through a descriptive qualitative methodology, the study examines the perspectives of EFL students at a school in Jakarta, Indonesia, regarding the use of TikTok for language learning. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who utilize TikTok for their English language learning. Data collection involved observation and interviews to gain insights into students' experiences and perceptions. Findings reveal diverse viewpoints among students regarding the utility of TikTok for English language learning, encompassing both positive and negative opinions. While TikTok offers opportunities for exposure to authentic language and engagement with native speakers, challenges such as accuracy and fluency are noted. Despite these challenges, TikTok is recognized as a potential platform for improving speaking skills due to its accessibility and engaging content. This research provides valuable insights into the perceptions of EFL students regarding TikTok's role in language learning. By addressing the research question of students' perceptions of TikTok's effectiveness in English language teaching, the study contributes to understanding the potential of social media platforms like TikTok as supplementary tools for language learning.*

**Keywords:** *Students' Perceptions; Tik Tok; Speaking Skills.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the most important aspects of learning a language is oral communication. Communication skills and speaking ability go hand in hand, and oral communication has been used frequently in daily life. In the modern, globalized world, language is employed as a tool for communication and is essential for success in all endeavors and without the use of language, perfect communication is not possible between individuals (Rao, 2019). Regarding academic competition, the ability to speak must be integrated by students. Exposure to the target language contributes to developing speaking skills (Al-Zoubi, 2018)

Speaking skills are the most important skill to acquire a foreign or second language among the four key language skills. Speaking is deemed to be the most important skill in learning a foreign or second language stated by P. S. Rao (2019). Speaking is a key used between people to communicate in the social context (Namaziandost, 2019). Pratiwi et al (2021) revealed that Six key factors are believed to be useful for helping someone speak more clearly and fluently. These are confidence, accuracy, and fluency, choosing the right

words, illustrating our point, keeping listeners' interest, and sounding natural. All these statements are an activity that produces information involving words and body language. Additionally, the goal of speaking while communicating in a foreign language is to communicate understanding. For accurate and precise meaning to be communicated, someone has to employ the right words along with appropriate grammar.

Social media, which has many benefits in the current digital era, is increasingly widely utilized by people. One of those uses is as a tool for language learning according to (Pratiwi, A. E., Ufairah, N. N., Sopiah, 2021). Using the TikTok platform is one of the way for assisting children improve speaking ability (Pratiwi, A. E., Ufairah, N. N., Sopiah, 2021). TikTok is one of the popular applications influenced by millions of viewers that contains the short video sharing social media (De Leyn et al., 2022). On this social media platform, users may upload and share videos through individual accounts on TikTok (Rahmawati et al., 2023). In terms of Language teaching especially in teaching English, because of the large number of creators that create English-related content, people (students) may learn English using TikTok. The native-speaker creators on TikTok play a vital role in giving them exposure to English. For example, pronunciation, structure, and vocabulary. Jung & Zhou (2019) reveal research showed that viewers are more engaged with videos that provide information and that these videos improve users' learning mindsets, effectiveness, and engagement. Learners gain confidence through TikTok since TikTok provides clear pronunciation, a lot of vocabulary, easy to understand of the structure by the exposure. Thus, learners have amount of knowledge so they do not feel shy and confidence to speak English. Furthermore, since the public may view the videos, uploading them on TikTok might encourage students to provide the finest speaking performances. If they talk incorrectly, their followers on the TikTok application will penalize them digitally (Celeste, 2021). Xiuwen & Razali (2021) strongly believe that the application of TikTok in English language communication acquisition has beneficial potential for EFL students because of its function as a platform providing chances for short video sharing. In short, TikTok offers a massive opportunity for specific purposes of language learning, such as enhancing speaking skills.

The scope of this study is to further explore the perceptions of EFL students regarding TikTok used by teachers at one of the schools in Jakarta, Indonesia. The focus of this study is to explore whether TikTok used as a learning medium by teachers can increase EFL students' engagement because TikTok offers a wide range of skills for students to improve their foreign language skills. The aim of this research is to know the students' perceptions on TikTok for improving students' speaking abilities based on the research objective. It will be expected that this study provides valuable insights into TikTok's potential as an aid to promote language learning, particularly in the context of improving speaking abilities. This article addressed research question "What are students' perceptions on using Tiktok in English Language Teaching?"

## **TikTok as Learning Media**

As stated by Isroqmi (2015), the teaching and learning process is unable to take place without learning media; at the very least, one media is required to deliver the teaching materials and with the advancement of technology. The term 'learning media' refers to an educational resource evolving in tandem with the advancements in teaching technology, taking on diverse forms ranging from audio and visual to audio-visual as stated by (Zaitun, Hadi, M. S., & Indriani, 2021).

According to its definition, social media is "a collection of Web 2.0-based applications that enable the production and sharing of generated by users content and depends on its technological and ideological underpinnings as it stated by (Al-Qaysi et al., 2019). According to Sharma (2019), she believes how social media sites could represent beneficial resources to foster the proficiency in English and enthusiasm of learners who want to learn. Moreover, learners must keep up with current happenings by utilizing a variety of platforms to enhance their skills in speaking and one such medium is the TikTok app as stated by (Salsabila et al., 2021).

The TikTok application constitutes a social media platform, obtainable for download through both the App Store and Google Play Store platforms said (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022). Tiktok application lets users share and create short movies for both educational and entertaining reasons. (Paz-Domínguez et al., 2023). Recently, TikTok has become extremely popular and widely utilized by users since it has brief videos, up to 60 seconds long, the utilization of Tiktok application for acquiring proficiency in spoken language engenders a sense of satisfaction and contentment among students (Komariyah Titik et al., 2022). Thus, based on the above statements, Tiktok as social media can fully affect learning outcomes positively with no stress on the learners as it also supported "Compared to students who passively absorb instructional content, learners who actively immerse themselves in their education frequently show higher comprehension levels, increased learning keeping, enhanced remember, higher levels of enjoyment, and an increased capacity to recognize the significance of what they have learned." stated by Park (2003).. Komariyah Titik et al. (2022) said many video producers also offer sophisticated and captivating English language instruction, covering a range of English language learning resources. It has been discovered that using the TikTok application to engage students in learning English can lead to a greater interest in learning English, also, the application may serve as a learning tool, inspire students to participate in classroom activities, and even have a positive psychological impact, in overall, this innovative app can help students improve their speaking skills (Komariyah Titik et al., 2022). Based on those statements, the large variety of content on TikTok that can promote English, this makes TikTok possible to improve English speaking skills.

## **Speaking**

Speaking is an essential skill that students need to develop. Since they can obtain knowledge in the language and impart it to others, it will be valuable to them in their daily lives (Nasichah, 2023). Nasichah (2023) stated that among the four abilities that are frequently used in daily life other than only sending and receiving information is speaking. Speaking is a fundamental aspect of human interaction and communication. It allows us to express our thoughts, intentions, and meanings to others, ensuring that they hear us and understand what we have to say (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022). Thus, we can state based on those definitions, that speaking is how we interact with one another to understand what we mean. Being involved in English discourse on TikTok empowers students to develop their audience, fostering high confidence as their videos are viewed and appreciated through the accumulation of 'likes'. The accumulation of positive feedback serves as a motivational catalyst, encouraging students to keep striving to produce better video content (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022). As stated by Pratiwi et al (2021) bravery and fluid communication may be achieved by considering six important factors: certainty, accuracy, and fluency, picking the right words, describing our plan of action, keeping the audience's interest, along with talking real. Herlisya & Wiratno (2022) reveal that the use of appropriate teaching resources helps improve students' oral communication skills and it is fully supported that learners tend to favor the moment that correlates with real-world situations, such as using social media platforms. Based on those statements, we can take a line that TikTok can be an alternative medium for improving speaking skills.

## **Students' Perceptions**

The act of observing and analyzing sensory information to create a mental picture and understanding of what is happening is called perception as concurred by Nureani & Warni (2023). A person experiences a stimulus, organizes it, and then analyzes it to become aware of and understand what was experienced (Sekeon et al., 2022). Humans keep in touch with their surroundings through their five senses by perception, which refers to the act of bringing data to the brain (Khan Ishtiaq et al., 2021). Students' perceptions can include details or a summary of how they utilize TikTok in education, as well as whether or if studying English using TikTok is helping them become more fluent in the language. This article aims to explore students' perceptions of whether TikTok is useful for improving their language skills.

## **METHOD**

This research adopted a descriptive methodology with a qualitative approach, as its primary aim is to identify and explain students' viewpoints regarding using TikTok as a means of improving their oral proficiency. According to Pratami & Syafryadin (2023), qualitative descriptive entails describing the state or characteristics of an item or entities in order to clarify and find solutions by illustrating their states. The very first thing that has to

be done in qualitative descriptive research is gathering the data, according to Taylor et al. (2015). The information gathered must be pertinent to the topic being researched. The process of data analysis came next. The process of data analysis starts with transcribing the interview responses. Once the transcripts were prepared, researchers moved to the familiarization stage, which involved reading through the transcripts multiple times, highlighting key points, and noting potential themes that emerged. These steps set the stage for more in-depth analysis. Next, researchers proceeded with data coding to identify and segment the interview responses. Following this, researchers moved to the identification of themes. With the key points and initial themes identified, researchers began organizing them into broader themes by grouping similar codes. Each theme was clearly defined based on the data. Then conducted a detailed analysis of each theme and its subcategories, writing comprehensive descriptions and supporting our findings with direct quotes from the transcripts. This systematic approach allowed to transform the raw interview data into a rich, nuanced, and insightful analysis, contributing valuable knowledge to the research. To guarantee that the results are presented accurately, the researcher paid close attention to every detail when evaluating the data. Following a careful analysis of all the relevant evidence, the last step is drawing conclusions. This research involved seven students from one of the public senior high schools in Jakarta, Indonesia. The seven students are labeled as S1 through S7. The selection of participants in this study involved the application of purposive sampling techniques, with inclusion criteria focused on students who utilized TikTok as a platform for English language learning. Under the objectives of this study, the researcher attempts to find out what students thought or non-statistical data about utilizing the TikTok app as a teaching aid for learning the language. Subsequently, The tools used in this research are observation and interview, to examine how learners learn English. These observations were made to give a thorough picture of the conditions surrounding students' participation in English learning activities using TikTok videos. To guarantee a thorough grasp of the phenomenon under inquiry, the researcher made these observations more than once. The other instruments applied for data collection in this study are interviews.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section reports the findings we gathered through observation and a deep analysis of the semi-structured interview conducted by seven students who utilize TikTok concerning their perceptions of using TikTok in English Language Teaching. The following sections present specific narratives and quotes to demonstrate these findings. Researchers gathered data from classroom observations focused on how teachers utilize TikTok as a social media tool to improve students' speaking skills. The observations aimed to understand teachers' integration of technology in the learning process and to identify students who utilize TikTok for learning purposes. The findings from the observation revealed that teachers frequently incorporate technological updates into their teaching methods and seamlessly integrate technology into the learning process. They also often

pose questions related to knowledge beyond the standard curriculum, which is sourced from social media platforms. Moreover, students actively engage with these questions, drawing upon knowledge acquired from social media, particularly TikTok. These findings suggest that students are familiar with the content available on TikTok and actively utilize the platform to supplement their knowledge. The observations highlight the potential of TikTok as an alternative medium for enhancing students' speaking skills within the learning environment.

The deep analysis of the gathered data from the interview revealed four main themes based on students' viewpoints: TikTok as an EFL perspective, Motivation for using TikTok for learning English, the effectiveness of TikTok in Enhancing speaking skills, and Challenges Faced in using Tiktok for Learning English. Each theme will be elucidated in detail as follows:

### **TikTok in EFL Perspectives**

The interviews with students revealed diverse perspectives on TikTok, highlighting its transition from a source of enjoyment to an educational tool. S1 noted TikTok's engaging visuals, which diverge from traditional boredom, echoed by S4's appreciation for its captivating content. Conversely, S2 and S3 highlighted its educational value, using it for knowledge acquisition and language learning. Overall, TikTok's ability to provide visually engaging material and educational content underscores its versatility as a platform for both entertainment and learning

*S1: "I use the TikTok application to find audio-visual information that is not graphically boring, apart from looking for informations that is currently viral/trending on the internet, I use TikTok for entertainment".*

*S4: "I am a user of the TikTok application, usually using it to see random videos, especially to see the things I'm most interested in for example makeup tutorials, skincare tips, and outfit tips. The main thing is for entertainment".*

*S2: "I use TikTok are for educational purposes and to learn or practice new skills, for example, learning English through this TikTok platform".*

*S5: "I use it for various purposes such as learning video editing, educational content like English language learning, and much more".*

TikTok's impact on students' daily routines is increasingly acknowledged for its ability to boost productivity by sharing productive insights. The platform's skillful blend of captivating visuals and educational content makes it a versatile hub for both entertainment and intellectual pursuits (Cahyono & Perdhani, 2022). This dual functionality not only expands TikTok's user base but also positions it as a valuable tool for individuals looking to engage in diverse activities while leveraging digital media for personal and educational

growth (Koc, 2023). Thus, TikTok's highlight the role in fostering collaborative learning experiences and nurturing critical thinking skills among users, further establishing its significance within modern educational contexts.

## **Motivation for Using TikTok for Learning English**

The interviews shed light on how TikTok significantly influences students' motivation to learn English in today's digital age. Students emphasized TikTok's role in making English learning enjoyable and accessible. S2 and S4 emphasized that TikTok offers brief yet captivating educational videos, serving not only as starting points for learning but also as stimuli for deeper language exploration. Additionally, students noted the platform's appeal lies in its diverse user-generated content, where users employ unique and creative methods to teach English. Moreover, S4 claimed TikTok as an effective tool for English learning, to advance their English, particularly oral proficiency, interviewees turned to TikTok to find pertinent resources for enhancing their speaking abilities, frequently seeking out videos with thorough English-speaking content. As a result, students reported experiencing substantial exposure to the English language through their engagement with TikTok.

*S2: "The thing that is the factor on why I chose TikTok as a platform to learn English and learn new skills is that this TikTok platform presents content in the form of photo slides and short videos that are various, interesting, and material presented is more attractive and effective".*

*S4: "TikTok videos can be quite short so, instead of getting bored of the material presented, I feel more engaged and comprehend the material very well".*

*S6: "Watch a lot of English-speaking videos, such as duets, as these have previously provided pronunciation guides, grammar rules, and guidance on how to speak the language fluently. Those things really help me get better at speaking".*

As a result, TikTok provides versatility in education, engagingly presenting instructional content. It has evolved into a form of social media featuring short, practical, and captivating English language learning resources shared by teachers or native speakers. Additionally, students appreciate TikTok as a valuable and user-friendly educational tool (Addinna, 2022). Through TikTok, students acquire spoken English, becoming more accustomed to the language through exposure (Xiuwen & Razali, 2021).

## **The Effectiveness of Tiktok in Enhancing Speaking Skills**

As outlined in the study, using TikTok as a method to enhance speaking skills results in numerous notable benefits. Facilitating students' increased confidence levels is one of these benefits. S2 reports that there is a significant increase in confidence, which is presumably due to increased comfort speaking English. Furthermore, S7 agrees with this statement, asserting that TikTok's platform facilitates word understanding by displaying instructional information with native speakers a viewpoint that is backed by further

responders. Additionally, S4 explains how TikTok helps people improve their speaking and listening skills.

S2: *"After using the TikTok app, I feel that my English speaking skills have improved significantly. I am more confident in using English in daily conversations and feel more fluent and confident in conveying my thoughts and ideas in English".*

S7: *"My English speaking skills have improved quite well. I now understand English words faster without having to be translated and am more flexible in speaking English every day because of the exposure of TikTok videos".*

S3: *"Enough to improve my English skills, especially in terms of speaking and listening. In speaking I can practice the correct way of pronunciation, and for listening I am familiar with English vocabs".*

Utilizing TikTok can improve speaking skills, as articulated by numerous students who reported enhancement through consistent practice on the platform stated by (Said Harahap et al., 2023). TikTok offers concise and comprehensible material, facilitating ease of understanding for students (Savitri & Sukoyo, 2023).

## **Challenges Faced on Using TikTok for Learning English**

TikTok come with many advantages starting from its purpose to entertaining until the beneficial to the educational world, thus, there are various challenges in using TikTok videos for learning English. S2 claimed the content somehow not relevant from her/his learning objectives while S3 claimed the numerous creators on TikTok makes it quite confused since it become a lot tips and method from each creators.

S2: *"The obstacle that I often face when using TikTok in learning to improve English speaking skills is that there are contents that are not of high quality or relevant to my learning objectives".*

S3: *"Sometimes there are still differences in tips/methods from Content creator A with Content creator B so that it makes me quite confused".*

From those statement, S2 found an obstacle on the non relevant content shown on TikTok which it is quite unproductive. In addition, S3 found an obstacle on lots of content creators which leads a confusions and leads into non absolute explanation for students. These challenges indicate that although TikTok can serve as a helpful supplementary resource for learning English, it demands careful navigation and discernment to fully utilize its educational benefits (Anh Tuan Le, 2023).

## **CONCLUSION**

The study illuminated the deep insights into students' perspectives on using TikTok to enhance their speaking skills. The data and conversations revealed diverse perspectives among students regarding the utility of TikTok for improving speaking abilities, encompassing both positive and negative viewpoints. A positive aspect highlighted by users is the app's extensive video library, which students can leverage to enhance their speaking

skills. Moreover, the brevity of the videos was noted to facilitate information retention, as they avoid long and burdensome explanations, thus captivating students more effectively. Students express satisfaction when utilizing TikTok as a learning tool for improving English speaking skills. The study's findings indicate that TikTok serves as an engaging and effective method for enhancing speaking abilities, as evidenced by the significant improvement in students' self-confidence and positive attitudes towards using the application. Utilizing TikTok also aids in the development of oral English proficiency by fostering smoother conversation and expanding vocabulary. Despite the challenges inherent in TikTok, it serves as a valuable tool for improving speaking abilities.

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