

Learning English from *TikTok* : A Qualitative Case Study**Muhammad Rizqun Fokatea¹, Rudha Widagsa²**¹rizqunfokatea@gmail.com²widagsa@upy.ac.id^{1,2} Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the use of *TikTok* as a medium for learning English, specifically targeting English as a Foreign Language learners (EFL). *TikTok*, as a widely popular social media platform, offers a unique opportunity for users to engage with diverse video content that can enhance their English skills, particularly in pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. The primary objective of this research is to examine how EFL learners utilize *TikTok* to improve their English and to understand the impact of this platform on their learning process. The study employs a qualitative case study method, with data collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and analysis of *TikTok* content used by the participants. The findings suggest that *TikTok* may serve as a supplementary tool for improving English skills among EFL learners. Participants reported significant improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, along with increased motivation and interest in learning English due to *TikTok*'s interactive and entertaining approach. This research contributes to the field of language education by highlighting the potential of digital media as an innovative and engaging learning tool. English educators are encouraged to incorporate *TikTok* into their teaching strategies to facilitate the development of English skills.

Keywords: *TikTok*, *English Learning*, *EFL*

1. INTRODUCTION

Writing, reading, speaking, and listening are the four talents in English (Chaney in Salsabia et al., 2021). Therefore, for EFL learners, learning English especially in developing skills in English, there are several justifications for teaching English skills to EFL learners. First, English language skills are very important for language acquisition and teaching, especially for today's ESL and EFL learners. Second, you can prioritize your knowledge. Third, a tool to assess foreign or second language proficiency (Bahardofar in Salsabia et al., 2021). This argument clearly proves that developing English language skills is very important for EFL learners' need to interact in English.

Today, with the digital era, people can easily learn English with the various media provided, making it easier for us to learn English. Combining several digital literacies, this type of literacy enables learners to access speaking, writing, listening, reading, and seeing activities at the same time (Kress & Jewitt, Pahl & Rowsell, Walsh in Mudra, 2020). Digitalization is not limited to specific fields in Indonesia. It has spread throughout the

country. The Data and Technology Center of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020) claims that this digital transformation makes it possible to connect systems across several domains, including finance, education, health, smart cities, and governance. Digitalization can continue to advance until it is integrated into Indonesia's educational development process. Numerous educational processes, specifically organizational modifications and transformative leadership, will be impacted by the digitization process (Bejinaru, 2019). The ability to transform different educational processes and elements into different digital versions is known as digitization of education, according to Media Indonesia (2023). The learning process is facilitated by the digitization of education. Previously, books served as the primary source of knowledge, but computer-based technology has since taken its place. The way that education is viewed toward books is modified by this transfer process (Tosepu, n.d, 2018).

In the era of society 5.0, digitalization makes it easier for EFL students to learn kicking skills because all of the information is available in one medium, saving them the trouble of practicing English skills through manual reading of dialogue texts or similar materials. Learning english is now easily accessible because to people's ability to access media at any time and from any location in this digital age of advanced technology. The diverse range of media accessible in the era of society 5.0 can be accessed by EFL learners to enhance their english skills, and social media can be employed as a medium for english skill development (Which in Pratama & Hastuti, 2023). It suggests that social media can be utilized as a tool for learning a language.

1.1 Language Acquisition

Humans have been learning languages since they were born. Language acquisition is natural in children, and they are born with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that allows them to learn the language for themselves (Chomsky in Al-Harbi, 2019). Humans appear to make the same variety of sounds at birth, even if they are deaf (Lenneberg, Rebelsky, & Nichols in Steinberg et al in Safitri, 2020). This allows the sounds that are produced or heard to be imitated and the pronunciation of the language that is heard for the first time to emerge. They appropriate the speech patterns used in their group and modify them to communicate ideas that might be seen as novel (S. Bochner & J. Jones in Al-Harbi, 2019). According to (Skinner in Al-Harbi, 2019) learning a language is a behavior that is analogous to other behaviors. Like anything else, this habit may be acquired. The behavior in question is the development of habits through imitation, practice, and success

feedback in language learning. Children duplicate the patterns and noises they hear in their environment and are rewarded when they do so. Positive reinforcement and correction are therefore seen to be important in language acquisition because imitation and practice are the primary processes in language development.

1.2 Learning English

Writing skill is the ability to write clearly and effectively, including organizing ideas in a structured manner and using appropriate language. This includes skills in designing coherent texts, selecting appropriate vocabulary, and organizing grammar and punctuation correctly. Apart from that, writing skills also involve the ability to convey messages persuasively or informatively, according to the purpose of writing and the intended audience. Writing abilities are a part of literacy, which is defined as the capacity to communicate ideas, opinions, and feelings to others in writing (Sugondo in Franciska et al., 2023). This ability is important for conveying ideas, communicating effectively, and producing quality written work.

Reading skill is the ability to understand and analyze written text effectively. This includes recognizing words and vocabulary, understanding explicit and implicit information, as well as reading fluently and using appropriate intonation. Reading is one of the most fundamental abilities that would allow for the growth of knowledge; reading literacy comprises the capacity to comprehend, read, analyze, and discuss a variety of text types and settings (Xiao & Hu in Musa & Ismail, 2023). This skill also involves critical abilities in evaluating the author's arguments and points of view, concluding information based on evidence, and understanding the themes and ideas presented. By relating the information read to existing knowledge or real situations, readers can apply the information in various contexts, making the reading process more relevant and useful.

Listening skills are the ability to understand and interpret information conveyed through spoken language. This includes the ability to listen with focus, grasp the meaning of words and intonation, and understand the message conveyed by the speaker. For both native and non-native speakers in oral communication, listening is a useful ability (Samad in Gusmareky & Tambusai, 2023). Listening skills also involve the ability to process information in real-time, identify important points, and respond appropriately. This ability is important in effective communication, whether in educational, professional or social contexts, because it helps build understanding and good relationships between individuals.

Speaking skill is the ability to convey ideas and information effectively through spoken language. This involves the ability to speak clearly, use appropriate vocabulary, form grammatically correct sentences, and speak fluently and accurately. According to (Hornby in Salsabia et al., 2021), speaking is the capacity of an individual to employ language in everyday situations. One of the fundamental English language abilities that must be acquired is speaking. Speaking seems to be the most crucial of the four abilities, as evidenced by the fact that language users are referred to as "speakers" of their native tongue (Ur in Salsabia et al., 2021). According to (Burn and Joyce in Salsabia et al., 2021) speaking is an interactive process of meaning construction that entails information retrieval, reception, and processing. In addition, speaking is a challenging skill for foreign language learners, according to (Yohanes and Nuan in Salsabia et al., 2021) because effective oral communication involves the capacity to utilize language effectively in social interactions.

1.3 Formal and Informal Education

Formal education is a system of education which is regulated by law and structured by government policy. Formal education is carried out in institutions such as schools and universities. According to law number 20 of 2003, formal education is a structured and tiered educational path consisting of basic education, secondary education and higher education. Formal education is a learning activity carried out by a person and the learning system is regulated in a structured manner by an institution or school (Suprijanto in Syaadah et al., 2023).

Informal Education is a learning process that occurs outside of Formal Education so that Informal Education does not have a schedule or structured learning. Law number 20 of 2003 states that informal education is an educational pathway from the environment that forms independent learning activities. Informal education is a learning activity that occurs accidentally so that the learning activity can help and increase a person's knowledge (Suprijanto in Syaadah et al., 2023). Informal education is an educational path from the environment that shapes a person's independent learning activities which are carried out consciously and responsibly. Informal education does not have a curriculum or is bound by rules like formal education institutions so that informal learning can occur through daily interactions or activities that are not tied to formal education.

1.4 TikTok

TikTok is a social networking platform where users may share short films that can be altered to suit their individual creativity. China's *TikTok* is an app that was developed in September 2016. This software, formerly known as DouYin, gained popularity in China before being rebranded as *TikTok* when it made its way to the global market. This app had 100 million users at the time of its inception, under the name DouYin, and up to 1 billion individuals could view the videos (Anggi in Salsabia et al., 2021). With 1.5 billion downloads, WhatsApp is the most popular app, and this one comes in second (Kusuma, 2020). *TikTok* was deemed the greatest app in the Play Store in 2018 due to its large number of users and downloads.

According to a KIC and Kominfo study conducted in 2022, the number of *TikTok* users in Indonesia who use *TikTok* climbed to 207.69%. This is in contrast to data from 2020, when the percentage of users was just 17%. In 2022, the presentation of *TikTok* users increased to 40%. Grahanurdia.com sources from 2022 state that there were 85 million active *TikTok* users as of March 2022. According to a 2021 Ginee.com surveys, the average age of *TikTok* users in Indonesia is 13% for those between the ages of 13 and 17, 40% for those between the ages of 18 and 24, and 37% for those between the ages of 25 and 34. This means that 90% of Indonesians between the ages of 13 and 34 will have used *TikTok* overall in 2021.

1.5 Research Question

Based on the background that has been displayed by the researcher. There is a formulation of the problem that is, How Learning English Through *TikTok* Impact EFL Learners ?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a Qualitative method. Qualitative research is a research process to understand human or social phenomena by creating images that are comprehensive and complex that can be presented in words, report detailed views obtained from informant sources, and carried out in a natural setting (Walidin, Saifullah & Tabrani in Fadli, 2021). Qualitative research is well suited to researchers who are more interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation than hypothesis testing (Merriam, 2009).

The type of research approach used in this research is Case Study. Case Studies are an approach that is carried out in depth and in detail regarding something being researched in the form of programs, events, activities and others to gain knowledge about the thing

being researched (Baxter & Jack in Fadli, 2021). This means that a case study is a phenomenon or event that really happened and is ongoing, not something that has passed. So, looking at the phenomenon of increasing use of *TikTok*, researchers used a case study approach in this research.

In general, qualitative research only uses a few participant. In fact, certain studies only use 1 participant. The conditions needed to determine the number of participant are sufficiency and suitability (Martha & Kresno, 2016). The selection of participant in qualitative research is completely determined by the researcher or what is called Purposeful Sampling (Patton in Metodologi, 2002), namely that the researcher selects cases based on the strategy and objectives that the researcher has set and the number depends on the research objectives and resources.

2.1 Participant

In this study, researchers looked for participants by looking at 5 videos posted on the account *TikTok SpeakEnglishWithZach* Then the researchers looked at the comments or feedback given by several users. The researcher looked at several comments given by users, then the researcher contacted several of these users by following their accounts so they could provide messages regarding the researcher's aims and objectives. Initially, the researchers contacted users with more than 10 participants, but of the 10 participants available, some users refused to be interviewed, some of the reasons were also because they were not willing to do interviews via Zoom. There were several participants who thought that the interview would only be conducted via voice so there was no need to show faces, but what the researcher needed was to use zoom so that documentation could be carried out, which was one of the proofs of data collection. Of the 10 *TikTok* users contacted by researchers, only 5 users were willing to be participants in this research. Below, the researcher created a table of information on the characteristics of 5 willing participants.

2.2 Observation, Interview, and Documentation.

Observation is a research technique in which researchers directly or indirectly make observations. The researcher made observations by observing several users who follow the content creator's account and looking at the comments and feedback made by other *TikTok* account users. Observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site (Creswell, 2012). Observation provides researchers with the opportunity to observe social interactions, behavior, and contexts that

are relevant to the phenomenon under study (Bogdan & Biklen in Ardiansyah et al., 2023). After making observations the data that has been obtained and then taking notes. Taking notes are also part of the observation technique.

Providing a list of questions that will be asked to the participants via Zoom application. Interview is a data collection method in which researchers ask questions to participants to gather information about a topic or phenomenon being studied (Merriam, 2009). Interviews can be conducted structured, semi-structured, or unstructured, depending on the level of predetermined framework (Creswell, 2012).

One of the data collection techniques related to evidence of screen shoots the comments that participants that have been use on the *TikTok* application that can help this research and also a source for one of the *TikTok* content creators who makes videos learning Speaking Skills. Data sources can be administrative records, correspondence, memos, agendas and other relevant documents (Fitrah & Lutfiyah in Fadli, 2021). Documentary studies provide insight into the historical context, policies, events, and developments relevant to the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012).

2.3 Data Analysis

Finding themes or patterns that emerge in the data so in the process of analyzing data, researcher used Thematic Analysis. In general, Thematic Analysis is a way to analyze data with the aim of identifying patterns or to obtain themes through data that has been collected by researchers (Braun and Clarke in Dawadi, 2020). This method is very effective in analyzing qualitative research so that by using Thematic Analysis researchers discuss the data in detail to find patterns in a phenomenon and explain the extent to which the phenomenon occurs (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane in Sitasari, 2022). In Thematic Analysis the researcher reads or asks the content of the interview questions and tries to understand the meaning of the interview data (Liamputtong in Sitasari, 2022). In this process the researcher focuses on the content of the interview questions and understands the meaning of what the participant has said. Researchers need to pay attention to the patterns conveyed by participant in the process of understanding the content of interview questions.

2.4 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research there is a Trustworthiness test that already has standards so that the test assessment of the data collected is valid. Researcher used triangulation as data Trustworthiness in this research. Qualitative inquirers triangulate among different data

sources to enhance the accuracy of a study (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012). Triangulation in research can be aimed at testing reliable data, which means that data is examined and checked from various data sources in various ways, and at different times (Margono, 2010). Triangulation can help find different views from various sources that have the same problem so it can be obtained using the Triangulation method (Suryaproyogo, Tabroni, & Yin in Kaharuddin, 2021). In this research, the researcher used Data Source Triangulation to test the Credibility of the data. The use of various data sources can increase the Validity of research results (Denzin, 1978). Data Source Triangulation implies collecting data from various different sources so that a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied is obtained. Researchers can also reduce bias or deviation from one particular type of data by comparing and confirming information from various types of sources.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussions found through data collection carried out by researchers will be explained. This finding answers the research question namely, How Learning English Through *TikTok* Impact EFL Learners?

3.1 Reader-Friendly Content

The content available on *TikTok* is created in such a way, including creating content in reader-friendly way, this allows several participants to learn English with the ease contained in the content and participants 1, 2, and 5 also feel some of the convenience contained in the content, namely the use of slang, the use of English in everyday life, pronunciation and use of words.

In this case, participants 1, 2, and 5 stated how easy it was to learn English and some of the conveniences they learned, namely in terms of the use of slang and everyday language used in the content, were the conveniences found in *TikTok* content which usually some of the participants did not get. examples of slang and everyday language in formal education. Then, in terms of pronunciation and use of the words used in the content, it is fairly easy to understand and learn. Some participants learned how to pronounce words correctly in English and also got to know new words that some of the participants had never heard or said before.

3.2 Motivation To Learn

Motivation to learn is very important for the continuity of learning and with encouragement from within to achieve knowledge goals. Motivation to learn also plays an important role in determining how strong the desire to learn is. The desire for motivation to learn through *TikTok* content with interactive learning and learning through relevant content so that participants 2, 3, 4, and 5 felt the desire for motivation in learning English through *TikTok*.

The content provided by *TikTok* is varied and adapts to the wishes of the videos they want to learn. This has made participants 2, 3, 4, and 5 state that interactive learning using *TikTok* is one of the methods preferred by several participants and learning through relevant content is also provided by *TikTok* so that several participants can learn English according to the content they like. Learning videos on *TikTok* can also be played back repeatedly to train participants' speaking skills so that *TikTok* provides easy and fun learning.

3.3 Learning Environment

The learning environment also influences the atmosphere of the learning process, for this reason participants 1, 2, 3, and 5 state that the learning environment is created to make it easier, more enjoyable and can increase the concentration and effectiveness of learning. By using *TikTok* as a learning medium where technology is used as a learning resource, *TikTok* is able to provide ease of learning such as being able to learn anytime and anywhere and providing learning that is relaxed and does not create stress in learning.

Learning English using *TikTok* also has an impact in terms of the learning environment where participants 1, 2, 3, and 5 stated that they were able to learn English on *TikTok* with the free time they had so that the learning process could be carried out easily and relaxedly. *TikTok* provides a learning environment for people who sometimes find it difficult to find time and want to improve their English.

3.4 Language Skills And Development

In learning English speaking skills and language development are components that are needed to help hone skills in English, especially speaking skills. By channeling ideas, thoughts and information in English conversation, learning speaking skills through *TikTok* is a helpful medium.

Learning speaking skills is very necessary so that participants 1, 3, and 4 stated that learning through *TikTok* media can develop speaking skills and there is a need for practice

where they can learn easily through content on *TikTok* to practice their speaking skills so as to achieve progress and development in their speaking skills.

3.5 Interaction

Communication between two or more people is an interaction and can occur in various contexts. Interaction from the community or social is also communication or feedback that occurs when using *TikTok* as a medium for learning English, so that you can be given feedback in the form of information, praise and suggestions from the community or social.

Feedback is a strong form of communication in the community or social so that the feedback given can build progress in learning English. Participants 1, 2, and 3 stated that by communicating with the *TikTok* user community or in the social environment, they felt more encouraged in learning English and *TikTok* helped them in this interaction and also the feedback they received could also be positive or constructive.

The results of the discussion in this research also prove that the use of *TikTok* as a medium for learning English can also be based on one of the learning methods, namely the Social Learning Theory put forward by Albert Bandura in 1977, where in a learning process there are several stages of the process that must be carried out by an individual, namely through Paying Attention, Storing, Producing, and Motivating. This can be used in the learning process through *TikTok*, where an individual can implement the process, namely by Observing what material they want to learn, for example by looking for videos on *TikTok* that contain content about Speaking Skills, then the Imitate process, where the individual watches videos of speaking practice on *TikTok*, then Imitate how to practice speaking in the video, the individual has gone through a process of learning speaking which can Create Skills that the individual has through watching videos on *TikTok* which then *TikTok* provides Motivation and Consistency in Environment learning to the individual through new knowledge about the practice of Speaking Skills that the individual can learn.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the Research Question, namely How Does Learning English Through *TikTok* Impact EFL Learners? So, based on the results of data collection, namely observations and interviews collected from 5 participants, it can be concluded that *TikTok* can be used as an English language learning medium, especially in Informal learning

environments. These results mean that the Informal Learning Environment is also a learning factor for EFL Learners where *TikTok* can be used as an English language learning medium. The other findings in this research are that through Reader-Friendly Content where participants can find content on *TikTok* that uses slang words and everyday language as examples in the content, so that participants feel the involvement they have experienced in the content and Participants are taught how to pronounce words properly and correctly. Participants can also learn new words that have never been learned before so that participants can easily understand how to learn English word by word. Participants also felt Motivated to learn English through *TikTok* because interactive learning through *TikTok* made participants more active and fun when learning English, where participants were given interesting and easy to access material. Participants feel happy and are more interested in learning English because *TikTok* provides relevant content that suits the English learning they are looking for, this is because the content on *TikTok* adjusts the algorithm to the content needed by participants. The Learning Environment felt by participants is that participants can learn anytime and anywhere, where the learning process environment is created to be easier, relaxed, enjoyable and participants do not need to rush in learning. This makes participants concentrate more on learning because there is no pressure from any aspect so as to further increase effectiveness in learning English. One of the improvements that participants felt when learning English through *TikTok* was an increase in their Speaking Skills, where participants could more easily understand dialogue conversations on content on *TikTok*, which then participants practiced again so that participants could improve their speaking skills correctly and effectively. Then, when learning English through *TikTok* participants can not only improve their English themselves but also how they can get feedback from Interactions between the social environment and community where participants can learn to use English content on *TikTok* with people around them and Also participants get positive feedback regarding improving their English skills.

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