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The Impact of English Educational Content on TikTok on Audience Understanding

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Abstract:*TikTok is a social media platform that is not only used for entertainment but also as a learning medium, including for learning English. This study aims to explore the impact of English educational content on TikTok on users' understanding. Data was collected through interviews with 10 respondents aged 18–24 who actively use TikTok to learn English. The results indicate that TikTok helps improve vocabulary acquisition, understanding of grammar, speaking skills and pronunciation skills, and overall comprehension of English. The platform is considered more engaging and relevant compared to traditional learning methods such as reading books.*
Keywords: *TikTok, English learning, audience understanding, educational content*

Abstrak: TikTok adalah platform media sosial yang tidak hanya digunakan untuk hiburan tetapi juga sebagai media pembelajaran, termasuk pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dampak konten edukasi bahasa Inggris di TikTok terhadap pemahaman pengguna. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan 10 responden berusia 18–24 tahun yang aktif menggunakan TikTok untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa TikTok membantu meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata, pemahaman tentang grammar, keterampilan berbicara dan pengucapan, dan memahami bahasa Inggris. Platform ini dianggap lebih menarik dan relevan dibandingkan metode pembelajaran tradisional seperti membaca buku.
Kata kunci: *TikTok, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, pemahaman audiens, konten edukasi*

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has revolutionized the way individuals access information and acquire new skills. Social media platforms, such as TikTok, have transitioned from entertainment-focused mediums to powerful educational tools. TikTok, renowned for its short, visually engaging videos, simplifies complex topics, making them more accessible to a broader audience. In the context of English language learning, TikTok has gained significant popularity due to its interactive and creative features. Numerous content creators on the platform produce English educational materials, including vocabulary lessons, grammar explanations, pronunciation guidance, and conversation practices. Unlike traditional methods, such as reading textbooks or attending formal classes, TikTok offers a more enjoyable and flexible learning experience, aligning with the preferences of the digital generation. This shift has redefined the ways in which learners engage with educational content, as TikTok provides unique access to resources in an informal and easily comprehensible format, appealing to diverse users across various age groups and backgrounds. Through its blend of entertainment and education, TikTok has successfully built a global community of learners, enabling real-time knowledge sharing and collaboration. Moreover, TikTok's algorithm personalizes content to match user preferences, ensuring that educational materials reach audiences who can benefit most from them.

Several studies have highlighted TikTok's potential as an educational platform. For instance, Dian (2020) emphasized the effectiveness of TikTok's format in improving users' vocabulary comprehension, while Pratiwi (2021) demonstrated that pronunciation lessons delivered via TikTok significantly enhance speaking skills. These findings reflect the growing acknowledgment of TikTok as a platform that transcends its original entertainment purpose to serve educational functions. Furthermore, Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory offers a theoretical basis for understanding how TikTok's presentation of information in short, visually appealing segments reduces cognitive overload and enhances learning outcomes. By presenting information in manageable chunks, TikTok allows learners to focus on one concept at a time, facilitating improved comprehension and retention. This approach

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is particularly advantageous for learners who may find traditional educational formats, which often present large volumes of information at once, overwhelming. Additionally, TikTok's interactive features encourage active learner participation, including commenting, sharing, and engaging in challenges, fostering an immersive learning environment that surpasses conventional tools in terms of engagement.

Despite these promising insights, there remains limited research examining the comprehensive impact of TikTok's educational content on language learning outcomes, particularly in the domains of vocabulary acquisition, speaking skills, and grammar comprehension. While existing studies have explored individual components, a holistic investigation of TikTok's influence on English language proficiency has yet to be conducted. This study aims to address this gap by analyzing the effects of TikTok content on key language skills, focusing specifically on vocabulary development, speaking ability, and grammar mastery. Through this exploration, the research seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of TikTok's role in English language education and evaluate its effectiveness relative to traditional learning methods. The anticipated findings are expected to offer valuable insights into TikTok's potential as a modern, interactive language learning tool. Furthermore, this study aspires to present practical recommendations for educational institutions and content creators on optimizing TikTok's utility for language instruction, particularly for digitally native learners. As TikTok continues to evolve as an educational platform, understanding its impact on learning outcomes is essential to maximizing its potential and ensuring its sustained value as a tool for language acquisition.

Method

This study a qualitative reseach design with data collected through semi-structured interviews

Result and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that TikTok significantly impacts users' understanding of the English language, specifically in three key areas: vocabulary acquisition, speaking skills, and grammar comprehension.

New Vocabulary

Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental aspect of English language learning. Respondents revealed that engaging short videos on TikTok helped them learn new vocabulary more effectively. The use of visual aids and real-life context in these videos made the content easier to understand and remember. Some respondent answers supporting this finding are as follows:

Respondent Responses:

- L1: "Sangat membantu, banyak pengetahuan baru yang saya dapat di sana. Saya memang malas membaca buku, jadi dengan adanya konten bahasa Inggris di TikTok, lebih mudah dipahami."
- L4: "Cukup bermanfaat, saya setidaknya dapat kosakata baru dari konten tersebut."
- L9: "Saya merasa lebih paham, terutama tentang kosakata baru."
- L10: "Saya merasa lebih tahu kata-kata yang sebelumnya belum saya ketahui, terutama kata-kata yang asing."

The interview results show that TikTok content significantly contributed to respondents' acquisition of new vocabulary, as they found it easier to comprehend the vocabulary through the engaging format of this platform. Previous literature, such as Dian (2020) and Almaidah (2022), also emphasized that TikTok is an effective medium for teaching vocabulary, highlighting its role in enhancing users' understanding of elements such as vocabulary and grammar. For example, the TikTok account @harmony181018 uses

visually appealing and contextually relevant methods to introduce new words. Idiomatic expressions, presented in relatable or humorous skits, enhance memorability. This aligns with Schmitt's (2000) theory, which states that vocabulary is best learned in meaningful and authentic contexts. Furthermore, the multimedia format of TikTok reduces cognitive load, allowing users to process information more efficiently (Sweller, 1988).

Understanding of English

Understanding the English language is a crucial factor for smooth communication and language learning. TikTok offers various content that helps improve English comprehension, both in terms of vocabulary and conversational context. Some of the respondents' answers supporting this finding are as follows:

Respondent Responses:

- L3: "Kalau manfaatnya, mungkin kita jadi lebih familiar dengan bahasa Inggris, jadi tidak terlalu asing."
- L6: "Manfaatnya membantu saya belajar bahasa Inggris, terutama untuk pekerjaan."
- L7: "Manfaatnya membuat kita lebih familiar dengan bahasa Inggris, tidak terlalu asing."
- L8: "Manfaatnya pribadi, saya merasa lebih tahu beberapa kata yang sebelumnya tidak saya ketahui, jadi saya merasa lebih paham."

From the respondents' answers, it is clear that TikTok content helps increase familiarity with the English language and overall understanding of it. For example, respondents mentioned that TikTok made them feel less unfamiliar with English and helped in learning the language, especially for professional needs. These findings align with Syamsi (2022), who explained that TikTok media can significantly boost motivation and learning engagement, which increases students' familiarity with English. Additionally, Almaidah (2022) supports this by highlighting that simple and practical TikTok content contributes to understanding English, including grammar and vocabulary. TikTok accounts like @zelynafah provide content that is relevant to conversational contexts and commonly used words in everyday communication, which accelerates practical English comprehension.

A theory supporting language comprehension is Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (1978). Vygotsky stated that the best learning occurs when individuals interact with material that is slightly more challenging than their current abilities but can still be understood with the help of a guide or tool. In this context, TikTok content allows learners to be within this "zone," as the videos present language in a familiar and relevant context, allowing for deeper understanding.

Speaking and Pronunciation

Mastering speaking and pronunciation skills is a major challenge in learning English. TikTok content provides many conversation and pronunciation tutorials that help improve these skills. Some respondent answers supporting this finding are as follows:

Respondent Responses:

- L2: "Sangat membantu, terutama saya belajar percakapan dan cara pelafalannya."
- L6: "Cukup membantu, biasanya saya suka konten percakapan seperti ini, yang bisa membantu saya dalam pekerjaan nantinya."

From the respondents' answers, it is clear that TikTok content helps improve speaking and pronunciation skills. TikTok is beneficial for learning conversation and pronunciation, as well as for workplace-related conversations. These findings align with Dian (2020), who observed that TikTok offers pronunciation lessons, and Almaidah (2022), who pointed out that short TikTok videos are effective for enhancing speaking and pronunciation skills. The interactive and engaging nature of TikTok makes the learning process more accessible and enjoyable, strengthening the view that TikTok is beneficial for improving speaking and

pronunciation skills in English. Videos from accounts like @speakfastchallenge simplify complex rules through concise explanations and visual aids, which make comprehension easier. Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (1988) supports this, where TikTok is able to present information in digestible chunks, reducing cognitive load and making the learning process easier.

Grammar

Grammar is an essential element in learning English, often considered difficult. However, TikTok simplifies teaching grammar in a way that is easier to understand compared to traditional methods. Some respondent answers supporting this finding are as follows:

Respondent Responses:

- L4: "Terbantu, terutama dalam hal tata bahasa, jadi sekalian belajar."

The interview results show that TikTok content is useful for learning grammar, as respondents felt that the content helped in understanding grammatical concepts. These findings align with literature such as Dian (2020), who noted that TikTok offers lessons on grammar. Almaidah (2022) also supports this view, highlighting that short TikTok videos are effective for teaching grammar due to their engaging and practical nature. TikTok accounts like @kampunginggrisc simplify difficult grammar topics with easy-to-understand explanations and supporting visuals, speeding up the understanding of grammar concepts in a more enjoyable manner.

The relevant theory to support these findings is Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (1988), which states that learning is more effective when information is presented in a format that does not overload the learner's cognitive capacity. TikTok, with its concise videos and use of visual elements to explain grammar concepts, can reduce cognitive load and enable more efficient learning. By avoiding information overload and presenting content in small chunks, learners can focus entirely on the concepts being taught, enhancing their understanding of English grammar.

Overall Impact on Audience Understanding

Overall, respondents reported that TikTok helped them expand their vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and understand grammar rules more effectively. The interactive and engaging nature of TikTok videos made the learning process enjoyable and accessible, even for those who found traditional methods somewhat monotonous. This positive impact is further supported by Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes the importance of active participation and interaction in learning. Respondents' engagement with TikTok content, such as practicing pronunciation or applying new vocabulary, reflects the principles of this theory, where learning is constructed through individual experiences and interactions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, TikTok proves to be an effective platform for learning English. Respondents reported significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition, understanding of grammar, speaking and pronunciation skills, as well as overall English comprehension. This success can be attributed to TikTok's engaging and interactive short video format, which makes learning materials easier to understand and remember compared to traditional learning methods. TikTok also encourages active participation and interaction, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) Constructivist Learning Theory. By combining elements of entertainment and education, TikTok provides a fun and easily accessible platform, especially for younger users. These findings highlight TikTok's great potential as a modern, flexible, and highly relevant tool for English language learning.

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