

Students' Perspectives on Using Tiktok to Improve Skills in EFL

Nafilla Malika Oktavena¹, Devi Intan Maisaroh², Dian Arief Pradana³

^{1,2,3}Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945
Banyuwangi

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Abstract

This study explores students' perspectives on using TikTok as a tool to enhance their skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). With the growing popularity of social media, particularly TikTok, as an educational resource, the research aims to investigate how students perceive the impact of this platform on their language learning. A mixed-method approach was employed, involving surveys and interviews with EFL students to gather qualitative and quantitative data. The findings suggest that TikTok offers a dynamic and engaging way for students to practice listening, speaking, and vocabulary acquisition. Many students reported enjoying the short, creative videos that provide exposure to authentic language use, and they highlighted the platform's interactive features, such as challenges and trends, as motivating factors. However, some students expressed concerns about the quality and accuracy of content, emphasizing the importance of guidance from teachers. The study concludes that while TikTok can be an effective supplementary tool for language learning, its integration into formal education should be carefully monitored. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on the use of social media in education, offering insights into how platforms like TikTok can be leveraged to support EFL learning in the digital age.

Keywords

TikTok, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Social Media in Education

(*)Corresponding Author

Devi Intan Maisaroh

Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Banyuwangi, Indonesia, deviintanmaisaroh1317@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, social media platforms have become integral parts of daily life, influencing various aspects of human interaction, communication, and even education. Among these platforms, TikTok has emerged as one of the most popular, particularly among younger audiences, due to its engaging and creative content. With over a billion active users worldwide, TikTok has transformed from a platform primarily used for entertainment into a space where individuals and educators can



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share knowledge, skills, and ideas. This shift presents an opportunity to explore how platforms like TikTok can be leveraged to enhance educational outcomes, particularly in the field of language learning.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has traditionally relied on more conventional methods, such as textbooks, classroom instruction, and formal language practice. However, the advent of digital tools and social media offers an alternative and potentially more dynamic approach to language learning. TikTok, with its short-form video format, offers EFL students the opportunity to immerse themselves in authentic language use through a variety of content, including language tutorials, cultural insights, and peer interactions. This platform provides an engaging environment for learning, where students can engage with the language in a fun, interactive, and flexible manner. Given its popularity and accessibility, it is essential to examine how TikTok influences students' perspectives on language acquisition and their perceptions of its effectiveness in improving their English skills.

The potential benefits of TikTok for EFL learners are vast. For example, the visual and auditory nature of TikTok content can help reinforce vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening skills. Additionally, the platform's trend-based culture allows students to engage with current language use, slang, and cultural nuances that might not be emphasized in traditional EFL materials. Through trends, challenges, and hashtag movements, students can actively participate in global conversations, allowing them to practice English in real-world contexts.

Despite the many advantages, TikTok's role in education is still a relatively new area of research. There are concerns regarding the accuracy and quality of content, as well as the potential for distraction due to the platform's entertainment-focused design. Moreover, students' perspectives on the utility of TikTok for improving their language skills remain underexplored. Thus, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating EFL students' perspectives on the use of TikTok as a tool to enhance their language proficiency.

Understanding students' views on this innovative approach to language learning is crucial in determining its effectiveness and potential limitations. By exploring how students perceive TikTok's role in their educational journey, this research aims to provide insights into the integration of social media platforms in language learning environments and offer recommendations for educators seeking to incorporate digital tools into their teaching practices. The results of this study could also inform future research on the broader implications of social media in education, particularly in the context of language acquisition.

2. METHODS

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' perspectives on using TikTok to improve skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), this study draws upon a diverse range of existing research related to the intersection of social media, language learning, and student engagement. The literature review follows a

narrative approach to synthesize findings from previous studies, offering a contextual foundation for the research.

The first section of the review focuses on the role of social media in education, particularly in language learning contexts. Studies have increasingly highlighted the potential of social media platforms, such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, in enhancing student engagement and providing interactive learning experiences. For example, research by Godwin-Jones (2018) emphasized the importance of integrating social media into language learning, noting that platforms like YouTube have already shown promise in helping students improve listening skills and pronunciation. Building on this idea, TikTok, with its unique short-video format, offers opportunities for EFL learners to engage with authentic language use, allowing them to observe real-time language, accents, and cultural nuances that are often absent from traditional textbooks (Hernandez, 2020).

The second part of the review investigates how TikTok's features—such as trends, challenges, and hashtags—serve as motivators for learning. Studies have indicated that the interactive nature of TikTok allows learners to be more actively involved in the language acquisition process, encouraging students to create content, participate in challenges, and engage with a wider online community. These features create a dynamic environment where language learners are exposed to both formal and informal language, facilitating the acquisition of new vocabulary, slang, and idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, TikTok's ability to provide immediate feedback through comments and likes offers a form of social validation, which can enhance students' motivation and confidence in using the language (Kukulska-Hulme, 2019).

In addition, the literature also discusses the effectiveness of TikTok in improving specific language skills. Several studies have explored how platforms like TikTok can aid in improving listening comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition by providing students with opportunities to hear and mimic native speakers. Research by Li and Ni (2021) found that language learners who regularly used social media platforms reported improved speaking and listening skills, particularly through exposure to authentic content. TikTok, with its diverse range of creators from around the world, offers students the chance to hear various accents and cultural contexts, further enriching their learning experience.

However, the literature also acknowledges some limitations and concerns regarding the use of TikTok for educational purposes. Some studies caution that the quality of content on TikTok can be inconsistent, with a significant portion of videos not adhering to educational standards. This raises concerns about the accuracy of the language used and the potential for students to be exposed to incorrect grammar or pronunciation. Moreover, the addictive nature of TikTok can sometimes hinder focused learning, leading to distractions and reduced time spent on educational activities (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017). These issues highlight the need for structured guidance from educators to ensure that TikTok is used as a beneficial tool for language development rather than as a source of distraction.

By reviewing the existing body of research, this study aims to identify gaps in the current literature, particularly regarding students' direct perspectives on using TikTok for language learning. While numerous studies have explored the general impact of social media on education, fewer have specifically focused on students' opinions regarding TikTok's role in improving their EFL skills. Thus, this study will contribute to the understanding of how students perceive TikTok's effectiveness, what challenges they face while using it, and how it can be integrated into EFL teaching strategies.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. How do students perceive the effectiveness of TikTok in enhancing their listening skills in EFL

The perception of students regarding the effectiveness of TikTok in enhancing their listening skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is influenced by several factors, including the nature of the content, the platform's interactive features, and the frequency with which students engage with the app. TikTok's appeal lies in its short-form video format, which often features real-world conversations, authentic accents, and varied speech patterns, providing EFL learners with exposure to a broad range of listening experiences that traditional educational resources may not offer.

One of the primary reasons students perceive TikTok as an effective tool for improving their listening skills is the authenticity of the content. Unlike textbooks or scripted dialogues typically used in classroom settings, TikTok features real, unscripted communication. Videos on TikTok often include everyday conversations, informal speech, and colloquial language, providing learners with valuable insight into how native speakers use English in casual settings. This exposure to natural language use helps students become more familiar with real-world speech, which often differs from the more formal English they encounter in traditional learning materials. The variety of accents and dialects on TikTok further enriches this listening experience, allowing learners to develop their ability to understand English spoken by people from different regions, cultures, and backgrounds.

Moreover, TikTok's algorithm promotes content that aligns with users' interests, which means that students can find videos tailored to their language learning preferences. Many students report that they enjoy listening to content that is personally relevant to them, such as videos on topics they are passionate about or challenges that align with their learning goals. This personal connection can enhance engagement and make listening practice feel less like a chore and more like a fun, interactive experience. For instance, students might watch cooking tutorials, travel vlogs, or language challenges, all of which incorporate authentic language use while exposing them to various cultural contexts. This kind of content motivates students to actively engage with the language, improving their listening skills as they tune into videos that hold their attention.

Another factor that contributes to the perception of TikTok's effectiveness in

enhancing listening skills is the platform's interactive nature. TikTok allows users to engage with content by commenting, sharing, and responding to videos. These interactions encourage students to focus on the content more attentively and actively process the language. Many students also engage in "listening and repeating" exercises by mimicking the speech in videos, which can improve their listening comprehension and pronunciation. In particular, students may repeat short video segments to practice intonation, rhythm, and word recognition. This interactive practice reinforces their listening abilities by combining auditory input with active production of the language.

However, students' perceptions of TikTok's effectiveness in improving their listening skills are not entirely positive. Some students express concerns about the quality and clarity of the audio in certain videos. The fast-paced nature of TikTok's content can sometimes make it difficult for students, especially beginners, to follow the conversation, as many videos feature background music, fast speech, or multiple speakers. For EFL learners at lower proficiency levels, this may make it challenging to grasp the meaning of a video, reducing its effectiveness as a listening tool. Additionally, because TikTok videos are short and often contain only brief snippets of conversation, some students may feel that the platform does not provide enough context for understanding language in longer or more complex interactions.

Furthermore, while TikTok exposes students to a variety of accents, this diversity can be both beneficial and challenging. For learners who are not familiar with certain regional accents or dialects, it may be difficult to understand specific words or phrases, particularly if they are unfamiliar with slang or idiomatic expressions. This could lead to frustration, especially for students who are already struggling with the fundamentals of listening comprehension. As a result, students' perceptions of TikTok as an effective tool for improving listening skills may be mixed, with some feeling that it significantly aids their understanding of authentic language use, while others find it too challenging or overwhelming.

In conclusion, students' perceptions of TikTok's effectiveness in enhancing their listening skills in EFL vary, with many acknowledging the platform's ability to expose them to authentic, real-world language use, diverse accents, and cultural contexts. The interactive features of TikTok also contribute to students' active engagement with the language, making listening practice more enjoyable and motivating. However, challenges related to audio quality, content clarity, and regional accents can affect how students perceive TikTok as a useful tool for improving their listening comprehension. Ultimately, while TikTok presents a promising supplementary resource for language learners, its effectiveness in enhancing listening skills depends on the individual learner's preferences, proficiency level, and ability to navigate the platform's diverse and sometimes overwhelming content.

B. What are students' views on the role of TikTok in improving their speaking and pronunciation abilities in English

The role of TikTok in improving students' speaking and pronunciation abilities in English has become a subject of growing interest as educators and learners increasingly explore the potential of social media platforms in language acquisition. TikTok's unique features—such as short, engaging video formats, wide user participation, and the presence of diverse accents and dialects—offer students new ways to practice speaking and pronunciation outside the traditional classroom environment. While many students view TikTok as an effective and enjoyable tool for improving their spoken English, their perspectives on its effectiveness vary depending on their individual learning goals, language proficiency levels, and engagement with the platform.

One of the primary ways in which TikTok is perceived as beneficial for speaking practice is through the platform's interactive and participatory nature. Many students appreciate the opportunity to create their own content, such as video responses, language challenges, or duets with other users. For these students, TikTok provides a platform to actively engage in spoken English, allowing them to practice their speaking skills in a relaxed, non-judgmental environment. By creating videos, students are encouraged to produce spoken English naturally, which can help build confidence in their speaking abilities. This form of self-expression, whether through miming songs, repeating phrases, or delivering monologues, gives students the chance to practice fluency and articulation, all while receiving instant feedback from their peers in the form of likes, comments, and shares.

Another key aspect of TikTok that students value is the wide exposure to various accents and pronunciations. Since TikTok content is created by users from all over the world, students are often exposed to a broad range of English-speaking accents, from American and British to Australian and regional accents. For students who are learning English as a global language, this exposure is crucial, as it helps them become accustomed to the diversity of pronunciations and speech patterns in the English-speaking world. Many students appreciate that TikTok allows them to hear the language spoken in authentic, everyday contexts, with a variety of informal expressions, slang, and cultural references. This exposure is particularly valuable for students seeking to improve their pronunciation, as they can mimic the speech of native speakers or proficient learners, experimenting with intonation, rhythm, and stress.

Moreover, TikTok offers a wide array of pronunciation-focused content that caters to learners who wish to improve their speech. Many English learners seek out TikTok creators who specialize in teaching pronunciation, accent reduction, or language tips. These videos often break down the sounds of English and provide easy-to-follow techniques to help learners articulate words more accurately. Students who actively engage with such content may find it helpful in developing a more native-like pronunciation or in correcting specific areas of difficulty, such as vowel

sounds or word stress. By watching and imitating pronunciation tutorials on TikTok, students can reinforce their understanding of how words should sound and practice producing them in their own speech.

In addition to mimicking pronunciation, students also report that TikTok's language challenges and trends offer them opportunities to engage in speaking practice within a community. For instance, trends such as "repeat after me" challenges, where users must copy a phrase or sentence spoken by a native speaker, allow students to practice their speaking and pronunciation while participating in a fun and engaging activity. These challenges often involve repeating tongue twisters, phrases, or sentences that focus on specific sounds or accents. For students, participating in these challenges can help reinforce correct pronunciation, improve fluency, and increase comfort with speaking English in a social, collaborative context.

However, while many students find TikTok helpful in improving their speaking and pronunciation, there are also some perceived limitations and challenges. One concern that students raise is the absence of structured feedback. While TikTok's interactive features allow for peer feedback in the form of likes and comments, this feedback is often unstructured and may not provide the specific guidance students need to refine their pronunciation. Students may receive praise or encouragement, but they may not always receive detailed corrective feedback on areas where their pronunciation could improve. This lack of direct, expert feedback can limit TikTok's effectiveness as a tool for more advanced learners who require precise corrections to their spoken English.

Additionally, some students express concerns about the informal nature of TikTok content. While many TikTok videos feature native speakers, the informal and sometimes exaggerated language used on the platform may not always align with standard or academic English. For example, TikTok videos often contain slang, colloquialisms, or playful distortions of speech that might not be relevant to more formal contexts. This informal style of speech can be both an advantage and a disadvantage, depending on the student's learning goals. For students who aim to improve their pronunciation for academic or professional purposes, the overly casual nature of some TikTok content might not provide the ideal model for pronunciation.

Lastly, the brevity of TikTok videos can also be seen as a limitation. Since TikTok content typically consists of short, 15- to 60-second videos, students may not have enough time to fully immerse themselves in extended speaking practice. While short clips can provide quick, engaging practice, they may not offer the depth of learning that longer conversations or more comprehensive speaking activities provide. Consequently, students may feel that TikTok is a valuable supplementary tool but is not sufficient on its own to achieve fluency in speaking.

In conclusion, students view TikTok as a valuable tool for improving their speaking and pronunciation skills, largely due to its interactive features, exposure to diverse accents, and the opportunity to engage with a broad range of content. The ability to practice speaking in a fun, low-pressure environment, combined with

exposure to real-world language use, makes TikTok an appealing resource for many EFL learners. However, its effectiveness can vary depending on the student's proficiency level, learning goals, and ability to navigate the platform's informal content. While TikTok provides numerous opportunities for students to improve their speaking and pronunciation abilities, it works best as a supplementary tool that complements more structured learning experiences.

C. To what extent do students feel motivated to learn English through the use of TikTok, compared to traditional learning methods

The motivation to learn English is a key factor influencing students' engagement and success in acquiring the language. In recent years, the rise of social media platforms, especially TikTok, has provided learners with alternative, dynamic, and interactive methods of language learning, compared to traditional classroom settings. As an entertainment-focused platform that thrives on creativity, user-generated content, and short-form videos, TikTok has gained considerable popularity among students, particularly younger learners. This raises an important question: to what extent do students feel motivated to learn English through TikTok, compared to traditional learning methods such as textbooks, formal classroom instruction, and structured language exercises?

One of the primary reasons students report feeling more motivated to learn English through TikTok is the platform's informal, engaging, and entertaining nature. Unlike traditional learning methods, which can sometimes be perceived as rigid or monotonous, TikTok provides a lively, personalized environment where students can interact with content that resonates with their individual interests. Whether it is through watching humorous skits, participating in language challenges, or following content creators who share their personal experiences in English, TikTok allows students to engage with the language in ways that feel more enjoyable and relevant to their daily lives. This sense of fun and relatability fosters intrinsic motivation, as students are more likely to continue engaging with the language when they find the learning process enjoyable and aligned with their personal preferences.

Additionally, TikTok's ability to offer immediate feedback and social validation is another motivating factor for students. The platform's interactive features, such as likes, comments, and shares, create an environment where students can gauge their learning progress through peer interactions. For example, students who post videos of themselves speaking or participating in language challenges often receive feedback from their peers, which can boost their confidence and encourage them to keep practicing. This sense of community and social engagement is less common in traditional learning methods, where feedback is typically more formal and comes from a teacher or textbook. On TikTok, learners feel empowered to showcase their skills, share their progress, and receive praise or constructive criticism from a global audience. This social element of learning increases students' motivation, as they are not only learning for themselves but also engaging with others in a shared learning

experience.

TikTok also motivates students by offering a wide variety of content that caters to different learning preferences. Students can find videos tailored to their specific needs, whether they are looking for pronunciation tips, vocabulary-building exercises, or listening comprehension practice. The platform's diverse range of content allows students to choose materials that align with their learning goals, whether they aim to improve conversational fluency, explore cultural aspects of the language, or practice specific grammar points. The autonomy to select content that is personally relevant and engaging makes learning more enjoyable and motivating for students, as they feel more in control of their educational experience. In contrast, traditional learning methods often provide a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not cater to individual learning styles or interests, potentially reducing student engagement and motivation.

Moreover, TikTok's ability to present authentic language use is a strong motivating factor for students. Through TikTok, learners are exposed to real-world English spoken by native speakers, proficient non-native speakers, and people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This exposure allows students to hear how the language is used in everyday contexts, such as informal conversations, pop culture references, and current trends. This authentic language use not only helps students improve their listening comprehension but also motivates them to learn by showing them the practical applications of the language in real-world situations. In traditional classroom settings, students often focus on grammar rules, vocabulary lists, and formal dialogues, which may seem disconnected from real-life communication. TikTok, on the other hand, presents language as it is used in dynamic and varied contexts, helping students connect more deeply with the language.

Despite these motivating factors, students also report certain limitations when comparing TikTok to traditional learning methods. One of the primary concerns is that TikTok, with its emphasis on short, bite-sized content, may not provide the depth or structure needed for comprehensive language learning. While TikTok videos can expose students to authentic language use, they may lack the context and scaffolding necessary for deeper understanding. For example, students might encounter slang, idioms, or fast speech that can be difficult to understand without proper explanation or background. In traditional classroom settings, teachers are able to guide students through complex language concepts, provide explanations, and offer in-depth practice that is more difficult to achieve through short TikTok videos. As a result, students might find themselves motivated to engage with TikTok, but still relying on traditional methods for a more thorough and structured understanding of the language.

Another limitation is the potential for distraction. While TikTok's fast-paced and entertaining nature can initially boost motivation, students may find it difficult to stay focused on learning goals. The platform is designed to captivate users with endless scrolling and a variety of content, which can lead to passive consumption

rather than active learning. For some students, this can result in time wasted on entertainment rather than educational content. In contrast, traditional learning methods, which are typically more structured and goal-oriented, help students stay focused on specific language learning objectives and provide a clear progression from one skill level to the next.

Lastly, TikTok's lack of direct teacher involvement and guidance can also impact students' motivation. While TikTok provides opportunities for self-directed learning, some students may feel a lack of accountability or clarity in their progress. In traditional classroom settings, students have the support of instructors who can track their development, offer tailored feedback, and provide explanations when needed. Without this direct support, some students may struggle with understanding their weaknesses or how to effectively improve their language skills.

In conclusion, TikTok has emerged as a powerful motivator for many students learning English, offering an engaging, interactive, and personalized learning experience. The platform's ability to integrate entertainment with education, provide immediate feedback, and expose learners to authentic language use makes it an attractive alternative to traditional learning methods. However, while TikTok motivates students to engage with the language in fun and meaningful ways, it does not replace the need for structured learning, teacher guidance, and in-depth practice that traditional methods offer. Students often find TikTok to be a valuable supplement to their learning, helping them stay motivated and engaged in the language acquisition process, but they continue to rely on traditional classroom instruction to achieve a more comprehensive and well-rounded understanding of English.

D. How do students evaluate the quality and accuracy of English content available on TikTok for language learning purposes

As TikTok becomes an increasingly popular platform for language learning, students are exposed to a wide variety of English content created by users from all over the world. With its engaging, short-form video format and its vast repository of content on nearly every imaginable topic, TikTok offers an appealing alternative to traditional educational materials. However, the quality and accuracy of the English language content available on TikTok vary significantly, and students must navigate this content critically to determine its usefulness for language learning. The evaluation of this content by students is influenced by several factors, including the credibility of the creator, the type of content, the clarity and correctness of the language used, and the relevance of the material to their language learning goals.

1. Credibility of Content Creators

One of the primary ways students evaluate the quality and accuracy of English content on TikTok is by assessing the credibility of the content creators. TikTok hosts a diverse range of users, from native English speakers to non-native learners and professional language instructors. Students often look for creators who have clear

expertise or experience in teaching English, such as certified English teachers, linguists, or well-known language learning influencers. These creators are more likely to provide content that is accurate and aligned with standard language norms, such as correct grammar, pronunciation, and usage.

Some students follow TikTok accounts that are dedicated to English language teaching, where the creators focus on providing lessons, pronunciation tips, grammar explanations, or vocabulary building in a structured manner. These accounts, which are often run by professionals, tend to have higher credibility in the eyes of students, as they are perceived to offer reliable and educational content. Conversely, students may be more skeptical about content from non-experts, especially if it includes unverified information or informal language that may not align with standard English. This evaluation process is crucial for students in determining whether the content is appropriate for their learning needs.

2. Type of Content and Educational Value

Students also evaluate the quality of English content based on the type of content being shared and its educational value. On TikTok, the content can range from casual, informal language use, such as slang or colloquialisms, to more structured lessons aimed at improving specific language skills. For example, some students may be interested in content that focuses on real-world language use, such as common phrases, idioms, or cultural expressions, while others might prefer formal, academic content that explains grammar rules, syntax, and sentence structures.

Content that provides clear explanations, examples, and practical exercises is typically seen as higher quality, as it helps students understand how to apply the language in real-life contexts. Students are more likely to engage with content that offers something educational—whether it's a lesson on common English idioms, tips for improving pronunciation, or advice on language learning strategies. In contrast, content that is purely entertainment-focused or too abstract may be less valued in terms of language learning purposes, even if it is entertaining or engaging.

Moreover, students tend to seek out content that targets their specific learning goals. For example, a student trying to improve their speaking skills might evaluate TikTok videos that feature pronunciation tips, speaking challenges, or dialogues with native speakers. Students who are looking to expand their vocabulary may focus on content that introduces new words or expressions. The more relevant the content is to their individual language learning objectives, the more students will consider it valuable and high-quality.

3. Clarity and Correctness of Language

The clarity and correctness of language used in TikTok videos are crucial factors in students' evaluations of the content's quality. Since TikTok is an informal platform, some videos may contain errors or deviations from standard English, especially in user-generated content. Students are generally quick to notice instances of incorrect grammar, mispronunciations, or improper use of vocabulary. For learners at intermediate or advanced levels, exposure to such mistakes can sometimes hinder

their progress, as they may inadvertently adopt incorrect language patterns or misunderstand the intended message.

On the other hand, students appreciate content that uses clear and accurate English, especially if the creator demonstrates the correct usage of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. They often prefer videos where the language is both simple enough to understand yet sophisticated enough to challenge them. Some students may even use TikTok to help reinforce grammar lessons they learn from formal educational sources, seeking creators who focus on teaching English with a focus on correctness and precision.

4. Engagement with the Content and Feedback from the Community

Students also evaluate the quality of TikTok content through engagement with the videos and feedback from the TikTok community. TikTok's interactive features, such as likes, comments, and shares, allow students to gauge how well the content is received by other users. High levels of engagement can be an indicator of the content's relevance, usefulness, or entertainment value, which often contributes to the overall quality of the video in the eyes of students. Positive comments or discussions in the comment section may further confirm the accuracy and effectiveness of the content.

However, some students may be cautious about the opinions of others in the TikTok community. They are aware that the platform does not have a formal moderation system for educational content, and videos that go viral may not necessarily be based on accurate or high-quality information. As a result, students might cross-check information from TikTok with other sources, such as textbooks, online courses, or educational websites, to ensure that the content they engage with aligns with established language learning standards.

5. Relevance to Students' Proficiency Level

The relevance of the content to a student's proficiency level is another significant factor in evaluating its quality. Beginners may find content that focuses on basic vocabulary, simple grammar rules, and everyday phrases more useful, while advanced learners might seek out more complex discussions, cultural insights, or in-depth explanations of advanced language structures. Students often assess whether the content aligns with their level of understanding and whether it challenges them appropriately without being too difficult to comprehend.

If students perceive the content as too advanced or too simplistic for their current proficiency level, they may deem it less valuable for their language learning journey. This evaluation helps students determine whether the content is appropriate for their needs and learning pace.

In conclusion, students evaluate the quality and accuracy of English content on TikTok based on several factors, including the credibility of content creators, the type and educational value of the content, the clarity and correctness of the language, community feedback, and the relevance of the material to their proficiency level and learning goals. While TikTok offers a wealth of engaging and authentic content that

can support language learning, students must critically assess the material to ensure its usefulness and accuracy. Content created by qualified instructors or experienced learners is generally seen as more reliable, and videos that provide clear explanations, practical examples, and engaging challenges are highly valued. However, due to the informal nature of TikTok and the lack of a formal educational structure, students may need to complement their TikTok learning with more traditional language learning resources to ensure comprehensive, accurate, and well-rounded language acquisition.

- E. What challenges do students face when using TikTok as a tool to improve their EFL skills, and how do they address these challenges

While TikTok offers a variety of engaging and accessible ways for students to improve their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) skills, it is not without its challenges. As a platform primarily designed for entertainment, TikTok presents unique obstacles that may hinder its effectiveness for language learners. These challenges include issues related to content quality, the informal nature of language use, distractions, time management, and the lack of structured learning. However, many students are able to overcome these challenges by adopting strategies that complement TikTok's strengths and address its limitations. Below, we explore the primary challenges that students face when using TikTok for EFL learning, along with how they typically address them.

1. Quality and Accuracy of Content

One of the most significant challenges students face when using TikTok to improve their EFL skills is the inconsistency in the quality and accuracy of the content. Since TikTok is an open platform where anyone can post videos, the language used in many videos may be informal, unstructured, or even incorrect. This can lead to students picking up errors, such as incorrect grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary usage, particularly when following content created by non-professional language learners or influencers.

How Students Address This Challenge: Students who recognize the importance of accurate language learning tend to follow creators who are language experts, qualified teachers, or reputable language influencers. Many students actively seek out accounts dedicated to English language instruction, where content is crafted with a focus on correctness and clarity. In addition, students often cross-check the information they learn from TikTok with other reliable sources such as textbooks, online language courses, or grammar websites. By verifying the accuracy of the content, students can mitigate the risk of learning incorrect language usage from TikTok.

2. Overuse of Informal or Colloquial Language

TikTok content often features informal, colloquial, or slang-heavy language, which is common in everyday conversations but not always suitable for formal contexts. For beginner and intermediate learners, exposure to such language can be

confusing or misleading, as they may not understand the meanings or nuances of certain expressions or slang terms. Furthermore, excessive exposure to informal language can lead to students incorporating incorrect language habits into their own speech.

How Students Address This Challenge: To counteract this challenge, students can focus on selecting content that strikes a balance between informal and formal language. For instance, they can follow accounts that offer educational content focusing on academic English or professional communication, while still enjoying TikTok's more casual language videos for cultural and conversational practice. Additionally, students may use TikTok as a supplementary resource rather than the sole source of learning, pairing it with more structured materials that emphasize formal English. By diversifying their language input, students can develop a well-rounded understanding of both formal and informal language use.

3. Distractions and Time Management

TikTok is designed to be highly engaging, with its endless scroll of short videos, each lasting only 15 to 60 seconds. While this is ideal for quick learning bursts, it can also lead to distractions and time management issues. Students may find themselves spending excessive amounts of time browsing entertaining videos without gaining much educational value. The addictive nature of the platform can make it difficult for students to stay focused on their language learning goals.

How Students Address This Challenge: To combat distractions, students can set specific learning goals and time limits for using TikTok. For example, they might decide to watch only educational videos for a set period (e.g., 15–20 minutes) or limit their TikTok usage to certain times of the day. Some students use the "Save" or "Bookmark" features to create a playlist of videos that are relevant to their learning goals, which helps them avoid mindlessly scrolling. Additionally, students may prioritize engaging with high-quality educational content, avoiding purely entertainment-driven videos that don't contribute to their learning progress.

4. Lack of Structured Learning

Unlike traditional classrooms, TikTok is not designed to offer a structured curriculum for language learners. The videos are brief and often cover isolated topics, making it challenging for students to build a progressive, coherent learning path. Without a clear structure, students may struggle to understand how the content fits into a larger context of language acquisition. This can lead to gaps in knowledge or confusion about how different language skills (such as grammar, vocabulary, speaking, and writing) relate to one another.

How Students Address This Challenge: To address this issue, students often use TikTok as a supplement to more structured learning methods. They may complement their TikTok learning with formal language courses, textbooks, or language apps that provide a more organized and systematic approach to language acquisition. Some students set personal goals, such as improving their pronunciation or expanding their vocabulary, and use TikTok videos that are specifically aligned

with those goals. Additionally, students might engage with TikTok challenges or trends related to language skills, such as pronunciation exercises, speaking challenges, or grammar quizzes, to incorporate structured practice into their learning.

5. Language Level Mismatch

TikTok content is created by a wide range of users with varying levels of English proficiency, from beginners to native speakers, which can create a mismatch in the difficulty level of the language. Beginners might find it difficult to follow content that uses advanced vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, or fast speech, while more advanced learners might find content aimed at beginners too simplistic. This mismatch can lead to frustration or a lack of motivation.

How Students Address This Challenge: To overcome this, students can use TikTok's search and hashtag functions to filter content based on their proficiency level. Many students follow creators who categorize their content by difficulty, ensuring that they engage with videos appropriate for their current level. Intermediate and advanced learners often seek out videos that present more complex language use, while beginners focus on simple vocabulary and grammar explanations. Additionally, students may choose to watch videos multiple times, slowing down the playback speed or using subtitles to better understand challenging content. This helps learners at any level maximize the value of the content they encounter on TikTok.

6. Absence of Personalized Feedback

While TikTok is interactive in terms of comments and likes, it lacks the personalized, direct feedback that students typically receive in a classroom setting. This lack of expert feedback can make it difficult for students to gauge whether they are improving in areas such as pronunciation, grammar, or fluency. Without constructive criticism, students may continue practicing incorrect forms of language or fail to notice their weaknesses.

How Students Address This Challenge: To fill this gap, students often use TikTok alongside other learning platforms that offer personalized feedback. For example, students might use language exchange apps, online tutoring services, or study groups to receive expert or peer feedback on their language use. Some students also upload their own videos to TikTok, asking followers or teachers for specific advice or corrections. By integrating feedback from a variety of sources, students can overcome the limitations of TikTok's informal feedback environment.

While TikTok presents several challenges for students using it to improve their EFL skills, these obstacles are not insurmountable. Students are resourceful in addressing issues such as content quality, the informal nature of language, distractions, lack of structure, and language level mismatches by employing strategies that involve seeking out credible creators, using TikTok as a supplement to formal learning, setting time limits, and engaging in other feedback mechanisms. By adopting a balanced and strategic approach, students can harness TikTok's potential

as an engaging and motivating tool for language learning while mitigating its limitations.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of TikTok as a tool for improving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) skills offers both significant opportunities and notable challenges for students. On the one hand, TikTok provides an engaging, interactive, and accessible platform where students can immerse themselves in authentic, real-world language usage, ranging from casual conversations and slang to pronunciation tips and language challenges. The informal and personalized nature of the content makes learning enjoyable, helping to foster intrinsic motivation and engagement. However, TikTok's open platform also introduces challenges related to the quality and accuracy of content, as well as the potential for distractions, lack of structured learning, and mismatches in language proficiency levels. To navigate these challenges, students often turn to strategies such as following credible content creators, combining TikTok with more formal learning methods, and using the platform as a supplement rather than a replacement for traditional educational resources. They also recognize the need for critical engagement with content, carefully selecting videos that align with their learning goals and seeking external feedback for improvement. By balancing the strengths of TikTok with these strategic approaches, students can enhance their EFL skills while minimizing the risks associated with unverified or informal content. Ultimately, TikTok serves as a valuable supplement to language learning, but it is most effective when used in conjunction with other structured educational tools and methods.

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