

Problems Faced by the EFL Students in Implementing TikTok as a Speaking Learning Medium

By Rifki Irawan



2 Problems Faced by the EFL Students in Implementing TikTok as a Speaking Learning Medium

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Abstract. This research aims to find problems faced by five EFL students in implementing TikTok as a speaking learning medium. This study used a qualitative methodology, including data collection techniques such as observation and questionnaires, and data analysis procedures such as data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing/verification from Miles and Huberman (1994), with the researchers serving as the primary instrument and the students serving as the primary informants. The findings of the study indicated that the students confront several challenges when using TikTok as a spoken learning medium. Their challenges are the inability to concentrate due to the distractions from other videos, insufficient teacher's written explanation, and a lack of interaction with others. As a result, a teacher should combine this medium with other media to improve the teaching and learning process. The results of this study have pedagogical significance in the area of implementing social media in speaking instruction.

Keywords: EFL students · TikTok · Speaking

1 1 Introduction

The roadmap for language teaching and learning has changed significantly in this era of global deployment of new technology [1]. In the twenty-first century, mobile technology, together with interactive Web 2.0 Internet-based applications, also known as online social media, is becoming increasingly visible and vivid in our lives. The world is getting closer to implementing cutting-edge technological solutions due to the fourth industrial revolution (IR 4.0). As a result, education is currently building new teaching and learning mediums to transfer knowledge as well as to train and equip students with all of the required and important skills to succeed in the machine era [2].

Teaching English in numerous Indonesian colleges has had disappointing outcomes, especially in terms of speaking. The ability of the students to communicate in English is still restricted. As a result, some effort is required to help the students improve their

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speaking skills. Incorporating media into the subject and teaching methods used with students is one strategy to improve them.

In Indonesia, the Fourth Industrial Revolution has an impact on education. The number of students who use technology in their everyday life is continuously rising. 71,65 percent of students use the internet at school [3]. Given the size of the country and the number of rural areas, this is a big percentage. However, the use of the internet gives rise to internet addiction. Based on the research, internet addiction was identified in 25% of internet users in Indonesia, and eCommerce websites and social media were its cause. Indeed, students in high school and college have a 1.7% higher chance of becoming addicted [4].

Indonesia had over 170 million active social media users in January 2021, ranking third in the Asia Pacific behind China and India [5]. Social media has become a tool for most Indonesians to communicate and interact with friends and family. Social networking websites may be more successful for informal learning than formal learning, as 91 percent of students in their poll said they had never used such technology to contact teachers and 43% said they had no academic potential [6]. For a long time, the majority of participants claimed they used social networking sites for non-academic objectives [7]. These behaviors can take students' focus away from their studies, hurt their academic performance, social connections, and sleep length, and lead to a sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity, putting them at risk for noncommunicable diseases and mental health difficulties.

Numerous studies on the use of TikTok in English teaching and learning have been undertaken. The studies are *An Overview of the Utilization of TikTok to Improve Oral English Communication Competence among EFL Undergraduate Students* [8], *Having Good Speaking English through Tik Tok Application* [9], *Student's Perception toward The Use of Tik Tok in Learning English Vocabulary* [10]. On the other hand, none of them discusses the students' challenge in applying TikTok in the speaking activities. This study explores the students' difficulty in utilizing TikTok in speaking activities. The research aimed to identify solutions to the following issues: "What are the problems faced by EFL students in implementing TikTok as a speaking learning medium?"

2 Literature Review

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2.1 EFL Students

Before considering language learning, it's essential to understand the English context, including whether it's L1 (native language), L2 (second language), or EFL (English as a foreign language) (English as Foreign Language). The variations between them are significant since they will be taken into account when making the next decision for someone who learns English.

The differences are that L1 is a native language or mother tongue used by native speakers in a community where the language is spoken, and L2 is learned and used in the environment of a community of native speakers by non-native speakers; in other words, L2 refers to learning another language after learning the native language, and Foreign Language refers to a language of non-native speakers that are used in their daily lives [11]. As a result, Indonesian students studying English in Indonesia are referred to as English Foreign Language (EFL) students.

2.2 Speaking

Speaking is the capacity to verbally communicate ideas, beliefs, information, and emotions to other people, animals, and even oneself. Nunan [12] quoted in Mart [13] claims that speaking is a useful oral ability that entails creating orderly verbal utterances to express ideas. Brown [14] notes that “speech is an interactive process of generating meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information” in a somewhat different way. In speaking, students learn how to structure thoughts, compose sentences, and communicate language orally in an intelligible manner with good pronunciation. They must also learn how to convey the language’s meaning by the situation in which they are speaking.

2.3 Social Media

The various technologies that humans developed serve to improve human lives. Some people use social media for entertainment. Social media is typically used by someone experiencing these emotions to combat the loneliness brought on by the absence of direct engagement with others [15]. Social media also contributes to students’ ongoing quest for knowledge, news, education, insights, and distant relationships. Social media users are now liberated to communicate and exchange news, information, and other materials with one another without concern for barriers like price, distance, or time [16]. When they are engaged in the teaching and learning process, students are more social media-focused, and outside of the classroom, there is hardly any interaction between them. This phenomenon demonstrates how pupils unknowingly encountered social media’s quick influence, which might impede social contact [17].

2.4 TikTok

TikTok videos have several benefits for both students and teachers. TikTok videos are a free and user-friendly application that let teachers carry out class activities. The TikTok app’s biggest beneficiaries are students. Engaging texts, fun exercises that stimulate learners’ cognitive abilities, and chances for students to use their prior knowledge and skills are all characteristics of high-quality learning materials [18].

Additionally, using videos to learn English has advantages [19]. The advantages of video content include: First, education is more participatory, straightforward, and interesting. The use of the video TikTok in the classroom can increase students’ motivation to learn. Next, consider time and energy efficiency. Because it doesn’t take a teacher

a long time to create each learning film, video TikTok can also save time and energy. Third, learning can take place at any time and from any place. Because it is accessible through an Android device, students may utilize it wherever they want to learn, whether at home, school, or other locations. Lastly, cultivating an optimistic outlook.

3 Methods

The qualitative methodology employed in this study was a descriptive case study. A qualitative case study is an in-depth, comprehensive description and analysis of a single occurrence, phenomenon, or social unit [20]. A phenomenon with a limit might be the subject of the investigation. This study used an interviewing technique to learn about the difficulties encountered by the students using TikTok as a speaking learning medium.

Because the researcher had just finished a teaching-learning process there, this study was conducted at Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta. This is why the researchers were interested in their assessments of the use of different literary techniques based on their personal experiences. The researcher's weekly teaching schedule, which runs from November 2021 to January 2022, is how the data were gathered.

The researchers served as the primary instrument for data collection, while an interview guide served as the primary supporting instrument. Interviews felt like a suitable technique to learn more about the subjects' experiences about these things to be clarified and elaborated on because the purpose of this study was to learn the difficulties that might arise when students utilized TikTok as a medium to develop the speaking learning process. Five pupils were given semi-structured interviews.

Since the interview sought to elicit a more honest answer from participants addressing some fundamental ideas that needed to be addressed, it was decided that it was appropriate for this study. The interview was recorded and transcribed to prevent data inaccuracies and incompleteness. The interview was conducted in Indonesian to reduce misunderstandings [21] The following query was what are the problems faced when you implemented TikTok as a speaking learning medium?

4 Results and Discussion

This qualitative study aims to investigate the ²⁰ difficulties encountered by EFL learners in speaking learning environments, particularly at UPY in Indonesia. When interview data were analyzed, it became clear that several challenges were preventing students from using this application, including (1) other video diversions, (2) inadequate teacher-written explanations, and (3) a lack of social connection.

4.1 Other Video Diversions

An educational institution cannot use social media to improve academic achievement unless it has effective collaborat³ learning [22]. When using social media for authentic learning, it raises some issues such as unsuitable real-life representation, difficulties collaborating with others, and difficulty identifying their learning potential [23].

Table 1. Interview transcript of Other Video Diversions

| Students | Interview transcripts |
|----------|--|
| S4 | While I want to create a video for the assignment, my concentration changed to watching other TikTok videos on my account. |

Table 2. Interview transcript of inadequate teachers' written explanations

| Students | Interview transcripts |
|----------|---|
| S1 | The material uploaded by the lecturer is difficult to understand because it is not as detailed as in the other media |
| S2 | TikTok does not provide a menu to upload or download learning documents |
| S3 | TikTok is not effective for uploading learning materials. In addition, the maximum duration on TikTok is only 5 min |
| S4 | if you only use the TikTok application, it's only a video and you cannot use files like PPT, word, and others |
| S5 | I can forget the assignments given because no checklist column helps me remember the materials and assignments that have been given |

Other videos on TikTok can distract the students' learning concentration. S4 found when creating a video for an assignment on TikTok, he cannot concentrate well. He was distracted by other videos on his TikTok home. He was unaware that he watched about ten minutes to explore entertainment videos there. After being aware, he closed the 11 Tok Application and took videos before editing and uploading his work. Distraction, in the context of using social media for educational reasons, refers to a delay in study time, a lack of attention when it comes to learning, and so on [24]. He was very lucky because he was conscious to do what should he do. However, if he kept exploring other videos on 5 that application, he could stay up late and get sleep deprivation. Excessive usage of social media for non-academic purposes diverted them from their studies and academic pursuits, causing them to miss bedtime and sleep less [7] (Table 1).

4.2 Inadequate Teachers' Written Explanations

First, S1 said that he got difficulties understanding the material I uploaded on TikTok because she considered the explanation video on TikTok to lack the level of detail found in other media. In addition, S3 assumed five minutes explanation video is not effective for the students to comprehend what the lecturer means. Moreover, another student thought that he needed more explanation not only in the form of video but also in Microsoft PowerPoint, Word, and others. From the interview transcript, in brief, TikTok did not provide features like what is delivered by e-learning.

3 TikTok does not have the same functionality that LMS has. Although university teachers and students note that social media provided them with learning resources such



Fig. 1. Submission Status of LMS

Table 3. Interview transcript of a lack of social connection

| Students | Interview transcripts |
|----------|---|
| S3 | We need face-to-face meetings to interact, discuss, and get feedback from the teacher |

as videos, demonstrations, and learning files that enabled students to comprehend the learning material [23], learning management systems (LMSs) provide learners with more resources in a variety of formats, such as videos, quizzes, and forum discussions [25].

As exemplified in Table 2, student 5 complained social media does not have a reminder of assignment deadlines. Submission status is very essential for students who have other courses besides English. It can remind them when the assignment has to be submitted. Figure 1 is the display of the submission status of LMS. It consists of submission and grading status, due date, time remaining, last modified, and submit comments. They are very helpful to give information to the students without making reminders in another medium.

An educational institution cannot use social media to improve academic achievement unless it has effective collaborative learning [22]. When using social media for authentic learning, it raises some issues such as unsuitable real-life representation, difficulties collaborating with others, and difficulty identifying their learning potential [23].

4.3 A Lack of Social Connection

The usage of technology hurts the facilitation of communicative classroom discourses and teacher feedback patterns [26]. In Table 3, S3 believed that although the teacher integrated LMS and TikTok in learning to speak, lacked interaction between teachers and students. They missed the atmosphere of the teaching and learning process of the traditional method. There is no valuable feedback given on the students' speaking performance. The students cannot directly ask the problems and they could not get a comprehensive understanding of the material. Electronic education can be a useful tool for increasing motivation, but it should not be regarded as a self-contained alternative to the traditional English classroom [27].

5 Conclusion

Five students' opinions on the usage of TikTok in EFL classrooms to learn speaking were examined in the current study. Based on the study's findings and analysis, several conclusions are drawn. According to this study's findings, EFL students who use TikTok as their speaking medium have four key issues: (1) other video distractions; (2) insufficient teacher written explanations; and (3) a lack of social engagement.

The empirical data offered here should be viewed with some restrictions in mind. It is recommended that more research be conducted to examine different alternatives, such as looking into other English language abilities including reading, writing, and listening. In addition, it is recommended that the participation be broadened to include various educational levels (i.e., high school students). This leads to more thorough findings.

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