

Exploring the Use of *TikTok* Application in Enhancing the Skill of Pronunciation: A Case on Students' Perception

Isah Cahyani¹, Khakim Toshimovich Buriev², Magdalena Ngongo³, Zokir Mamadiyarov⁴, La Ino⁵, Herman Herman⁶, Nanda Saputra⁷, Sobirov Bobur Baxtishodovich⁸

¹Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

²PhD in Economics Science, Acting Professor, Business Management, Samarkand State Architecture and Construction University Named after Mirzo Ulughbek, Uzbekistan

³Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Indonesia

⁴Mamun University, Khiva, Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan; Alfraganus University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan; Termez University of Economics and Service, Termez, Uzbekistan

⁵Universitas Halu Oleo, Indonesia

⁶Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Indonesia

⁷Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Al-Hilal Sigli, Indonesia

⁸Samarkand Branch Tashkent State University of Economics, Uzbekistan

Correspondence: Herman Herman, Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, Indonesia.

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Abstract

Over the past few years, technology has had a significant influence on the teaching and learning process. The appearance of several types of new technologies has benefitted some improvements in teaching language to students, of which one is a popular social media platform. This study focused on the exploration of the students' perceptions towards the use of this platform for pronunciation improvement in language classes. A total of 32 students from Grade VIII SMP Cinta Rakyat 3 Pematangsiantar were selected to be the participants. Overall, the participating students were highly accepting of its use in teaching and learning, particularly for pronunciation skills. They had a positive perception of the platform as it was seen as an approachable and user-friendly tool that is effective in contributing to the students' English language learning and in enhancing students' pronunciation abilities. This study's result will be able to be extended in future empirical research using *TikTok* in pronunciation since it was a theoretical investigation of *TikTok* only. Next, researchers should execute an empirical study to further investigate any possible impact of using *TikTok* on students' speaking skills, including investigating productive skills in pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse markers.

Keywords: TikTok Application, perception, pronunciation, media learning

1. Introduction

The use of media in learning can also assist students in enhancing their understanding as well as reducing the burden of traditional resources, depending mainly on the teaching instructions. However, if different kinds of interesting media are included, they can work together to change the traditional teaching mode into active learning classrooms (Hanif et al., 2023). Therefore, from the viewpoint of learning effectiveness, there is potential for media to help improve hearing as well as studying a foreign language. The positive feelings of self-directed learning courseware and media to study in language learning have also been well recaptured in the field of computer-assisted language teaching practice (Prabawati et al., 2021; Haleem et al., 2022; Girsang et al, 2025).

This survey emphasizes the 'Vak' learning style of students and the introduction of a video-based learning platform to develop an English pronunciation learning system. The vast majority of students have those personality strengths – in listening, language learners do not easily give up their visual inflectional method for now because the lecture language learning style does not seem to match the language learning features of this large minority (Simaremare et al., 2023). Even with explanation and interpretation, once the lag has been lessened, the tested pronunciation courseware type for

group students also seemed to direct different supporting methods in order to help (van Thao et al., 2021; Judijanto et al., 2024). Furthermore, such coordination leads to the amendment in individual oral facilities of several mature students.

Despite various teaching aids that can be used to help students in speaking and pronunciation, especially at the term level, some students still have problems with poor pronunciation. The application has many benefits to be used in the education sector. Therefore, researchers wanted to explore deeper with the purpose of this study, which is to explore the students' perceptions toward the use of videos on students' pronunciation. Although many studies have been conducted regarding the popularity of the application and the challenges faced by students, the studies on the perception of the application in the literature are still lacking. To provide a brief idea or understanding of this study, the researcher will describe the background of the study and the statement of the problem. The students' perception toward the use of videos on students, the studies on the perception in the literature are still lacking (Collins et al., 2021; Rumapea, 2024). To provide a brief idea or understanding of this study, the researcher will describe the background of the study and the statement of the problem. Therefore, the researcher wanted to explore deeper with the purpose of this study, which is to explore the students' pronunciation in the literature are still lacking (Collins et al., 2021; Rumapea, 2024). To provide a brief idea or understanding of this study, the researcher will describe the background of the study and the statement of the problem. Therefore, the researcher wanted to explore deeper with the purpose of this study, which is to explore the students' perceptions toward the use of videos on students' pronunciation (Yeung et al., 2021).

The purpose of this study is to identify the students' perception toward the use of *TikTok* videos on students' pronunciation. Pronunciation is the heart of the language system. This is one of the keys that make the language be delivered properly. It doesn't only relate to verbal communication or speaking. Good pronunciation will make communication more meaningful. In some cities in Indonesia, many students only know Indonesian, so it will be difficult for them to distinguish between consonants and vowels in English. They need to know about the habits of other countries. However, based on the explanation above, it will not be a problem because *TikTok* offers to create session activities according to pronunciation by using recorded videos and parodying the videos. Then, the students express their voice, posture, and mouth formation similar to that of a native speaker. With this activity, students can train their speaking skills with a standard accent.

To achieve this main research, some sub-questions were proposed to explore further into the main research. These research questions are based on Bloom's Taxonomy, which means that one has to understand and remember a concept before they can analyze and evaluate it. These research questions can be informal or formally stated. In this study, the informal research questions would be to understand whether the teachers used a trans-languaging approach, as this understanding helps the research rave a more comprehensive view to interpret the responses from the research participants and allows the identification of the differences, patterns, and a deeper understanding of how *TikTok* videos are used to improve students' pronunciation.

2. Literature Review

This study discusses the application of the innovative method, *TikTok*, in various situations of studies within real classes. *TikTok* is able to facilitate the learning process and make it enjoyable, interactive, and memorable, and may be applied to different academic branches such as language and language skills, despite the lack of research in the literature. This is classroom action research that was conducted with junior high school students in Indonesia, and the results of the study showed a significant improvement in students' understanding of English learning through the media. Particularly in the field of language learning, it helps learners to condition their language learning in a target language environment, which can improve their language performance and outcomes. The method of teaching pronunciation to students who need practice outside the classroom has a real impact on their pronunciation in English. *TikTok* is an application that provides a fun and innovative atmosphere, commonly for the younger generation, to continuously study their target language (Safila, 2023). The music of a catchy song, attractive style, and challenges will make learning the language, especially English, a bit easier (Batubara et al., 2023).

The *TikTok* video can bring a substantial effect on students' pronunciation. The effects of *TikTok* videos on students' pronunciation must be seen from: what are the impacts of *TikTok* on students' pronunciation? *TikTok* is one of the social media services that we can use to deliver content that is essential for English learning. The educational videos on *TikTok* can bring a positive effect on students' pronunciation. The use of *TikTok* videos in digital media-based instruction encourages and motivates students to utilize their social media bubble productively. Humans are visually oriented because their senses are highly developed. The sense of sight becomes one of the effective senses in helping students learn new material. Hence, Purba et al (2025) stated that video is an essential tool for teaching and learning, especially for pronunciation training in English language classes (Belkaisse & Manel, 2023).

The use of *TikTok* in delivering pronunciation content focuses on modeling the first language, where the teacher will produce words and sentences by reading them aloud. The pronunciation content can be presented alongside a slide or a written document. Afterward, students will imitate the sentences or phrases produced by the teacher. This system requires maximum cooperation from the teacher and the active role of students in learning the material (Literat, 2021). The features

in *TikTok* could positively affect the students' pronunciation training process itself. The *TikTok* videos present explicit learning objectives or learning intentions, explicitly exploring specific pronunciation problems or errors. The platform enables the teacher to present content before, during, and after the language training process. The language trainer can also place quizzes and student-teacher interaction activities on the platform (Chikhi & Guetaf, 2023).

This section reviews some related studies on technology in language learning. The use of WhatsApp and Snapchat in improving grammar received positive feedback from the participants. They perceived that both applications were user-friendly and that they would prefer to use WhatsApp over Snapchat (Syarif and Zaim, 2021). In addition, it was revealed that the use of WhatsApp improved grammar, vocabulary, and visual skills, developed characters, and increased students' participation. It was found that multimedia, short texts, and small groups strengthened students' motivation. Another research study demonstrated that the use of WhatsApp in learning academic writing at the tertiary level improved learners' awareness and enhanced their understanding of the characteristics of academic writing genres and their features (Benlaghrissi & Ouahidi, 2024).

Besides WhatsApp and Snapchat mentioned above, another popular application used among language learners is *TikTok*. It was mentioned that *TikTok* motivates ESL students to learn English through English lesson videos, creating assignments for fun, and sparking interest in using the English language in the classroom. It was learned how to create meaningful classroom assignments and address sensitive issues of the platform. In interviews, it was revealed that visual support such as color, images, and videos can make language study more effective (Tan et al., 2022; Ansasri et al., 2023). It was added that with the language information and the pronunciation cues provided, the students experience high engagement, which requires a small amount of time to respond. It is pointed out that in practice, *TikTok* motivates students to interact with English outside of the classroom. In a study, it was found that tutor-generated content increased students' motivation (Kaur and Sulaiman, 2023).

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This research used a qualitative research design to answer the research question. The rationale for using a qualitative research design in this study is that it allowed the researcher to explore students' perceptions toward the use of *TikTok* videos on students' pronunciation. Thus, the qualitative approach is more suitable because it offers a more flexible vehicle to drive into a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of those being studied (Sinambela et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2024). Therefore, by using this research approach, the researcher has taken a lens that focuses on what goes on in the minds of the participants, reflecting their perceptions and understanding of a specific phenomenon. In other words, instead of following tradition in educational research, the exploration of this particular research question might be better conducted using a qualitative approach due to its unique nature that calls for understanding students' perceptions.

A qualitative research design is chosen for the purpose of understanding or initiating theories (Herman et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2022; Munthe et al., 2024; Widodo et al., 2024). This research concentrates on understanding students' perceptions toward the use of *TikTok* videos on students' pronunciation; a qualitative approach was most suited to the investigation of the perceptions of the individual participants. Thus, this study does not aim to generalize the findings to a given target population. Rather, it aims to explore the role of *TikTok* videos on students' pronunciation and to offer the rich insights that are necessary for understanding the underlying processes, mechanisms, and modalities of this role.

3.2 Participants

The participants of this research were taken from Grade VIII of SMP Cinta Rakyat 3 Pematangsiantar. Researchers used purposive sampling based on the specific purpose. The participants were chosen because, based on the teacher's observations, the students' pronunciation was still low. The method used to collect data was direct observation. The amount of data collected identified the symptoms of students' difficulties with pronunciation. Data were collected by observing the symptoms of students in the classroom, and then the teacher discussed ways to improve teaching and learning to overcome these issues.

In this research, the researcher collaborated with the educator to understand the meaning of students' expressions in class, which were little known among the students. The observation aimed to capture the responses from the educator and the questions posed by the students about singing and listening. The steps during the research involved implementing the learning process. The participants focused on speaking activities with authentic speeches for observation. The students had different pronunciation levels and faced various problems with their pronunciation. The observation was explained based on three aspects: 1) Several students still had a poor understanding of different pronunciations from a speech; in their perspective, all pronunciations were the same and not important. Therefore, the students did not pay further attention to the pronunciation they used. 2) A few students could improve their speaking skills with social media platforms, but not those who struggled to achieve their speaking skills. This was because some students could not afford to buy or have

smartphones needed to access the platforms. 3) Some students had difficulty being interested in this research. They found it challenging, especially those who were not familiar with social media. Only a few of these students believed that self-motivation was needed to improve language skills to achieve medium or high speaking skills. Based on the data, a picture emerged that could help in this research.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

Semi-structured interviews using an interview guide were conducted to collect qualitative data. Interview questions were based on the research questions and have been validated. The interview guide consisted of nine open-ended questions. Hence, the researchers used one instrument, namely questionnaires. In survey research, questionnaires are tools employed to gather information from study participants, who complete and return them to researchers (Purba et al., 2024). Cohen (2007:84) describes questionnaires as highly effective instruments for collecting survey data, offering structure and often numerical information, which can be administered without the researcher present and are typically straightforward to analyze (Ngongo et al., 2024). The use of questionnaires allows for swift data processing. The Likert Scale was implemented in the questionnaires, providing a range of response options from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to measure perceptions.

Table 1. Likert Scale	
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No	Likert	Point
1	Strongly Agree (SA)	4
2	Agree (A)	3
3	Disagree (D)	2
4	Strongly Disagree (SD)	1

(Simaremare et al., 2023)

There are ten indicators that collected from internal factor of perception on using *TikTok* Video and there was one question for each indicator:

- 1. Feeling
- 2. Attitude
- 3. Opinion
- 4. Presupposition
- 5. Ambition or expectance
- 6. Interest
- 7. Process of learning
- 8. Personality
- 9. Necessity
- 10. Motivation

There are five indicators that collected from external factor of perception on using *TikTok* Video and there was one question for each indicator:

- 1. Family support
- 2. Situation
- 3. Information obtained
- 4. Familiar object
- 5. Unfamiliar object

Table 2. Questionnaires of students' perception:

No	Statement	SA	Α	D	SD
1	TikTok videos have piqued my interest for their potential in pronunciation learning				
2	I utilize the platform not just for entertainment, but also as an educational tool				
3	Through TikTok, I can enhance my pronunciation skills, focusing on both segmental aspects				
	(vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental features (stress, intonation, and syllables)				
4	The use of <i>TikTok</i> videos motivates me to improve my pronunciation				
5	The platform allows me to freely express myself while practicing pronunciation				
6	Among the applications on my smartphone, <i>TikTok</i> is the one I use most frequently				
7	Practicing pronunciation via TikTok is enjoyable and engaging, preventing boredom				
8	Often feeling self-conscious and lacking confidence when pronouncing words, I find that TikTok				
	helps alleviate my fear of making mistakes and boosts my self-assurance				
9	The English content and challenges available on TikTok provide opportunities for me to practice				
	pronunciation by recording myself				
10	TikTok serves as an effective medium for pronunciation improvement, allowing me to express				
	myself freely while honing my skills				
11	My parents supervising me on the use of <i>TikTok</i> video.				
12	Nowadays <i>TikTok</i> is the most popular app.				
13	TikTok has enhanced my ability to discover new vocabulary and observe how words are used in				
	various contexts, making it simpler for me to retain this information				
14	As a frequent TikTok user, I dedicate substantial time to the platform and am well-acquainted with				
	its features.				
15	I confused with <i>TikTok</i> features and didn't familiar with <i>TikTok</i> .				

Table 2. Questionnaires of students' perception:

No	Statement	SA	Α	D	SD	Total
1	TikTok videos have piqued my interest for their potential in pronunciation learning	18	12	2	0	32
2	I utilize the platform not just for entertainment, but also as an educational tool	20	12	0	0	32
3	Through <i>TikTok</i> , I can enhance my pronunciation skills, focusing on both segmental aspects (vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental features (stress, intonation, and syllables)	15	16	1	0	32
4	The use of <i>TikTok</i> videos motivates me to improve my pronunciation	11	17	3	1	32
5	The platform allows me to freely express myself while practicing pronunciation	11	17	4	0	32
6	Among the applications on my smartphone, <i>TikTok</i> is the one I use most frequently	15	7	9	1	32
7	Practicing pronunciation via <i>TikTok</i> is enjoyable and engaging, preventing boredom	13	15	4	0	32
8	Often feeling self-conscious and lacking confidence when pronouncing words, I find that <i>TikTok</i> helps alleviate my fear of making mistakes and boosts my self-assurance	12	14	6	0	32
9	The English content and challenges available on <i>TikTok</i> provide opportunities for me to practice pronunciation by recording myself	7	23	2	0	32
10	<i>TikTok</i> serves as an effective medium for pronunciation improvement, allowing me to express myself freely while honing my skills.	7	22	3	0	32
11	My parents supervising me on the use of <i>TikTok</i> video.	10	14	5	3	32
12	Nowadays <i>TikTok</i> is the most popular app.	21	11	0	0	32
13	<i>TikTok</i> has enhanced my ability to discover new vocabulary and observe how words are used in various contexts, making it simpler for me to retain this information	22	10	0	0	32
14	As a frequent <i>TikTok</i> user, I dedicate substantial time to the platform and am well-acquainted with its features.	17	9	6	0	32
15	I confused with <i>TikTok</i> features and didn't familiar with <i>TikTok</i> .	1	5	14	12	32



Figure 1. The results of students' questionnaires

The data presented above clearly demonstrates that students have a favorable response and perception towards utilizing *TikTok* videos for pronunciation learning. This is evidenced by the majority of students selecting "strongly agree" or "agree" for most of the provided statements. The only exception was statement number 14, which suggested that *TikTok* was an unfamiliar platform for students. However, disagreement with this statement does not indicate a negative perception of *TikTok*. On the contrary, it confirms that students are well-acquainted with the platform. This familiarity likely contributes to their positive attitude towards using *TikTok* for educational purposes, specifically in improving their pronunciation skills.

5. Discussion

The researcher aims to address the research problem by examining the factors influencing students' perceptions of using *TikTok* videos for pronunciation learning. Toha (2003:154) categorizes perception factors into internal and external. Analysis of the collected data revealed that all internal perception factors (including feelings, attitudes, opinions, presuppositions, ambitions or expectations, interests, learning processes, personality, needs, and motivation) were present in students' perceptions of *TikTok* videos for pronunciation learning. Regarding external factors, the study identified family support, situation, information gained, and familiar objects as influential. Notably, the absence of the "unfamiliar object" factor does not indicate a negative perception; rather, it suggests that students are well-acquainted with *TikTok* and view *TikTok* videos positively in the context of pronunciation learning.

The results and findings indicate that the majority of students view the use of *TikTok* videos positively. This is evident from the calculated data, which shows that the highest number of responses fell under the "agree" category, followed by "strongly agree." As previously mentioned by the researcher, students only selected "strongly disagree" or "disagree" for statements suggesting *TikTok* was unfamiliar to them. Regarding family support, not all students chose "strongly agree" or "agree," implying that parents grant unrestricted access to *TikTok* videos. This situation could be problematic for both parents and students, as in the current technological era, *TikTok* videos are easily accessible, and some may negatively influence students. Therefore, despite *TikTok* videos being used for educational purposes, parental supervision is necessary to prevent exposure to harmful content.

This study utilized a previous investigation titled "Students' Perception Toward *TikTok* Media to Improve Their Speaking Ability" as a reference. The referenced study examined students' views using questionnaires based on three indicators: their feelings about using *TikTok* for speaking skills, time dedicated to *TikTok* for learning, and challenges encountered when using *TikTok* to learn English. The findings suggested that *TikTok* is a relatively effective medium for students, particularly for English learning, as evidenced by the data collected. In contrast, the current research aims to identify factors influencing students' perceptions of using *TikTok* videos for pronunciation learning. The researcher found that all internal and external factors were present, except for the external factor of unfamiliar objects. Based on the collected data revealing both internal and external perception factors, the researcher concluded that students have a favorable view of using *TikTok* videos. However, parental supervision is necessary to prevent exposure to potentially harmful content on the platform.

This study has some implications for the teaching and learning of English pronunciation. First, it can simplify the English

pronunciation lesson and make it more interesting if teachers use student-generated videos. This study showed that the pronunciation of the students had improved if they practiced by producing videos. It turned out that students were also interested in commenting as much as possible in the production of these videos. Seen from the positive responses of the students to this new teaching method, it can reduce the students' fear of speaking because students are not alone if they are given a pause and gather with friends while doing video shooting activities. This study also showed that producing videos can foster friendships between students, and from these friendships, it can create a comfortable climate in the class. The results of observations and interviews also showed that students still commented when they were outside of the class and did not expect remuneration from other students to provide commentary on the videos. With the closeness of these relationships, the interactions between students in and outside the class will also be smooth. The fact is that teachers only need to prepare material and be facilitators in guiding students to practice English pronunciation in pronunciation class. This is possible because the students who produced videos practiced pronunciation when making the videos. Teachers also do not need to be "hosts" when visiting the students' accounts because the students themselves are not inferior in giving a badge of their personal recognition to their friends or other students who commented on the video.

Hence, to overcome the problem, some recommendations are given, particularly to EFL practitioners. The aim of using *TikTok* as a learning tool is not to promote distasteful content, including hate speech, racism, and xenophobia, but rather to promote cross-cultural understanding and experience. Instructors need to be informed of the guidelines for educators and ensure that any content they use is age-appropriate when considering using the *TikTok* app for educational purposes. It is important to remember that educational content should be guided by educational objectives and outcomes. In addition, faculty should introduce and train learners to engage and communicate with the app, navigate the app, and filter and avoid potentially harmful content should the learner wish to download and use it. The development of intermediate and advanced pronunciation training will feature clear rubrics and designed guidelines. The communication should be completed in an environment that supports the students and promotes polite behavior and how to treat the students. *TikTok* is an app that encourages learners to engage with content socially and share it. Educational institutions interested in partnering with *TikTok* can find guidelines designed to maintain student safety while offering growth opportunities on and off the app.

6. Conclusion

The findings indicated that, in general, the use of *TikTok* videos is accepted by the students. Students were positive regarding the use of *TikTok* videos to enhance their pronunciation. Of course, the study has some limitations; for example, the short period of time for the implementation of the *TikTok* videos, as well as the short period of time of intervention, only two weeks. Also, for some students, it may be a bit difficult, not only in terms of students' proficiency in understanding technology, but also in finding a partner to accomplish some tasks such as dubbing, designing, and performing some movements. For future research, a pretest, posttest, and delayed test research design could be conducted to investigate more in-depth the long-term effects of *TikTok* on pronunciation.

Further details should be known involving the students' self-assessment that may involve other effective factors such as the learning environment, experiences, and so on that may influence the students' outcomes, and to know the students' satisfaction toward the implementation of it. Despite its limitations, the findings may provide language teachers with insights on how to implement new technologies to enhance the students' pronunciation. The use of *TikTok* for these purposes proved to be effective even though it has only been practiced for a short time. In the future, this study can be carried out in a more guided way, controlling and monitoring who can participate, on what subjects, and with what time limit restrictions. This includes both the direct production of content as well as evaluating the content produced by the students.

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Authors contributions

IC, HH, and MN were responsible for study design and revising. NS and LI was responsible for data collection. HH and MN drafted the manuscript. IC and HH revised the manuscript and KTB, ZM, SBB proofread it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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