



AN ANALYSIS OF TIKTOK'S APP EFFECTIVENESS IN ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILLS IN 9TH-GRADERS' ENGLISH CLASSES FOR PALESTINIAN STUDENTS

Dr. Tahani R. K. Bsharat¹, Manal Hamarsha²

¹Tahani Bsharat, Faculty of Major Language Studies, USIM, Malaysia

²Manal Hamarsha, TEFL, An- Najah National University, Palestine

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using TikTok as a platform to enhance speaking skills in English as a foreign language classroom. It was conducted on 9th graders in Palestine. The study involved 20 students from two schools in the West-Bank region of Palestine. The data collection process included classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and observation checklist. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study revealed that using TikTok in the classroom had a positive influence on students' speaking skills. Students reported feeling more motivated to learn English and engage in class activities in a fun way when TikTok was utilized as a teaching tool and have self-esteem in speaking the English language. The study also found that TikTok helped students improve their speaking, listening, and writing skills. The study highlights the potential benefits of TikTok for teaching English as a foreign language. The findings of this study can inform educators and policymakers in Palestine and other similar contexts about technology in language education. Furthermore, this study provides insights into students' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of TikTok in the classroom. This can help improve language teaching and learning effectiveness.

KEY WORDS: *TikTok, speaking skills, English as a Foreign Language.*

INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology into language learning has become a popular and effective method for educators worldwide. A growing number of English language learners, especially those learning English as a foreign language (EFL), have found that social media can be a useful tool for improving their English proficiency. In recent years, TikTok has gained worldwide popularity among young learners as a social media platform. EFL students' speaking and listening skills can be improved through the platform due to its popularity among young adults and teenagers.

Additionally, TikTok appeals to learners of all ages due to its simplicity, ease of use, and accessibility. Using TikTok improved EFL learners' speaking skills, vocabulary, and motivation, according to Chen and Huang (2021). Two groups of participants were divided into the study. Among the groups, TikTok is used as a supplement to regular instruction and traditional teaching methods. In the study, the group using TikTok as a supplementary tool showed significant improvements in speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and motivation. This was compared to the group that did not use the platform.

In another study by Al-Sawalha et al. (2020), TikTok was also found to improve the pronunciation skills of EFL students. 40 undergraduate EFL students participated in the study, with one group practicing pronunciation skills using TikTok and the other using traditional classroom instruction. As compared to the group that received traditional instruction, the group that used TikTok significantly improved their pronunciation skills. Teachers can use TikTok to improve their students' speaking and pronunciation skills by using this platform. Furthermore, TikTok may be an effective tool for improving EFL students' listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills in the long run, according to these studies. EFL teachers can use the platform to enhance students' language learning experience as the platform continues to grow in popularity among young learners.

TikTok As An Effective Platform To Teach English

Teenagers and young adults have become increasingly interested in TikTok, a popular short-form video-sharing app. In addition to its engaging and interactive nature, TikTok is a good platform for teaching English. Short videos can be customized to suit specific language learning goals, which can be created and shared via the app. By creating engaging and relevant content, EFL teachers can motivate their students to learn English.



TikTok's capacity to encourage authentic language use makes it a useful tool for teaching English, too. The software offers opportunities for EFL by allowing users to communicate with a global community of users.

in order for the students to practice their language abilities in authentic settings. Additionally, the app's AI makes recommendations for videos based on user likes and interests, which can expose EFL students to a variety of authentic language use in various circumstances.

TikTok's support for multimodal learning is yet another element that makes it a successful platform for English instruction. The features of the program enable users to mix audio, video, and text to produce interesting and educational content that can support language acquisition. To assist students, understand and practise new vocabulary or grammar structures, EFL instructors can use the app to make films that include visual aids like pictures or subtitles.

TikTok has the potential to be a very effective platform for teaching English as a foreign language, in light of the foregoing. It is the perfect tool for EFL teachers to employ to assist their students in developing their language abilities because of its engaging and interactive character, capacity to encourage real language use, and support for multimodal learning. It will be interesting to see how TikTok may be further incorporated into language instruction to improve the learning experience for EFL students as it continues to gain popularity.

How TikTok works

On the social media site TikTok, users may make and share short movies, which are typically between 15 and 60 seconds long. The app is free to download and use and is accessible on both iOS and Android smart phones.

TikTok is a highly flexible platform for artistic expression because to its video creation tools, which let users add music, text, and special effects to their films. The editing features of the software also allow for the cutting and splicing of clips, adjust video speed, and add filters to enhance the visual quality of the videos.

Users of TikTok have the option to take part in a variety of challenges and trends that are popular on the app in addition to browsing and creating content. Users are encouraged to make videos that adhere to a specific structure or style by participating in these challenges, which frequently have a particular hashtag or topic. Users can increase their visibility on the app and get new followers by taking part in challenges and trends.

Overall, TikTok is a preferred option for users all over the world due to its distinctive features and interesting content. People of different ages and backgrounds make up the app's user base, and usage of the app is exploding in popularity. In order to reach new audiences and interact creatively with their followers, businesses

and organizations are increasingly utilizing TikTok as a marketing tool.

Here are some ways to use TikTok for English language learning

TikTok videos can be utilized to learn new vocabulary words and perfect your pronunciation. Users can look for videos in the English language that concentrate on particular words or phrases and hear how they are pronounced by native speakers.

Practice your English conversational abilities by watching TikTok videos. English-speaking videos that users can make and share with other users in the comments section. This can boost self-esteem and increase English speaking fluency.

grammar concepts or create videos that demonstrate correct grammar usage. This can be a fun and interactive way to learn and practice grammar.

TikTok videos can be utilized to educate yourself about the cultures of English-speaking people. Users can browse videos that highlight various facets of culture, including music, fashion, and gastronomy. This can enhance students' comprehension abilities and help them better understand communities that speak the English language.

Overall, using TikTok to learn and use English may be entertaining and engaging. Students can communicate with native speakers and other students from across the world by using the app's video creation and sharing features, which will help them develop their language skills and confidence. Students can use TikTok as a potent tool to develop their English conversational abilities.

Here are some ways that TikTok can help

Short-form videos: TikTok's short-form video format is perfect for students looking to practice their conversational skills in English. By creating short videos in which they speak English, students can focus on improving their pronunciation, fluency, and sentence structure.

Language Challenges: TikTok's language challenges can be a fun way for students to practice their English conversation skills. These challenges often involve creating short videos in response to prompts or themes, such as describing a favorite hobby or talking about a recent travel experience. Students can use these challenges as an opportunity to practice their English and receive feedback from other users.

Native Speaker Videos: TikTok's large and diverse user base includes many native English speakers who create videos on a wide range of TikTok videos can also be used to practise grammar in English. Users can make films explaining various subjects. These films allow students to watch and participate, honing their listening abilities and exposing themselves to other accents and



dialects. These videos might serve as a guide for how they should practise having conversations with others.

Interactive Learning: TikTok's interactive elements, such as the capability to comment on and respond to other users' videos, can help build a community of language learners who can support one another in honing their English conversational abilities. Aside from hearing comments from native speakers and other learners, students can participate in discussions and ask questions.

TikTok can reportedly boost students' interest and involvement in language learning, which can result in better communication skills, according to a number of studies. According to a research by Chen and colleagues (2020), TikTok helped students develop their English pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. Similar to this, Gao and colleagues (2020) found that by offering a variety of real-world language materials, TikTok can aid learners in improving their speaking and listening abilities.

Additionally, a number of studies have shown how TikTok helps kids develop their creativity and critical thinking abilities. For instance, Chen and Chen's (2020) study discovered that TikTok may be used as a platform for students to make their own videos, fostering their originality and creativity. TikTok may be utilised to improve students' critical thinking abilities by motivating them to examine and analyse the language used in the videos, according to another study by Saeed and colleagues (2020).

Furthermore, the reviewed studies have also emphasized the importance of incorporating TikTok in language classrooms as a means of promoting cultural awareness and understanding. Furthermore, TikTok can be used to introduce pupils to various cultures and viewpoints, which can improve their comprehension of the English language and culture, according to a study by Al-Qarni and colleagues (2020). Similar to this, a study by Abuhmaid and Tarhini (2020) found that TikTok can help students become more interculturally competent and improve their capacity for effective communication with people from other cultures and languages.

TikTok may also be used as a platform for interactive and collaborative learning, according to several studies. TikTok can facilitate peer learning and peer feedback, which can encourage active learning and social engagement among students, according to a study by Luo and Huang (2020). Additionally, a study by Alsharif (2021) found that by enabling students to collaborate on video projects and share ideas and feedback, TikTok can be utilised to improve group collaboration and project-based learning.

Additionally, some research has highlighted TikTok's contribution to learner autonomy and self-directed learning. TikTok can be utilised as a tool for learner-centered instruction, which can provide students the power to take charge of their learning process and advance their language abilities at their own

speed, according to a study by Khazaei and colleagues (2021). In a different study, Alqahtani (2021) hypothesised that by encouraging students to record and assess their own language performance on TikTok, it is possible to foster self-reflection and self-assessment.

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THE SIGNIFICANT OF THE STUDY

The importance of this study is in examining the potential use of TikTok as a tool for improving conversational abilities in EFL classes. Finding creative and interesting ways to enhance speaking skills is the key because they are crucial for language learners. TikTok is a promising tool for language acquisition because of its appeal to millennial, its short video style, and its capacity to deliver real language input. Its efficacy in the particular setting of EFL courses needs to be examined, nevertheless.

This study can shed the light on how TikTok can be effectively used in EFL classes, particularly to improve conversational abilities. It can also assist educators in creating TikTok-based activities that encourage students to engage in active and genuine discussion. The research can also add to the body of knowledge on technology's role in language learning and offer recommendations based on solid data. The results of this study can also stimulate further investigation into TikTok's potential as a language learning aid, particularly in the area of speaking skills.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In spite of the importance of effective speaking skills in learning a foreign language, many English learners still have difficulty developing their speaking, listening, writing, and reading abilities. EFL students' communicative competence has not been enhanced by traditional methods of teaching. As a result, digital technologies have become increasingly popular as alternative instruction tools. A popular app among young people all over the world is TikTok, an app that allows you to share short-form videos. The effectiveness of TikTok in enhancing speaking skills among EFL learners has not yet been extensively studied, despite its potential benefits. Thus, this study examines whether using TikTok as an effective platform can enhance EFL learners' speaking skills.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The influence of using TikTok as a platform to improve speaking abilities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms for



9th graders in Palestine is investigated in this qualitative study. The following research issues are addressed by the study:

1. What are the perceptions of 9th-grade EFL students in Palestine regarding the use of TikTok as a platform for enhancing speaking skills in the English language?
2. What are the attitudes of EFL teachers in Palestine towards integrating TikTok in their classroom practices to enhance students' speaking skills in the English language?
3. What are the challenges faced by both EFL students and teachers in Palestine in using TikTok as a platform for enhancing speaking skills in the English language?

By addressing these research questions, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of using TikTok as a tool to enhance speaking skills in EFL classrooms for 9th graders in Palestine, and to identify potential challenges and solutions for integrating TikTok in EFL classroom practices. The findings of this study could contribute to the development of effective teaching strategies and practices that can facilitate the learning of speaking skills in the English language for EFL students in Palestine.

METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION

The researcher made a checklist of observations to track the reaction of the ninth-grade students on the influence of using TikTok in the English language classes. Semi-structured interviews also were conducted with the students to find out their opinions from using such a platform in the educational process. Below we explain some discussion of the responses that the researcher reached as follows.

The majority of the participants indicated that there are many perceptions of 9th-grade EFL students in Palestine regarding the use of TikTok as a platform for enhancing speaking skills in the English language such as increasing self-esteem to speak English as one of the students indicated that he feels more comfortable in

speaking English in front of his classmates. as he indicated in this quotation "I feel more confident to speak English in front of my friends in my class". Furthermore, another student said that the TikTok app is fun and enjoyable as he indicated in this quotation "I feel very interested in speaking the English language in a fun way and I enjoy it". Furthermore, TikTok has a favorable impact on educational growth, making it suited for online learning and enhancing student communication aspirations. So there are many positive attitudes of EFL teachers in Palestine toward integrating TikTok into their classroom practices to enhance students' speaking skills in the English language. Thus, there are various drawbacks to the sites, including user conduct, inadequate infrastructure, and the low quality of the Palestinian Internet network. Both EFL students and teachers indicated that Palestine encounters numerous obstacles when using TikTok as a tool to improve speaking abilities in the English. Furthermore, one of the students said that He enjoys using the TikTok app, but the internet in Palestine is extremely unreliable as he said in this extract "I like to use TikTok app but the internet work in Palestine is so weak".

Participants

The participants in this study were EFL learners in 9th grade in 2 government schools in Palestine. A total of 20 students were interviewed.

Materials

The materials used in this study include smart phones, the TikTok application, and the observation checklist table. The TikTok application will be installed on the smart phones.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Thus, the observation checklist table used to qualitatively analyze the experimental group's videos to determine the effectiveness of using TikTok in EFL classes to enhance conversation skills.

| NO. | Observation Criteria | Yes | No |
|-----|--|-----|----|
| 1 | The students actively engage in TikTok-based activities | | |
| 2 | Students demonstrate improvement in their English speaking skills | | |
| 3 | Students participate in collaborative activities using TikTok | | |
| 4 | Listens attentively to classmates and teacher speaks clearly and audibly | | |
| 5 | Students show enthusiasm towards learning English through TikTok | | |
| 6 | Students feel more confident in their ability to communicate in English | | |
| 7 | The teacher provides constructive feedback on students TikTok videos feedback on student's TikTok videos | | |
| 8 | TikTok activities are integrated into the EFL curriculum | | |
| 9 | Students are able to express themselves better in English after using TikTok | | |
| 10 | The teacher regularly assesses student progress with TikTok activities | | |



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