



## Using TikTok for English Language Learning in Indonesian Formal Education: A Systematic Literature Review

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### Abstract

This study aims to synthesize findings on the uses, benefits, and challenges of using TikTok for English language learning in the Indonesian formal education context through a systematic literature review. Following the PRISMA guidelines, relevant studies published between 2021-2025 were systematically retrieved from Google Scholar and SINTA. Studies were screened by title and abstract, and full texts were assessed for eligibility. In total, 39 articles met the criteria for review. The review found that TikTok was frequently used as a source of learning materials, a medium for creating learner-generated videos, and a reference for tasks. The use of features such as duet and save facilitated interaction, engagement, and review. Key benefits included improvements in speaking, vocabulary, motivation, confidence, and a more enjoyable learning environment, along with other reported benefits related to the skills and engagement outcomes. However, challenges included distractions from entertainment content, difficulties with features, irrelevant or low-quality content, limited internet access, and video creation difficulties, in addition to other less frequent technical and pedagogical issues. Despite challenges, these highlight the importance of content quality, effective facilitation, and purposeful platform integration to ensure meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Therefore, these findings provide practical implications for the management and integration of TikTok in English language learning within Indonesia's formal education system.

**Keywords:** TikTok; English language learning; Systematic literature review

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## INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, social media platforms are increasingly being integrated as learning media for educational purposes. They have become an integral part of daily life, as many people depend on the Internet for communication and information access, which has contributed to the emergence of new learning patterns, strategies, and innovative educational approaches (Salam et al., 2025). As technology continues to develop, educators and learners seek effective ways to enhance the learning experience. Social media, in particular, offers valuable opportunities for both formal and informal education by presenting educational content in accessible and engaging formats. Through varied content, including educational videos, infographics, discussion forums, and collaborative activities, social media facilitates interactive learning and supports diverse learning styles.

Among various platforms, TikTok has emerged as a potential platform for educational purposes. As of July 2024, Indonesia, the United States and Brazil ranked highest in TikTok user numbers, with 157.6 million, 120.5 million, and 105.3 million

users, respectively (Ceci, 2024). TikTok enables users to watch short videos, interact with others, and create content, making it suitable for language learning. According to Ibrahim et al. (2023), watching videos created by native English speakers on TikTok can help learners improve listening and comprehension, while also creating and sharing videos supports speaking, pronunciation, and writing practice. TikTok's interactive features, such as comments and duets, enable users to engage in language practice and receive feedback.

Language learning involves four main skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—along with components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and grammar. Affective factors such as self-esteem, motivation, and anxiety are equally important, as they significantly influence how learners approach and experience the language learning process (Bao & Liu, 2021). However, many Indonesian EFL learners face difficulties due to structural differences between English and Indonesian and limited exposure to authentic English in daily life. Unlike English, the Indonesian language does not use tenses in the same way, which makes mastering English grammar particularly challenging (Setiyadi, 2020). These factors often reduce learners' confidence and participation. Integrating an interactive and engaging platform like TikTok can help increase motivation, provide authentic exposure, and support language skill development.

Previous studies have examined the use of TikTok in English language learning. Fitria (2023) highlighted TikTok's role in supporting the development of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking through imitation and pronunciation activities. Rininggayuh et al. (2024) found that short-form videos improved learners' confidence and motivation, while features like duets and auto-captions supported pronunciation and exposure to natural speech. Similarly, Putri et al. (2024) reported that TikTok facilitated speaking, listening, and writing activities through peer interaction, feedback, and exposure to authentic expressions. However, these studies also noted several challenges, including content selection, distraction, and lack of structured feedback, emphasizing the need for further research on how to optimize TikTok's integration into English language learning.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the general benefits and specific language skills, particularly speaking and listening, in relation to TikTok. However, limited research has examined how EFL learners in formal educational settings specifically use TikTok, the distinct benefits they gain, and the challenges they encounter. Additionally, while some challenges have been acknowledged in previous research, there are gaps in addressing issues specific to Indonesian EFL learners, particularly regarding content reliability, accessibility, and psychological factors. These gaps underline the novelty of this study, which aims to provide an updated and contextualized synthesis within the context of Indonesian formal education. By focusing on these overlooked aspects, this study offers valuable insights into the use of TikTok as a language learning tool for Indonesian EFL learners.

Hence, to address these gaps, this research systematically reviewed and synthesized empirical studies published between 2021 and 2025. The review focused on how EFL learners in Indonesian formal education used TikTok for English language learning, the benefits and learning outcomes they gained, and the challenges faced during its use. By focusing on recent studies, this research aims to provide an updated and comprehensive overview of TikTok's role in EFL education, contributing to a clearer understanding of its potential and limitations in Indonesian learning contexts. Therefore, based on the background described, this research aims to answer the following questions: How did EFL learners use TikTok for English language learning?; What benefits did EFL learners obtain from using TikTok for English language learning?; and What challenges did EFL learners face when using TikTok for English language learning?

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This research employed a systematic literature review to investigate the uses, benefits, and challenges of TikTok in English language learning within the Indonesian formal education context. The review employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Page et al. 2021) for managing and reporting the collected articles.

### Systematic Search Strategy

A comprehensive search was conducted using Google Scholar and SINTA databases. In Google Scholar, Boolean operators (“AND”, “OR”, and “-”) were employed to structure the search. Additional keywords were applied in the SINTA database, focusing on combinations related to “TikTok”, “English Learning” and language skills. The complete list of keywords is presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Search Keywords for Databases

| Boolean Search Query  | SINTA GS Article Keywords  |   |
|---|--|---|
| "TikTok" AND ("English Language" OR "listening" OR "speaking" OR "reading" OR "writing" OR "vocabulary") AND ("EFL" OR "Indonesia") – “perception” – “perspective” – “literature review” – “meta-analysis” – “thesis” | 1) TikTok, English Learning<br>2) TikTok, Listening<br>3) TikTok, Speaking<br>4) TikTok, Reading<br>5) TikTok, Writing<br>6) TikTok, Vocabulary<br>7) TikTok, EFL<br>8) TikTok, English, EFL | 9) TikTok, EFL Learners<br>10) TikTok, Listening, EFL<br>11) TikTok, Speaking, EFL<br>12) TikTok, Reading, EFL<br>13) TikTok, Writing, EFL<br>14) TikTok, Vocabulary, EFL<br>15) TikTok, English Learners |

### Selection Criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria related to publication type, year, research focus, and context were established to ensure relevance and data quality. Only empirical journal articles between 2021 and 2025 on TikTok use for English learning in Indonesian formal education were included. The detailed criteria are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria of this Review

| The inclusion criteria included:  | The exclusion criteria included:  |
|---|---|
| 1) Journal article  | 1) Non-journal article  |
| 2) Published in 2021-2025   | 2) Published before 2021  |
| 3) Empirical research   | 3) Non-empirical research   |
| 4) TikTok used for ELL in an EFL context  | 4) Perception-based only studies  |
| 5) Targeted ELL in formal education, referred to structured learning in elementary, secondary, or higher education (diploma/S1) settings in Indonesia | 5) Secondary research   |
| 6) SINTA-accreditation required   | 6) TikTok used for non-ELL contexts   |
|   | 7) Studies not focused on English language learning within Indonesian formal education settings |

### Data Extraction and Analysis

Following the established criteria, the researchers screened the titles and abstracts of the identified articles to determine eligibility. Full-text articles were then reviewed to confirm inclusion. A total of 6,496 articles were identified across two databases: 6,230 from Google Scholar and 264 from SINTA. Due to the large number retrieved from Google Scholar, only the first 300 results were collected using Boolean operators for initial sorting, leading to the exclusion of 5,553 articles. All 264 articles from the SINTA database were included in the initial sorting process, bringing the total to 564 articles.

From the 564 articles, 113 duplicates were removed, leaving 451 articles for title and abstract screening. At this stage, 299 articles were excluded for being unrelated to the

research questions or not within the EFL domain. Next, 102 articles were assessed for accessibility and SINTA accreditation. This process led to the exclusion of 92 articles. Thus, a total of 60 articles proceeded to full-text reading. After a detailed assessment, 39 articles were deemed eligible and included in the final dataset, while 21 articles were excluded for being non-empirical, perception-based only, secondary research, or conducted outside the Indonesian formal education context. The following PRISMA diagram visually presents the overall study selection process.

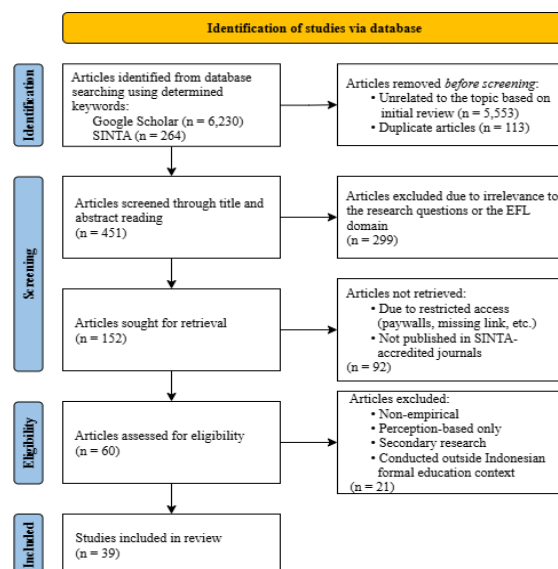


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for new systematic reviews including database searches

Each included article was assigned a unique code to facilitate systematic organization and ease of reference during the analysis and reporting stages. Each code consists of the letter “A” representing “article” followed by a two-digit number (e.g., A01, A02, ... A39). These codes are consistently used throughout the data analysis and presentation of findings. The full list of articles is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Final Sorted Articles

| No. | Article Code | Author(s) and Year           | Journal Name  | SINTA Accreditation | Research Method                  |
|-----|--------------|------------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1   | A01          | Mauriza and Siregar (2022)   | Education & Learning  | SINTA 5             | Descriptive qualitative analysis |
| 2   | A02          | Putra (2024)                 | Innovative Education Journal                                      | SINTA 5             | Classroom action research        |
| 3   | A03          | Rahmawati et al. (2023)      | Journal of Languages and Language Teaching                        | SINTA 2             | Quasi-experimental               |
| 4   | A04          | Perangin-angin et al. (2021) | Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan                                  | SINTA 4             | Classroom action research        |
| 5   | A05          | Saputri et al. (2025)        | Prima Magistra: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan                        | SINTA 2             | Pre-experimental                 |
| 6   | A06          | Qodarsih et al. (2023)       | Edupedia  | SINTA 4             | Pre-experimental                 |
| 7   | A07          | Mauludi and Suryadi (2023)   | At-Tajdid   | SINTA 4             | Experimental                     |
| 8   | A08          | Aida et al. (2023)           | Journal of English Language Teaching and Cultural Studies (JELTS) | SINTA 4             | Quasi-experimental               |
| 9   | A09          | Tambunan et al. (2024)       | Dharmas Education Journal (DE_Journal)                            | SINTA 4             | Quasi-experimental               |
| 10  | A10          | Zahro and Yasminto (2023)    | ETJar English Teaching Journal and Research                       | SINTA 5             | Pre-experimental                 |

| No. | Article Code | Author(s) and Year               | Journal Name   | SINTA Accreditation | Research Method           |
|-----|--------------|----------------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 11  | A11          | Amin (2023)                      | Journal of Education and Teaching Learning (JETL)                                    | SINTA 5             | Qualitative               |
| 12  | A12          | Virgin and Affini (2022)         | Jurnal Ilmiah Spectral   | SINTA 4             | Qualitative description   |
| 13  | A13          | Waode (2024)                     | Journal of Language and Literature Studies (JOLLS)                                   | SINTA 3             | Qualitative               |
| 14  | A14          | Nainggolan et al. (2022)         | Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling  | SINTA 5             | Experimental              |
| 15  | A15          | Huka et al. (2024)               | IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)                                       | SINTA 2             | Classroom action research |
| 16  | A16          | Fadhilah and Zaitun (2024)       | Linguistik: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra   | SINTA 5             | Pre-experimental          |
| 17  | A17          | Agustina and Putra (2022)        | Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research                                       | SINTA 5             | Quantitative descriptive  |
| 18  | A18          | Yuniati and Sujatmiko (2024)     | JEdu: Journal of English Education   | SINTA 5             | Classroom action research |
| 19  | A19          | Purba and Khairunnisah (2022)    | LINGUISTIK: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra   | SINTA 5             | Qualitative descriptive   |
| 20  | A20          | Iklim et al. (2024)              | Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science                        | SINTA 4             | Qualitative descriptive   |
| 21  | A21          | Zein et al. (2024)               | Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research                                       | SINTA 5             | Qualitative survey        |
| 22  | A22          | Novitasari, L. and Adityo (2023) | Education and Human Development Journal  | SINTA 3             | Quasi-experimental        |
| 23  | A23          | Muflihah et al. (2024)           | Journal of English Language Teaching and Cultural Studies                            | SINTA 4             | Mixed method              |
| 24  | A24          | Zaitun et al. (2021)             | Jurnal Studi Guru Dan Pembelajaran   | SINTA 4             | Qualitative descriptive   |
| 25  | A25          | Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2022)  | Wiralodra English Journal  | SINTA 4             | Classroom action research |
| 26  | A26          | Gunawan et al. (2023)            | Decode: Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi  | SINTA 3             | Classroom action research |
| 27  | A27          | Sari et al. (2024)               | IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature | SINTA 3             | Qualitative descriptive   |
| 28  | A28          | Ahmad et al. (2023)              | Akademika: Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan   | SINTA 4             | Classroom action research |
| 29  | A29          | Nurjanah and Hamid (2024)        | Journal of Academia in English Education   | SINTA 5             | Mixed method              |
| 30  | A30          | Adawiyah and Dalimunthe (2024)   | Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran  | SINTA 2             | Qualitative descriptive   |
| 31  | A31          | Arochman et al. (2024)           | Langkawi: Journal of The Association for Arabic and English                          | SINTA 2             | Pre-experimental          |
| 32  | A32          | Muzammil et al. (2024)           | JEELS (Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies)                         | SINTA 2             | Quasi-experimental        |
| 33  | A33          | Manik et al. (2024)              | Yavana Bhasha: Journal of English Language Education                                 | SINTA 5             | Pre-experimental          |
| 34  | A34          | Ulumuddin et al. (2025)          | JIIP-Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan   | SINTA 4             | Mixed method              |
| 35  | A35          | Nurwinda and Ambarwati (2024)    | Journal of English Educational Study (JEES)  | SINTA 3             | Case study                |



| No. | Article Code | Author(s) and Year      | Journal Name                              | SINTA Accreditation | Research Method           |
|-----|--------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 36  | A36          | Rivani et al. (2025)    | Metakognisi                               | SINTA 5             | Quasi-experimental        |
| 37  | A37          | Sidabutar et al. (2024) | TOFEDU: The Future of Education Journal   | SINTA 5             | Quasi-experimental        |
| 38  | A38          | Usman et al. (2024)     | Studies in English Language and Education | SINTA 1             | Descriptive qualitative   |
| 39  | A39          | Tirtayasa et al. (2024) | New Language Dimensions                   | SINTA 5             | Classroom action research |

To address the research questions, a thematic analysis was conducted. The extracted data were analyzed following Clarke and Braun's (2017) six-phase framework to systematically identify and organize patterns related to the uses, benefits, and challenges of TikTok for English language learning within the Indonesian EFL formal education context. Coding was conducted manually, and patterns were organized using Google Sheets to compile the emerging themes. The findings were then synthesized into a cohesive narrative to address the study's aims.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

This systematic literature review synthesized the uses, benefits, and challenges of using TikTok in English language learning within Indonesian formal education. The findings are thematically organized and presented in the following sections. In the tables, the article code refers to the source of each study, the emerging themes represent the identified themes, and the frequency indicates the number of studies reporting each theme.

#### Uses

Based on the analysis of the selected studies, TikTok has been utilized in various ways to support English language learning within formal education settings in Indonesia. Table 4 presents the identified uses of TikTok in this context.

Table 4. Summary of Emerging Themes for the Uses

| No. | Article Codes   | Emerging Themes   | Frequency |
|-----|---|---|-----------|
| 1   | A02; A04; A05; A09; A10; A12; A16; A17; A20; A25; A27; A28; A30; A33; A39 | Using TikTok as a source of English learning material           | 15        |
| 2   | A03; A15; A24; A25; A30; A32; A33   | Using TikTok to create learner-generated English language tasks | 7         |
| 3   | A08; A18; A22; A38  | Using specific TikTok accounts as English learning references   | 4         |
| 4   | A13; A31; A34   | Using TikTok's duet feature for speaking practice               | 3         |
| 5   | A33   | Using TikTok's save feature for repetition and review           | 1         |

Among the identified uses, the most frequently mentioned use of TikTok is as a source of English learning material, identified in 15 out of 39 articles (A02; A04; A05; A09; A10; A12; A16; A17; A20; A25; A27; A28; A30; A33; A39). Specifically, it was used for speaking and pronunciation practice, listening, vocabulary development, and writing, with educators and learners relying on TikTok videos for language input and instructional content. As noted by Iklim et al. (2024), TikTok provides easy access to English learning

content because many creators consistently produce unique, engaging, and enjoyable learning videos.

The second most mentioned use involves creating English language tasks, as reported in 7 studies (A03; A15; A24; A25; A30; A32; A33), showing that learners were enthusiastic and highly engaged due to their familiarity and enjoyment of the platform. These tasks, mostly speaking-related video creation, encouraged learners to produce videos as part of their assignments, making TikTok a platform for learner-generated content. Another identified use, reported in 4 studies (A08; A18; A22; A38), highlighted the use of specific TikTok accounts—such as @katekulp, @haicansu, @antonioparlari, and @prajaelfikri—as English learning resources to support classroom instruction and make the learning process more engaging through multimedia content.

Additionally, the use of TikTok features, particularly the duet (A13; A31; A34), and save functions (A33) showed positive impacts in English language learning. The duet feature enables learners to respond to prompts or collaborate virtually on speaking tasks, helping improve fluency and build confidence in spoken English. Meanwhile, the save feature enables learners to revisit videos for spaced repetition and reinforcement of previously learned content. Overall, the findings highlight the varied use of TikTok in English language learning, ranging from content delivery and speaking practice to task creation and learner-generated media.

## Benefits

Table 5 summarizes the benefits of TikTok for English language learning in the Indonesian formal education. The identified benefits were categorized into six categories: Language Skills, Language Components, Cognitive Outcomes, Affective Factors, Social Learning, and Usability & Accessibility.

Table 5. Summary of Emerging Themes for the Benefits

| No.                        | Article Codes   | Emerging Themes                           | Frequency |
|----------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| <i>Language Skills</i>     |   |   |           |
| 1                          | A04   | Improved listening skills                 | 1         |
| 2                          | A02; A03; A13; A15; A16; A17; A24; A25; A26; A27; A28; A29; A30; A31; A32; A33; A34; A35      | Improved speaking skills                  | 18        |
| 3                          | A11   | Improved reading skills                   | 1         |
| 4                          | A09; A36  | Improved writing skills                   | 2         |
| <i>Language Components</i> |   |   |           |
| 5                          | A01; A02; A03; A05; A08; A10; A12; A14; A20; A21; A23; A26; A27; A30; A32; A33; A37; A38; A39 | Improved vocabulary                       | 19        |
| 6                          | A02; A03; A07; A12; A13; A15; A17; A20; A22; A26; A27; A30; A31; A33; A35                     | Improved pronunciation                    | 15        |
| 7                          | A03; A13; A26; A33; A34   | Improved spoken fluency                   | 5         |
| 8                          | A15; A30  | Improved grammar                          | 2         |
| 9                          | A03   | Improved comprehension skills             | 1         |
| <i>Affective Factors</i>   |   |   |           |
| 10                         | A03; A04; A05; A06; A13; A15; A17; A20; A21; A23; A24; A25; A27; A28; A29; A31                | Improved learner motivation to learn      | 16        |
| 11                         | A02; A13; A15; A21; A23; A24; A25; A26; A27; A28; A30; A32; A33; A34; A35; A38                | Improved learner confidence               | 16        |
| 12                         | A02; A04; A06; A12; A13; A15; A18; A19; A20; A21; A22; A25; A26; A28; A39                     | Created an enjoyable learning environment | 15        |

| No.                                  | Article Codes                                    | Emerging Themes   | Frequency |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| 13                                   | A04; A06; A13; A19; A24; A25; A29; A32; A38; A39 | Improved interest and enthusiasm                                | 10        |
| 14                                   | A02; A05; A21; A28; A29; A31; A32; A34; A35; A39 | Improved engagement in the learning process                     | 10        |
| 15                                   | A04; A24; A26; A28; A32                          | Improved positive emotional responses                           | 5         |
| 16                                   | A14; A15; A21; A26                               | Encouraged active participation                                 | 4         |
| 17                                   | A14; A31; A33                                    | Encouraged learning independence                                | 3         |
| 18                                   | A33  | Encouraged learners' self-expression                            | 1         |
| 19                                   | A19  | Improved understanding of the material                          | 1         |
| 20                                   | A15  | Reduced anxiety   | 1         |
| <i>Cognitive Outcomes</i>            |  |   |           |
| 21                                   | A03; A12; A17; A31                               | Fostered learner creativity                                     | 4         |
| 22                                   | A20; A25; A31                                    | Facilitated authentic use and understanding of language context | 3         |
| 23                                   | A31  | Improved presentation skills                                    | 1         |
| 24                                   | A31  | Improved communication skills                                   | 1         |
| <i>Social Learning</i>               |  |   |           |
| 25                                   | A13; A34   | Encouraged collaboration among learners                         | 2         |
| 26                                   | A33  | Encouraged peer-support learning experiences                    | 1         |
| <i>Usability &amp; Accessibility</i> |  |   |           |
| 27                                   | A23; A35; A38                                    | Offered flexible use anytime, anywhere                          | 3         |
| 28                                   | A20; A25; A34                                    | Offered simple and user-friendly learning experiences           | 3         |
| 29                                   | A30  | Provided access to relevant references and ideas                | 1         |
| 30                                   | A32  | Provided opportunities for personalized and adaptive learning   | 1         |

## Language Skills

This category covers the four main language abilities: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The most reported improvement was in speaking skills, mentioned in 18 out of 39 studies (A02; A03; A13; A15; A16; A17; A24; A25; A26; A27; A28; A29; A30; A31; A32; A33; A34; A35). Learners practiced speaking through video creation, voice-overs, duets, and response videos, which helped them speak more clearly and confidently.

Writing skills were reported in two studies (A09; A36), showing that TikTok supported the development of specific text types, such as analytical exposition and procedure texts, helping learners understand text structures and language features. Listening (A04) and reading (A11) skills were each identified in one study. Learners improved their listening through short English videos enhanced with visuals, music, and subtitles, while reading was supported by captions and text-based content on the For You Page. Although fewer studies explored these skills, the multimodal features of TikTok contributed to incidental improvements in listening and reading comprehension.

## Language Components

This category covers the essential elements of language, including vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and comprehension. The most significant improvement in this category was in vocabulary, reported in 19 studies (A01; A02; A03; A05; A08; A10; A12; A14; A20; A21; A23; A26; A27; A30; A32; A33; A37; A38; A39). TikTok supported vocabulary learning through repeated exposure to authentic words in videos, captions, and hashtags. Pronunciation was the second most reported improvement, cited in 15 studies (A02; A03; A07; A12; A13; A15; A17; A20; A22; A26; A27; A30; A31; A33; A35), followed by fluency in five studies (A03; A13; A26; A33; A34). Learners improved by imitating native or fluent speakers and practicing repeatedly through short videos.



Grammar improvement appeared in two studies (A15; A30) and comprehension in one (A03), reflecting progress through exposure to diverse video content, feedback, and correction within real-life language contexts. These findings underscore TikTok's potential to facilitate deeper language understanding through authentic, rich context input.

### **Affective Factors**

Affective factors were the most frequently discussed in the reviewed studies, referring to how learners feel about learning English through TikTok, including motivation, enjoyment, confidence, and interest. Motivation (A03; A04; A05; A06; A13; A15; A17; A20; A21; A23; A24; A25; A27; A28; A29; A31) and confidence (A02; A13; A15; A21; A23; A24; A25; A26; A27; A28; A30; A32; A33; A34; A35; A38) appeared the most, each reported in 16 studies. Learners showed greater eagerness and willingness to learn English and felt more comfortable using the language, particularly when recording or watching videos. An enjoyable learning environment was noted in 15 studies (A02; A04; A06; A12; A13; A15; A18; A19; A20; A21; A22; A25; A26; A28; A39), while engagement (A04; A06; A13; A19; A24; A25; A29; A32; A38; A39) and interest and enthusiasm (A02; A05; A21; A28; A29; A31; A32; A34; A35; A39) were each identified in 10 studies. These findings reflect that learners responded positively to TikTok content that was both relatable and entertaining.

Other affective benefits included positive emotional responses (A04; A24; A26; A28; A32), active participation (A14; A15; A21; A26), and learning independence (A14; A31; A33). Less frequent benefits, each identified in one study, were self-expression (A33), better understanding of material (A19), and reduced anxiety (A15). Overall, these results indicate that TikTok supports the learners' emotional engagement and fosters a supportive and motivating learning environment.

### **Cognitive Outcomes**

Cognitive Outcomes refer to the mental skills learners develop, including creativity and understanding. One of the prominent benefits was creativity, reported in four studies (A03; A12; A17; A31), as TikTok facilitated learners to express ideas through content creation. Authentic language use appeared in three studies (A20; A25; A31), indicating that TikTok provided meaningful learning experiences through short and contextual videos. Presentation and communication skills were also noted in one study (A31).

### **Social Learning**

This category emphasizes how learners interact and learn collaboratively through TikTok. The platform facilitated collaboration (A13; A34) and peer learning (A33), by enabling learners to create, share, and respond to videos. Such interactions provided more opportunities for English communication and helped strengthen social skills and connections among learners.

### **Usability & Accessibility**

This category concerns TikTok's technical features that make English learning more accessible and flexible. The most frequently reported benefit were flexible use anytime, anywhere (A23; A35; A38) and a simple and user-friendly learning experience (A20; A25; A34), each cited in three studies. These features made learning more convenient and supported independent study and overview. Other benefits, each reported in one study, included access to relevant references and ideas (A30) and opportunities for personalized and adaptive learning (A32).

### **Challenges**

Although the literature acknowledges various benefits of using TikTok for English language learning, it also brings a number of significant challenges that could hinder its effective implementation. The summary of challenges is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of Emerging Themes for the Challenges

| No | Article Code       | Emerging Themes  | Frequency |
|----|--------------------|--|-----------|
| 1  | A11; A23; A27; A31 | Distraction from entertainment content                   | 4         |
| 2  | A12; A13; A30; A34 | Struggle with TikTok's features                          | 4         |
| 3  | A31; A20; A35      | Irrelevant or low-quality content                        | 3         |
| 4  | A03; A23; A34      | Poor or limited of internet access                       | 3         |
| 5  | A13; A15; A30      | Video creation problems                                  | 3         |
| 6  | A03; A31           | Limited focus because of the short video duration        | 2         |
| 7  | A23; A31           | Access to technology                                     | 2         |
| 8  | A30; A34           | Device problems and settings                             | 2         |
| 9  | A32; A35           | Time management constraints                              | 2         |
| 10 | A32; A34           | The need for better guidance (peers, educators, parents) | 2         |
| 11 | A29                | Worry about making mistakes                              | 1         |
| 12 | A27                | Content too long   | 1         |
| 13 | A34                | Account setting  | 1         |
| 14 | A35                | Addiction concern  | 1         |
| 15 | A27                | Perceived boredom  | 1         |
| 16 | A32                | Classroom environment distraction                        | 1         |
| 17 | A12                | Discomfort with the platform                             | 1         |
| 18 | A03                | Fear of potential digital punishment                     | 1         |
| 19 | A23                | Limited feedback from creators                           | 1         |

The most reported challenges, each found in four out of 39 reviewed studies, were distraction from entertainment content (A11; A23; A27; A31) and struggle with TikTok's features (A12; A13; A30; A34). Learners often found the platform's editing tools overwhelming or confusing, particularly those who were not frequent users of TikTok. Other cited challenges, each reported in three studies, include irrelevant or low-quality content (A31; A20; A35), poor or limited internet access (A03; A23; A34) and difficulties in video creation (A13; A15; A30). As noted by Waode (2024), unfamiliarity with the app's features complicated the video-creation process, while Nurwinda and Ambarwati (2024) noted that TikTok's algorithm inconsistently filters appropriate content on the *For You Page*, exposing learners to misleading or irrelevant materials.

Several other challenges appeared in two studies each, including limited focus due to the short video duration (A03; A31), restricted access to adequate technology (A23; A31), device functionality and settings issues (A30; A34), time management constraints (A32; A35), and a lack of proper guidance from educators, peers, or parents (A32; A34). These studies reported that brief videos limited in-depth understanding, while unequal access to devices and insufficient supervision affected consistent learning engagement.

Less frequently mentioned challenges, reported in only one study each, include worry about making mistakes (A29), overly lengthy content (A27), account setting issues (A34), addiction concerns (A35), perceived boredom (A27), classroom distractions (A32), discomfort with the platform (A12), fear of digital punishment (A03), and limited feedback (A23). While these appeared less often, these findings provide valuable insight into specific learner experiences and contextual factors that may influence the integration of TikTok into formal language learning environments.

## Discussion

This systematic literature review synthesizes the current uses, benefits, and challenges of TikTok in English language learning within formal education contexts in Indonesia. The findings reveal diverse instructional uses, including its role as a source of authentic English learning material, a platform for creating learner-generated English language tasks, and a digital reference for learning activities. Features such as duet and save also support collaborative learning and self-paced review.

The most common use is TikTok as a platform for English learning materials, where learners watch short videos created by educators or creators. As Iklim et al. (2024) highlight, TikTok provides an enjoyable and interactive learning environment, while Duan (2023) adds the efficiency of short videos for learning during spare time. Educators also use TikTok videos to demonstrate English materials, reflecting the early stage of technology integration, which begins with teacher-directed learning before shifting toward learner-centred practices (Hamilton, 2018). Therefore, educators are encouraged to curate reliable TikTok content and integrate it meaningfully into classroom activities.

TikTok additionally supports learner-generated content, where learners create videos as part of their English assignments. As reported by Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2022), tasks such as performing dialogues and role-playing via video not only foster language production but also boost learner creativity and innovation. This usage reflects Hamilton's (2018) suggestion that teacher-directed projects serve as effective starting points for developing language proficiency and digital literacy, particularly for learners with limited technical experience. In addition, some educators utilize content from English-learning influencers or educational accounts to complement lessons. Curated content helps guide learner understanding and ensure alignment with the curriculum. For instance, Tirtayasa et al. (2024) selected TikTok video materials based on each grade's English syllabus, supporting Intiana et al.'s (2023) suggestion that learning media should match learning objectives and required competencies.

TikTok's duet and save features enhance learning interactions. The duet feature is usually used for speaking tasks, allowing learners to mimic or respond to native speakers. This helps expose learners to accurate speech patterns and offers many opportunities for natural practice (Arochman et al., 2024). The save feature allows learners to collect useful content, facilitating spaced repetition and autonomous review, supporting Patty and Noija's (2023) emphasis that TikTok's features promote independent and online learning. TikTok can be effectively implemented when integrated into structured lesson plans aligned with learning objectives. A gradual shift from educator-selected video to learner-generated content can promote active learning, creativity, and digital literacy, making English learning more engaging and relevant. In this way, learners can improve both their English skills and their ability to use digital tools, creating a balanced learning experience that builds communication and technology skills.

Based on how TikTok is used, the studies further reveal its benefits in supporting English language learning, particularly in linguistic, affective, cognitive, and accessibility aspects. The development of specific language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is significantly enhanced through TikTok's engaging, multimodal, and interactive features, which make English learning more relevant and enjoyable. This aligns with studies by Fitria (2023) and Putri et al. (2024), who emphasized that TikTok positively influences the development of all four main language skills. These findings also support Multimedia Learning Theory, which highlights that materials combining words (spoken or written) and visuals—such as images, videos, or animations—help learners build new knowledge or skills (Mayer, 2024).

Learners showed improvements in vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and comprehension, particularly through exposure to authentic English input. Watching

short videos created by fluent English speakers helped learners improve pronunciation, intonation, and non-verbal communication cues, such as facial expressions and gestures (Nurwinda & Ambarwati, 2024), indicating that TikTok provides meaningful and contextualized input that supports comprehensive language development.

TikTok also strengthens affective outcomes such as motivation, engagement, interest, and enthusiasm. These results align with Bao and Liu's (2021), who note that motivation drives learners to persist and improve. The platform fosters positive emotional responses, making the learning process more enjoyable and reducing anxiety. Qodarsih et al. (2023) reported that learners became more engaged in discussions that previously felt burdensome, as TikTok content made participation more approachable. These findings support Duan's (2023), who concludes that short language learning videos enhance the learning experience and ease academic pressure. TikTok use also improves learners' confidence, enhances their understanding of materials, and promotes more active participation, which further supports self-expression and fosters independence. This aligns with Weller's (2020), who argues that social media encourages active participation and collaboration by blending educational activities with aspects of daily life.

In terms of cognitive benefits, especially through video production, learners synthesize language input into meaningful messages. TikTok fosters creativity, developing communication and presentation skills by encouraging critical thinking and original expression, thereby enhancing understanding of authentic language use. Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2022) emphasized that the platform enables engagement with real-world communication tasks, leading to more meaningful and contextualized language use. These findings reflect the principles of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, which highlights the importance of higher-order thinking skills—analyzing, evaluating, and creating—for cognitive development (Bloom, 1956/2001, as cited in Hamilton, 2018). Hamilton (2018) further notes that advances in digital platforms allow learners to communicate more clearly and creatively for a range of purposes, using various media formats and styles that match their goals. Through video production, learners not only apply their language knowledge but also engage in critical thinking and original content creation.

In terms of social learning, TikTok encourages collaboration and peer learning. Through comments, duets, and collaborative projects, learners can create videos, engage in peer correction, and improve their language skills while connecting with real-life context. This supports Thornbury's (2017) view that social media strengthens social bonds and facilitates learning. It also aligns with Setiyadi (2020), who states that language is inherently a social phenomenon and shaped through interaction within a community.

Lastly, TikTok offers flexible accessibility, allowing users to learn anytime and anywhere. Its mobile-friendly design provides a simple and interactive learning experience. One key advantage is that users can rewatch lessons, supporting flexible and self-paced learning (Perangin-angin et al., 2021). TikTok also provides access to relevant references and ideas, supporting personalized and adaptive learning. As Hamilton (2018) noted, digital platforms promote equitable access to learning opportunities, especially when learners control the pace and method of engagement. In this way, TikTok functions as a mobile learning center that provides personalized language input. By creating a fun, easy-to-access, and learner-centred space, it transforms language learning from passive observation to active and meaningful participation, allowing learners to explore information, participate in discussions, share resources, and enjoy the learning process.

Thus, to optimize these benefits, educators can integrate TikTok into project-based tasks where learners create content linked to specific language objectives (e.g., practicing tenses through storytelling or presenting procedural texts). Hamilton (2018) notes that project-based learning often involves several content areas, showing learners that acquiring knowledge is an engaging and multidisciplinary. Educators should guide learners in



selecting or creating video content that matches the learners' age and language level to maintain educational value while minimizing distraction.

While TikTok presents numerous benefits for English language learning, the reviewed studies also highlight several recurring challenges that must be addressed to ensure its effective integration in educational settings. These challenges span technological, pedagogical, psychological, and contextual domains, and if left unaddressed, they may undermine the learning potential of this digital platform.

One significant issue is distraction caused by entertainment content and irrelevant or low-quality content. This is often linked to time management constraints, addiction concerns, and potential distraction. Because TikTok's algorithm promotes trending content, learners can easily lose focus from academic goals. Sari et al. (2024) noted that learners frequently struggled to stay focused during learning activities due to the platform's tendency to expose them to unrelated videos, aligning with Putri et al. (2024), who reported challenges in content supervision and the risk of off-task or inappropriate materials. To address this, educators can guide learners to use dedicated educational accounts, apply specific hashtags, or curate video playlists, and provide clear guidelines that maintain focus on learning goals.

Another challenge involves learners struggling with TikTok's features and difficulties in creating and editing videos. As Waode (2024) reported, some learners found it difficult to produce content, particularly when using tools such as trimming, adding subtitles, or adjusting audio. This may discourage active participation in creative learning tasks. To overcome this, educators should provide simple, step-by-step guidance and opportunities for peer support. Starting with activities like watching and discussing videos before moving on to video creation can gradually help learners build digital confidence.

The issue of optimal video length also emerged as a concern. While TikTok is known for its short-form content, videos that are too short may limit the depth of language input and reduce learning opportunities, while overly long videos can lead to reduced attention and cognitive overload. Sari et al. (2024) found that learners struggled to focus on longer videos, leading to boredom. This highlights the importance of balancing video length, ensuring that content is not too short to be meaningful, yet not too long to become overwhelming. A practical solution is to divide content into shorter segments and use video series or playlists that balance focus and depth while maintaining attention.

Additional challenges include limited internet access, insufficient access to technology, technical issues, and a lack of guidance from educators or parents, particularly in areas with weak digital infrastructure. Schools and policymakers should support learners by providing better connectivity, device-sharing programs, or downloadable learning materials. However, as Hamiltion (2018) pointed out, neither parents nor educators were unprepared for the rapid digital changes. Therefore, there is a clear need for continuous digital training in addition to technological support.

Psychological factors such as fear of making mistakes, discomfort with the platform, or fear of potential digital punishment and limited feedback from creators can reduce learner participation and confidence. As Thornbury (2017) noted, social media can be supportive but may also become discouraging. Educators must foster a positive learning culture where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities and feedback is constructive.

Finally, the findings suggest that successful integration of TikTok in English learning depends on balancing engagement with educational purpose. Educators should design structured and creative activities that connect TikTok's features with learning outcomes. Digital literacy training is essential to ensure safe and productive use of the platform, supported by institutional policies that promote an inclusive and secure digital environment. Thus, while TikTok presents several pedagogical and practical challenges, many of these can be addressed through thoughtful instructional design, targeted support,



and appropriate digital literacy training. By proactively managing these issues, educators can maximize TikTok's potential as a meaningful and inclusive platform for English language learning.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this systematic literature review reveals valuable insights about how TikTok is used, what benefits it offers, and what challenges emerge in supporting English language learning within Indonesia's formal education context. The findings show that TikTok is used as a source of English learning materials, a medium for task creation and practice, presenting explanations and examples, and a space for learner-generated content. The platform's features, especially the duet and save options, facilitate learner interaction, engagement and provide space for review. TikTok provides key benefits, which include improved speaking proficiency, enriched vocabulary, increased motivation and confidence, as well as a more enjoyable and engaging learning environment. Additional linguistic, cognitive and affective gains further support its potential for language development. However, its integration also presents challenges, such as distractions from entertainment content, unfamiliarity with app features, limited internet access, technical difficulties, and exposure to irrelevant or low-quality content. Other challenges mentioned include technological, pedagogical, as well as psychological concerns. Despite these barriers, with proper instructional strategies and support, TikTok can contribute positively to language education by promoting both linguistic and affective development and supporting its usefulness in formal education.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. Learners are encouraged to use TikTok actively to support their learning. Educators should provide clear guidance, use selected videos, and gradually involve learners in creating their own content. Schools and institutions are expected to support the integration by providing internet access, devices, and educator training. Content creators are encouraged to produce focused, relevant, appropriately timed educational videos. Future should explore the long-term impact, effective classroom integration strategies, and ways to overcome potential challenges, including teacher readiness and digital literacy needs.

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