

**THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON EFL STUDENTS'  
VOCABULARY ACQUISITION**

**THESIS**

Submitted by:

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ACQUISITION**

**THESIS**

Has been Approved and Submitted to the Thesis Munaqasyah Defense  
As One of the Requirements to Obtain a Bachelor's Degree  
in the Field of English Language Education

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# THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON EFL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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It has been defended in *sidang munaqasyah* before the board of examiners and has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor Degree of Education in English Language Teaching

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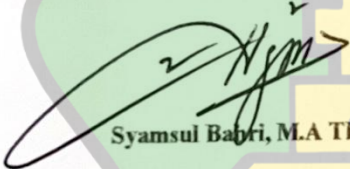
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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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Hereby declare that in writing this thesis, I:

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## ABSTRACT

Name : Muhammad Safwanulhadi  
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This study examines how TikTok influences English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' vocabulary acquisition at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The research was prompted by the growing use of social media in everyday life and the potential of digital platforms to help students learn vocabulary in informal settings. Prior research has shown that social media can help with language learning. However, there aren't many studies that focus on students' experiences in Aceh and how TikTok helps them learn vocabulary outside of school. A qualitative descriptive design was employed in this study. 14 students from the 2022 cohort of the English Education Department were selected through purposive sampling, based on their use of TikTok and their exposure to English-language content on the platform. Data were gathered using an open-ended questionnaire and analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings reveal that TikTok influences vocabulary development through four main factors. First, Vocabulary is frequently acquired incidentally through exposure to engaging and topic-specific content. Second, TikTok supports learning by presenting multimodal input, including audio, text, and visuals. Its algorithmic features also contribute to improved retention. Third, the platform offers an interactive and accessible learning environment, as its short-form videos are practical, appealing, and easy to access. However, its effectiveness is not absolute, as factors such as distractions, limited content depth, sporadic exposure, and insufficient active practice may reduce learning outcomes.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter is put together to present the main idea of the entire content within this study, including the background, research question, study objective, significance, and terminology.

### A. Background of Study

Vocabulary is important for learning any language, especially for Indonesian English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) students. Vocabulary is regarded as vital for the improvement of students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities (Nation, 2001). In order to learn a language, there are numerous components of the language that should be learned, such as pronunciation, writing system, sentence structure, pragmatics, modes of discourse, and even the spelling of the language. However, the most essential component of language learning is vocabulary (Folse, 2004).

Without sufficient vocabulary to understand and convey their ideas, it will be hard for EFL students to communicate effectively in their target language. Knowing how to use the appropriate vocabulary for certain situations is more important than having perfect grammar in most instances of language use. Vocabulary is not just one part of language; it is the core of it. Wilkins (1972, p. 111, as cited in Yildiz, 2023) stated, “Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”.

In Indonesia, English is taught in the formal education system, especially in schools. However, according to Mustafa (2019), vocabulary remains a challenge for many students, affecting their performance in school and making it difficult to find the confidence to use English in the real world. Some students may have difficulty understanding texts, following directions and writing complete sentences simply because they are not used to seeing some of the words. This is why vocabulary learning should be stressed in formal education and self-study. Students cannot effectively comprehend others' ideas or communicate their own without a broad vocabulary, and learners who are acquiring a second language and possess limited vocabulary often encounter difficulties in comprehension (Wilkins, 1972).

These vocabulary limitations indicate that an alternative approach is needed, such as the use of information technology. In this regard, information technology has made rapid progress, and the development has changed the way humans interact, learn, and even work. Today, technology has become a necessity in our lives. It affects every part of our lives, from science to management to routine tasks, making everything easier and faster (Lachhwani, 2022). Various types of information technology have been used in teaching and learning activities, both directly and indirectly. One real example is an investigation by Muluk et al. (2025) that demonstrated that the integration of information technology through a Synchronous Virtual Flipped Classroom positively influenced students' speaking performance and reduced their anxiety. The previous study suggests that social media platforms, a type of information technology, can help improve English language skills. In this context, some social media might provide easy access to a

mixture of learning materials, ranging from educational videos and interactive discussions to language skill exercises.

In line with the increasing integration of technology in learning, recent studies have discussed how information technology, especially social media platforms, facilitates the improvement of English language skills. Several studies (Malik & Asnur, 2019; Siddig, 2020; Sukri et al., 2018) have shown that the utilization of social media in educational contexts can enhance student motivation, provide a more interactive learning environment, and help improve language skills more naturally and contextually. Based on the studies mentioned above, social media platforms, which are widely used by many people, including students, might unintentionally help them improve their vocabulary and understanding.

Different studies have also examined the effectiveness of the use of social media in English learning. For example, according to a study by Samuel and Pulizala (2020), social media has an effect on learning English since it provides students with opportunities to improve and expand their vocabulary by reading new texts and phrases. A different study by Muluk et al. (2025) demonstrated that social media platforms, particularly Instagram, can facilitate English language acquisition by providing access to a mixture of English-learning accounts, encompassing those dedicated to speaking skills, TOEFL preparation, and overall language skills. The study findings suggested that Instagram contributes to the enhancement of students' pronunciation awareness, including the ability to differentiate between American and British English, while also improving their speaking proficiency. Suggesting

that social media platforms can be used as tools and resources to support independent and informal learning.

TikTok, one of the social media platforms with the most users, has been widely used in daily life. Building on the findings of previous studies that highlight the positive influence of social media in learning language, TikTok has the potential to present different influences for students. Several studies have highlighted its influence on English skills. For example, a study by Hongsa et al. (2023) found that TikTok was effective in improving EFL students' English-speaking skills. Furthermore, positive perceptions towards the TikTok application were reported by students. It was agreed by most students that utilizing TikTok is enjoyable, promotes creativity, and provides new ways to learn English. In addition, interaction with varied content on TikTok allows students to understand the use of words in a broader context, enriching their learning experience.

Another study by Mei and Abdul Aziz (2022) shows that when comparing TikTok to textbooks, which are viewed as more traditional forms of education, English learning that was presented in the form of videos on TikTok could make the learning process more enjoyable and engaging, as reported by the majority of students. The findings indicate that the entertaining and appealing videos that can be found on TikTok can capture students' attention and make the process of learning English more enjoyable. Due to this, they were able to comprehend and retain the information presented in the short video more effectively.

Another study by Wati (2022) suggests that Most students agree that learning English by utilizing TikTok can improve their English language skills.

Furthermore, the results demonstrated that TikTok aids vocabulary development through its short, clear, and engaging videos. These videos include easily understandable explanations, which help students learn new words more effectively. Another important finding showed that TikTok creates a pleasant and adaptable learning environment. Students said they found it enjoyable, easy to use, and not boring, which they attributed to its short videos and interactive features.

However, there is limited research conducted in a local context, particularly among EFL students in Aceh, especially at UIN Ar-Raniry in Banda Aceh. Cultural differences, learning environments, and social media use habits can influence students' use of TikTok as a learning tool. Furthermore, previous studies mostly employed quantitative approaches that emphasize learning outcomes, but did not provide information about the students' experiences and perceptions on the use of TikTok for English language learning. Yet this process is important, especially in the context of technology-based learning. Given the increasing popularity of TikTok and potential benefits for education, more research is needed to assess its effectiveness in increasing vocabulary acquisition. By exploring students' experiences and perspectives, this study will fill the gaps and search for another evidence of how TikTok can improve vocabulary learning. It is also important to explore whether students view TikTok as a learning tool or just a source of entertainment.

Based on the phenomenon above, this study focuses on using TikTok as a vocabulary learning tool in the context of EFL students. Therefore, this study examines the reality of its use and the relationship between exposure to English-

language content on TikTok and students' vocabulary development. Instead of relying on textbooks or traditional classroom methods, students are exposed to a variety of multimedia content that might help their vocabulary acquisition on the internet. The purpose of this study was to explore the views of students on the influence of TikTok on their vocabulary acquisition. By examining the perspective of students who use TikTok and watch English language content. Do students consciously use TikTok to learn English, or is vocabulary acquisition an unintended benefit of regular use? It is hoped that valuable insights can be gained regarding the role of modern digital platforms in improving English vocabulary acquisition, particularly for EFL students.

### **B. Research Question**

The research question is the question that a study tries to answer. Most research questions will lead to a task that attempts to create new insight (Mattick et al., 2018). The Research Question that the researcher aims to answer is as follows:

1. What is the influence of TikTok on EFL students' vocabulary acquisition?

### **C. The Objective of the Study**

Based on this study's research question, the researcher crafted the objective of this study as follows:

1. To explore students' experiences in using TikTok for vocabulary acquisition among English language students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

#### **D. Significance of the Study**

This research may contain insights that could benefit various parties involved in English language learning, particularly regarding the use of social media like TikTok to improve vocabulary mastery.

- 1) For EFL Students: This research is expected to help EFL students, particularly those at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, understand how TikTok can be used as a learning tool to expand vocabulary. Furthermore, it is hoped that students will be able to identify potential limitations when learning through this platform.
- 2) For EFL Teachers: It is hoped that the findings of this study will serve as a reference for teachers in designing learning strategies that are more engaging and relevant to the times. Teachers may also consider using social media platforms such as TikTok as part of their vocabulary instruction to help students become more interested, active, and better able to retain the material.
- 3) For Others: This research can also serve as a reference for others interested in examining the relationship between technology and language learning, particularly the use of social media in improving English language skills. Furthermore, content creators can gain insights into how to create content

that is more educational, easy to understand, and tailored to students' needs and learning habits.

## **E. Terminologies**

### **1. TikTok**

*TikTok* is a short-form video-sharing platform developed by ByteDance, a Chinese technology company. TikTok was initially released under the name Douyin and launched in China in 2016. It was launched internationally in 2018 following the merger with another similar app, Musical.ly. TikTok is gaining popularity, especially among younger audiences (Alifia, 2023).

According to Alifia (2023), TikTok allows users to create, edit, and share vertical videos lasting between 15 seconds and 3 minutes, in some cases even longer. In addition to basic editing features, TikTok also provides a wide range of visual effects, filters, transitional effects, and the option to add text to videos, making it possible to create highly personalized content. There is also the functionality of “duets” in which users record in parallel with another video, as well as “stitches” allowing TikTokers to make a reaction to the video made by another user to make new content.

### **2. EFL (English as a Foreign Language)**

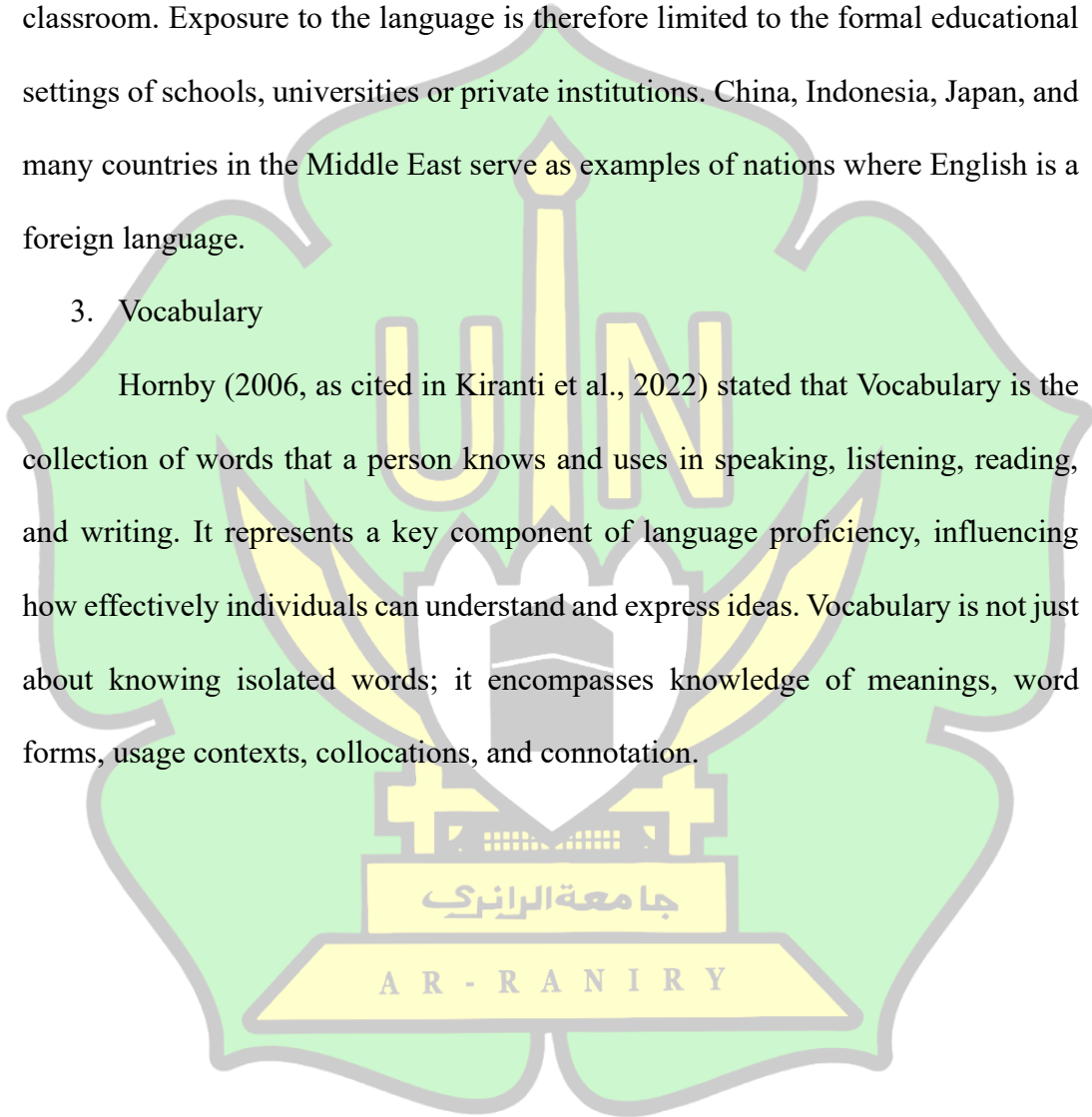
According to Ristiani (2021), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a common term in language education, which refers to the teaching and learning of the English language in a non-English-speaking nation. It is different from ESL,

which means English as a second language; it is a daily use and common language, along with the native language or the first language of the user.

Kirkpatrick (2007) states that EFL takes place in countries that often have no authentic, real-world contexts of using the English language outside the classroom. Exposure to the language is therefore limited to the formal educational settings of schools, universities or private institutions. China, Indonesia, Japan, and many countries in the Middle East serve as examples of nations where English is a foreign language.

### 3. Vocabulary

Hornby (2006, as cited in Kiranti et al., 2022) stated that Vocabulary is the collection of words that a person knows and uses in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It represents a key component of language proficiency, influencing how effectively individuals can understand and express ideas. Vocabulary is not just about knowing isolated words; it encompasses knowledge of meanings, word forms, usage contexts, collocations, and connotation.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is put together to provide a review and definition of vocabulary, social media, TikTok, EFL students, and theories, as well as previous studies that are relevant.

#### A. Vocabulary

##### 1. Definition of vocabulary

Hatch and Brown (1995, as cited in Keo et al., 2021) explain that vocabulary can be understood as a collection of words within a language, or the set of words that a person may use when communicating.

According to Manda et al. (2022), vocabulary is a collection of words that have meaning and are used to make sentences. Mastering the vocabulary is the first step in language learning. This will facilitate the construction of the sentence that someone wishes to say.

Based on the statements above, vocabulary can be defined as the collection of words that individuals comprehend and use to convey their ideas.

##### 2. Types of vocabulary

According to Nation (2001), vocabulary can be split into two main types:

- a. Receptive vocabulary is the set of words that both native speakers and language learners know and understand but don't use very often. When people listen to or read these words, they usually process them passively.

- b. Productive vocabulary is the collection of words that people use if they want to say something, especially when they are writing or speaking.

## **B. Social Media**

### 1. Definition of Social Media

Social media is an online platform where different kinds of content and communities can be created, shared, and interacted with by people. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) explain that social media is considered a collection of online applications based on Web 2.0 technology, through which users are allowed to create, edit, and exchange their own content. Thus, information is not only received by users, but can also be produced and spread by them.

According to McQuail and Deuze (2020), social media is a form of new media that differs from traditional mass media. One of its essential features is two-way communication, which enables individuals not only to receive information but also to respond to it. Because communication can take many forms, people can easily engage in conversations and share ideas. Additionally, there is no institutional mechanism for filtering information, allowing it to be distributed in real time.

In short, social media enables people from all over the world to establish connections and communities based on shared interests. Additionally, content creation is decentralized, allowing anyone to create and distribute content. As a result, user-generated content has flourished.

## 2. Social Media in Language Learning

According to Hamakali (2017), when social media is integrated into target language instruction, language learners are exposed to abundant comprehensible input through authentic and contextualized content. And also according to him, this condition aligns with the Input Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982), which emphasizes that language acquisition occurs when learners understand input that is slightly beyond their current level of proficiency.

Social media provides a flexible space for learning that supports both formal settings, like classrooms, and informal ways, such as through daily interactions online. It also allows users to interact with other users, to receive and use already existing linguistic material, and to explore the language in authentic situations. Due to its interactive nature, social media allows for creating more engaging learning experiences beyond the traditional ones (Manca, 2020).

Students can also access tutorial videos, English content, and comment or engage in online discussions with native speakers through social media to obtain authentic English learning materials. Social media also supports practice-based learning, where students can practice their writing, speaking, and listening skills in real situations, such as making posts in English or joining international discussion forums. Social media also allows students to improve their vocabulary and expressions by observing how English is applied in actual contexts (Syahira et al., 2024).

## C. TikTok in Language Learning

### 1. Definition of TikTok

According to Miltsov (2022), since the TikTok social media video-sharing platform was launched in 2017, it has grown immensely and become one of the most well-known platforms of its kind worldwide. Most of its users are youth who actively use the app for creating, sharing, and watching short videos. Basic social media features such as a comments section, user profiles, and a 'like' button are available on TikTok as they are on other platforms. However, TikTok has distinctive features that differentiate it from other platforms. A major distinguishing feature of TikTok is its reliance on creative and imaginative short videos produced quickly and shared among other users.

TikTok combines elements of self-expression and entertainment. Users can enrich their content by adding text, music, effects, and filters. This makes TikTok the space for the emergence of various forms of digital creativity that spread globally in a short time. TikTok serves not only as an entertainment medium but also as a platform that plays a vital role in popular culture and even marketing. Many individuals and organizations use TikTok to share information, promote products, and convey ideas innovatively. Therefore, TikTok can be understood as a social media platform that can encourage creativity, collaboration, and the spread of information (Guarda et al., 2021).

## 2. The Strengths and Weaknesses of TikTok as a Learning Medium

The use of TikTok in language learning is connected to its strength in giving learners authentic, visual, and interactive content. The short and captivating videos on TikTok set it apart from many other platforms. The majority of the content encourages students to participate, either by trying a challenge, repeating phrases, or interacting with the creator. This style of learning is very close to the idea of microlearning, which means learning in small pieces and focusing on simple but useful information (Conde-Caballero et al., 2024). Instead of sitting through a long lesson, students can watch many short videos in just a few minutes and learn something new from each one.

According to Milner (2025), when compared to other digital learning platforms such as Duolingo and YouTube, TikTok has a few different advantages. Duolingo has become the go-to platform for those seeking to learn a language through its structured lessons and gamified learning activities. However, TikTok offers different advantages, such as learning how to use the language in real-life scenarios through short videos from native speakers of that language. Additionally, TikTok is also more accessible than platforms like YouTube. While YouTube's videos typically contain more comprehensive lessons for the languages on the platform, the videos are of longer durations. However, TikTok's videos are short in length and can be accessed during any break in an individual's schedule. Thus, TikTok is a more suitable platform for individuals who require more flexibility in their learning schedules.

However, as a learning medium, weaknesses are certainly found in the TikTok. This application cannot be accessed if internet access is not available. The TikTok is also often slow if an old cellphone or device that is not sufficiently compatible is used (Erlisya & Wiratno, 2022).

According to Milner (2025), although learners may acquire useful phrases through TikTok, the absence of structured practice may hinder long-term retention and fluency development. Furthermore, because anyone, including individuals without language expertise, can create content on TikTok, there is a significant risk of misinformation and inconsistent instructional quality. As a result, pronunciation errors, inaccurate explanations, and oversimplified grammar rules may mislead beginner learners.

Furthermore, according to Sardar et al (2023), Excessive use of TikTok may lead to various harmful effects, especially for adolescents and younger users. Frequent exposure to inappropriate material can adversely affect children's ways of thinking and developmental growth, since some content is not appropriate for their age. Furthermore, social media platforms may expose users to risks such as cyberstalking, predatory behaviour, and other forms of digital exploitation.

#### **D. The Importance of Vocabulary in EFL**

##### **1. Definition of EFL Students**

EFL refers to learning English by people who live in countries where English is not the main language for daily communication. In this situation, students usually have very limited chances to use or hear English outside the classroom (Gebhard, 2006).

According to Rachmawati (2022), EFL students are those who learn English as a foreign language and mainly use it only in academic settings or during language courses. They do not interact with English in their daily lives beyond classroom activities, assignments, or other formal learning processes. This limits their exposure to real-world English interactions compared to their counterparts in English-speaking nations, necessitating enhanced practice, pedagogical support, and auxiliary learning materials to bolster their proficiency.

According to Sandy and Muliawanti (2020), EFL refers to a situation where students learn English as a foreign language, usually in countries where English is not spoken as part of daily life. In this context, English is not used for everyday communication but is mostly limited to academic environments, such as schools, universities, or language courses.

## 2. The Importance of Vocabulary for EFL Students

Vocabulary is the core of language proficiency. According to Nation (2001), learners cannot communicate or make sense of others effectively without sufficient vocabulary. If grammar is the structure of language, then vocabulary is the substance of communication. Without enough vocabulary, students will fail to express their ideas even if they have mastered the basic rules of grammar.

Folse (2004) stated that learning a language involves understanding many parts of that language, such as pronunciation, writing systems, grammar and syntax, pragmatics, reading and writing styles, culture, and spelling. Among all these elements, vocabulary is the most important.

In the EFL context, vocabulary knowledge plays a critical role in shaping learners' proficiency in the four main language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In listening, the knowledge of vocabulary of words contained in the spoken text ensures that its meaning is grasped in context (Bonk, 2000).

In speaking, ideas can be expressed clearly and smoothly when the right words are used. Reading comprehension is also strongly influenced by vocabulary size and depth, as many words must be recognized and understood for written texts to be understood (Qian, 2002).

Similarly, in writing, a rich vocabulary enables learners to construct meaningful, coherent, and varied texts, improving both clarity and effectiveness (Astika, 1993). Therefore, vocabulary isn't just a part of language; it's a core element that significantly improves overall communication skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

### **E. Theories**

This study is grounded in several theoretical perspectives that explain how vocabulary is acquired and how digital media can support language learning. Such as Social Constructivism Theory, Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, and the ADDIE Model as an underlying framework to conceptualize the role of TikTok as a learning medium.:

1. Social Constructivism Theory (Vygotsky, 1978): This theory suggests that learning is improved when students actively build knowledge through social interaction, collaboration, and engagement with their environment.

2. Mayer's (2005) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning suggests that learning is improved when information is presented in different formats, such as audio, video, and text. Moreover, the theory suggests that learning is enhanced when learners actively work with and combine these different formats.
3. ADDIE Model in Selecting Learning Media: The ADDIE model is a learning development model that is used as an instructional design framework that consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Branch, 2009).
  - a. In the analysis phase, it was identified that EFL students face challenges in vocabulary acquisition, particularly in understanding and retaining new words. EFL learners often face limitations in vocabulary mastery and lack exposure to authentic language use (Mustafa, 2019). Additionally, it was identified that students frequently engage with social media platforms in their daily lives.
  - b. In the design phase, instructional strategies and media characteristics are determined through analysis. From a design perspective, TikTok content can be organized to support vocabulary learning through microlearning and contextual learning (Conde-Caballero et al., 2024), as well as multimodal input such as audio, visuals, and text.
  - c. The development phase involves producing or selecting appropriate learning materials. In this study, TikTok functions as a platform where learning content is already available, produced by users, including

educational creators. This aligns with the concept of utilizing existing digital media as instructional resources to receive and use already existing linguistic material (Manca, 2020).

- d. In the implementation phase, the use of the selected media in a real learning context. In this study, TikTok is implemented as an informal learning medium, where students are exposed to English vocabulary through their regular interaction with the platform. The problem with the internet or distraction can also be identified during this phase.
- e. In the Evaluation phase, the focus is on assessing the effectiveness of the selected media. In this study, evaluation is conducted by observing students' engagement through their interactions with TikTok content. In addition, students' responses to the use of TikTok can be collected through questionnaires to evaluate their perceptions of its usefulness.

#### **F. Previous Studies**

A study conducted by Sely and Priyatmojo (2026) titled "Incidental English Vocabulary Learning Through TikTok: A Conceptual Analysis" discusses TikTok as a medium for the incidental acquisition of English vocabulary by EFL learners. This study did not include human respondents or participants in the traditional sense. Due to the nature of conceptual research, no surveys, interviews, or experimental procedures were conducted; instead, this conceptual study design analyzes various theories and literature related to incidental vocabulary learning, informal language learning, and digital media learning in language learning contexts. The analysis shows that non-educational TikTok content like vlogs, entertainment videos, and

social media trends can contribute to learning English vocabulary by presenting it through a variety of different ways, such as pictorial, textual, and audio means. Algorithmic repetition is a further cognitive mechanism reinforcing lexical recognition and familiarity. Also, lexical and semantic issues can be negotiated socially through code-switching between English and Indonesian languages, and by conversing amongst themselves in the comments. Thus, TikTok acts as an informal digital learning environment, allowing users to learn new words through natural interactions online.

In addition, a study by Alharthy (2025), titled “Exploring the Impact of TikTok on Second-Language Vocabulary Acquisition: Benefits, Challenges, and Learner Perceptions,” used a mixed-methods approach. A total of 30 English language students participated in the study. The researcher used several data collection methods. Then, data were analyzed using thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative data. The results show that students who watch a lot of TikTok in English improve their vocabulary in spelling and pronunciation. The study also recognized that the TikTok mobile app could make a person have a higher motivation to learn by giving interactive and contextualized content. However, TikTok has several drawbacks for vocabulary learning. Its addictive design can reduce focus, while user-generated content may contain incorrect language. The lack of structure leads to gaps in learning, and short videos limit depth. Exposure to informal language can affect proper usage, and the absence of feedback makes progress harder to track. Additionally, privacy concerns and limited access to devices or the internet can be barriers.

Another study was conducted by Tari et al. The 2026 study, “Students’ Perceptions of Using TikTok page @Nofreeadi for English Vocabulary Learning in an EFL Context,” used a descriptive qualitative approach. It included twelve students from the English Language Education program. The researchers used semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to gather data, which was then subjected to thematic analysis to identify trends in the opinions of the students. According to the students, TikTok provides interesting and contextual content, making the platform a user-friendly and helpful tool for learning vocabulary (@nofreeadi account, in particular). The researchers also identified some limitations, such as non-interactive communication and fast pacing of materials, which limit the volume of explanation feasible. Overall, the study comes to the conclusion that TikTok can be a reasonably useful supplemental vocabulary learning tool, especially when teachers carefully incorporate it into traditional classroom instruction.

A descriptive qualitative study was conducted by Rosa and Suhartatik (2025) entitled “TikTok as a Medium for Contextual Vocabulary Learning in EFL: Students’ Perception and Learning Experience”. This study used a thematic analysis approach to figure out the students’ experience and perception of TikTok as a Medium in EFL vocabulary learning. With the data collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 first-semester students who use TikTok, the data were analyzed using thematic analysis steps by Braun and Clarke. The findings reveal that through TikTok, the learners were finding the contextual vocabulary learning effective as it gives authentic examples, increases motivation,

and improves cognition of the words' use in everyday life. Nonetheless, this research reveals several challenges, such as distractions and that other strategies (i.e. note-taking) will help in vocabulary retention. Hence, TikTok is seen more as an adjunct tool rather than a replacement for the school classroom.

A previous study by Chiossi et al. (2023) examined the impact of different social media formats on prospective memory (PM), defined as the ability to remember and execute intended actions while performing other tasks. Using a between-subject experimental design, the study involved 60 participants who were assigned to one of four conditions during a 10-minute interruption: TikTok (short-form videos), YouTube (long-form videos), Twitter (text-based feed), or a rest condition. Participants completed a Lexical Decision (LD) task and a Prospective Memory (PM) task before and after the interruption to measure cognitive changes. The findings revealed that only the TikTok condition significantly impaired prospective memory performance, as participants showed a sharp decline in accuracy and increased error rates after exposure. In contrast, YouTube and Twitter did not produce significant effects. The study further demonstrated that this impairment was not due to higher engagement levels, but rather to the structural characteristics of TikTok, particularly rapid context switching, fast-paced content, and multimodal stimulation. These features were found to overload attention and working memory, leading to reduced ability to recall intentions and slower cognitive processing. The results suggest that short-form video platforms can act as a form of cognitive disruption, negatively affecting users' memory and task performance.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is put together to explain the research design, research participants, techniques of data collection, and techniques of data analysis. All of the explained aspects are meant to help understand the processes carried out by the researcher.

#### **A. Research Design**

According to Khanday and Khanam (2019), a research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by a researcher to answer questions validly. It is very objective and accurate. The research design plays an important role in guiding the type of analysis that should be conducted in order to obtain accurate and relevant results. This study will utilize a qualitative research method to fulfill the research question.

According to Sugiyono (2010), qualitative research is descriptive. It means that the data collected in qualitative research is not in the form of numbers or statistics, but in the form of sentences, phrases, or explanations. The data might come from interview transcripts, written reflections, classroom observations, or open-ended survey answers. Researchers use this kind of data to explore people's thoughts, feelings, opinions, or behaviours in more detail.

This research used the qualitative descriptive method. This method focuses on giving a straight description of what is happening, based on the data collected from participants. It does not try to give a deep interpretation. Instead, it presents

facts and experiences as they are, using the participants' own words as much as possible (Lambert & Lambert, 2012).

In the context of this study, the qualitative descriptive method can be used to explore the topic in a clear and simple way based on participants' real experiences. This method is suitable because the researcher wants to understand how people feel about a certain issue, especially in an educational setting. In this case, the researcher is not trying to build a new theory or give a deep interpretation, but instead to describe the situation as it is.

### **B. Population and Sample**

According to Sugiyono (2013), a population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects that share certain characteristics defined by the researcher as the focus of a study, from which conclusions are drawn.

In this study, purposive sampling was used by the researcher to select students from batch 22, which consists of around 187 students. The criteria to be chosen as the samples are as follows: 1. An active student of the PBI 2022 batch, 2. Students who had been actively using TikTok, 3. Using TikTok to watch content in English or using TikTok with the purpose of learning English. These participants were chosen because they were considered suitable for providing relevant data about the influence of TikTok on vocabulary acquisition. Based on these criteria, the researcher selected 14 students as the sample.

### **C. The Technique of Data Collection**

Qualitative research uses several methods of data collection, including documentation, semi-structured interviews, open-ended surveys, focus group discussions, and observation (Dewi, 2021).

A survey with an open-ended questionnaire is different from a closed-ended questionnaire, which limits answers to fixed options like “yes” or “no.” An open-ended questionnaire is a way of collecting data by asking questions that let respondents answer in their own words. This method gives participants the chance to share their ideas, feelings, and experiences more freely and in detail (Rosala, 2024).

In this study, the researcher used a survey using an open-ended questionnaire consisting of nine questions as the main instrument for data collection. An open-ended questionnaire was chosen as the method for gathering data on students' experiences with TikTok and its potential as a medium to enhance their vocabulary acquisition. The questionnaire was administered via Google Forms at a time chosen by the participants, allowing them to answer the questions comfortably.

In addition, one follow-up question was conducted through a written interview as a supporting instrument via WhatsApp.

### **D. The Technique of Data Analysis**

According to Mezmir (2020), qualitative data analysis is the process of organizing and understanding information that is written, spoken, or visual. This process helps researchers find both clear and hidden meanings in the data. It

involves looking at what people say, how they say it, and what their words or actions might mean. The main goal is to explore how people give meaning to their experiences, either as individuals or as part of a group.

This study used thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed thematic analysis as a method for analyzing qualitative data by identifying, examining, and reporting themes within the data. This method helps the researcher to organize the data and describe it in a clear and detailed way. In a basic form, thematic analysis helps show what is found in the data. However, it can also give a deeper understanding by explaining different parts of the research topic. This is why thematic analysis is not only useful for describing the data, but also for exploring the meanings behind what participants say or experience.

To apply this method in the current study, the researcher followed the steps of thematic analysis as introduced by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first step in the process was to become familiar with the data. After conducting the data collection, all the recorded data were transformed into written form. The researcher then read the transcripts carefully to understand the overall content. During this stage, the researcher also took simple notes and marked any points that seemed important or repeated across different responses.

The second step was to create initial codes. The researcher looked at the interview transcripts and selected words, phrases, or sentences that were relevant to the research focus. After that, the researcher grouped similar codes into larger themes.

Themes are bigger ideas that appear many times in the data. Once the themes were formed, the researcher reviewed and improved them. The goal was to check if each theme made sense. Then, the researcher defined and named each theme. Each theme had to show what it meant.

Finally, the last step was writing the research findings. In this step, the researcher explained each theme using a simple explanation and included direct quotes from the participants to support the points. The discussion of the findings also showed how the themes helped answer the research questions.



## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is put together to present the research findings and discussion. The research findings address and explain the research question, while the discussion relates these findings to previous studies and the existing literature.

#### **A. Findings**

This study investigates the influence of social media platforms, specifically TikTok, on the vocabulary acquisition of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. The main goal is to find out how interacting with TikTok content helps students learn new words in English. In accordance with this aim, the study objective is to answer the research question: What is the influence of TikTok on EFL students' vocabulary acquisition?

To address this research question, this study employs a qualitative research methodology rooted in Constructivism, conceptualizing learning as an active process wherein students construct knowledge through interaction and experience. An open-ended questionnaire was used in collecting data, which allowed participants to share their thoughts and experiences freely. The study targeted 14 students, whose responses were collected and analyzed to discern recurring themes associated with vocabulary acquisition via TikTok utilization.

To protect privacy, the identities of all participants were replaced with initials, ranging from P1 to P14. The gathered data underwent a systematic analysis,

emphasizing students' perceptions regarding TikTok's influence on their vocabulary development. The following section presents a detail about the results.

The analysis of the data collected from participants revealed four recurring themes that explain the influence of TikTok on students' vocabulary acquisition.

These include:

- a. Incidental and Content-Dependent Vocabulary Acquisition
- b. Multimodal and Repetitive Learning Support
- c. Engagement and Ease of Access Learning Environment
- d. Conditional and Constrained Learning Outcomes.

### **1. Incidental and Content-Dependent Vocabulary Acquisition**

The first theme indicates that vocabulary acquisition through TikTok largely occurs incidentally (incidental learning) when students watch various types of content. Many participants did not specifically open TikTok for the purpose of learning English, but they still acquired new vocabulary through exposure to the content they consumed daily. Participant (P6) stated that:

*"...The content was stand-up comedy... In my opinion, you can gain a lot depending on what content you watch."*

This suggests that the learning process occurs naturally during leisure activities such as watching short videos or scrolling through the app. Some participants explicitly stated that they acquire vocabulary while watching entertainment content or content that appears randomly on the For You Page (FYP).

For example, Participant (P8) stated that new vocabulary is often acquired unintentionally while watching content that interests them:

*“Entertainment... I learn new vocabulary incidentally. Usually from content I like.”*

A similar view was expressed by Participant (P11), who said they rarely use TikTok specifically to learn English but are still exposed to new vocabulary from content appearing on their feed:

*“...I usually use TikTok just to watch videos and do not specifically look for content to learn English... Basic vocabulary as well as slang in English.”*

Some participants also noted that learning vocabulary through TikTok felt relaxed because it happened alongside entertainment activities. Participant (P5) explained that learning vocabulary on TikTok felt like watching entertainment content while picking up new words:

*“...like watching entertainment while also getting new vocabulary.”*

This suggests that an informal learning environment can make the learning process feel less burdensome for students.

In addition, the type of vocabulary learned is heavily influenced by the type of content users watch. Participant (P3) explained that the vocabulary acquired can include both basic vocabulary and vocabulary related to specific topics, depending on the videos that appear on the FYP:

*“It can be basic vocabulary or topic-specific, depending on what video we’re watching and also depending on FYP.”*

Similarly, participant (P5) also stated:

*“I think it depends on what frequently appears on your FYP.”*

For example, Participant (P3) also mentioned that content such as “Get Ready With Me” (GRWM) videos can introduce vocabulary related to makeup tools and daily activities:

*“...Sometimes I get ‘GRWM’ videos, which give me vocabulary about how to do makeup and the tools used.”*

These findings indicate that content topics play a big role in determining the type of vocabulary learned, ranging from general vocabulary to specific vocabulary related to particular topics such as beauty, gaming, or everyday conversation.

In addition to vocabulary related to content topics, many participants also reported that they frequently pick up slang and informal expressions used by native English speakers. Participant (P5) explained that they often come across everyday vocabulary and slang through TikTok content:

*“In my opinion, the vocabulary acquired through TikTok is basic everyday vocabulary, as well as slang.”*

Participant (P1) also stated that they learned the casual vocabulary used by native speakers:

*“...like casual, slang words and how to speak like a native speaker.”*

Some participants even provided examples of slang words they learned through TikTok. For example, Participant (P5) mentioned the word “cap,” which means “lie”:

*“Yes, I have, for example, the word ‘cap’ means ‘a lie.’”*

Meanwhile, Participant (P6) also stated that they learned other slang words through TikTok content:

*“Yes, words like ‘lowkey.’”*

In addition, some participants also reported that they picked up unusual or “fun fact” vocabulary, including words related to fish names. For example, Participant (P7) stated,

*“...Kuwe in English is trevally fish.”*

Meanwhile, Participant (P12) mentioned,

*“...One example is pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis, which is the longest word in English.”*

When asked whether they use the vocabulary they acquire through TikTok, the majority of participants stated that they do. Participant (P1) explained:

*“...I do use some of the vocabulary I get from TikTok. The ones I end up using are usually the ones that feel natural or easy to use in daily conversation.”*

Similarly, participant (P3) stated:

*“Some of them stick and actually make sense in context, so yeah I use them. But not all of them, some are too niche or they die out too fast.”*

Participant (P4) stated:

*“...often find myself using some of those words naturally in conversations, or social media captions without even realizing it.”*

Overall, these findings indicate that TikTok can serve as a source of incidental, content-dependent vocabulary acquisition. Exposure to various types of videos that appeal to users allows them to acquire new vocabulary naturally, particularly everyday vocabulary, slang, and vocabulary related to specific topics. This suggests that TikTok can create a contextual language learning experience closely aligned with students' daily experiences.

## 2. Multimodal and Repetitive Learning Support

The second theme indicates that TikTok supports vocabulary learning through multimodal input, that is, a combination of visuals, audio, and text in a video format. This combination helps students understand word meanings because they not only read the vocabulary but also see the context of its use and hear how it is pronounced.

Some participants explained that the short and engaging video format makes the learning process easier to understand. Participant (P10) stated that the use of videos helps improve understanding and retention of new vocabulary:

*"It is quite effective because learning through videos is easier to remember and understand than just reading."*

*"... because TikTok is more practical and the explanation videos are shorter than YouTube, so they are easier to understand."*

This indicates that the visual and audio elements in videos provide additional cognitive support that helps students connect word forms and meaning simultaneously.

In addition, some TikTok videos, especially English learning videos, also provide example sentences and pronunciation guides, which help students comprehend how words are used in real-life contexts. Participant (P13) explained that it enables them not only to understand the words but also to practice them directly:

*“Sometimes, the videos also include example sentences and pronunciation, so I can practice as well.”*

*“...sometimes there are example sentences that help me understand how to use the words...”*

These findings suggest that when users have a serious intention to learn vocabulary through TikTok, the learning process that takes place is not merely receptive but can also support contextual understanding and pronunciation practice.

In addition to multimodal support, the repetition of content through TikTok’s algorithm also plays a role in reinforcing vocabulary recall. When the same words or expressions appear repeatedly on the For You Page (FYP), students receive repeated exposure that aids the memorization process. Participant (P13) described this experience as follows:

*“...Since similar videos appear repeatedly on my feed, I see the same words more often, which helps me memorize them faster...”*

This finding is further supported by the experiences of other participants who noted that they frequently encounter the same vocabulary repeatedly while

watching content on TikTok. For example, Participant (P5) stated that the frequent exposure to vocabulary on the FYP makes those words easier to remember.

*“I feel like I’ve improved, because I often come across the same words on my FYP, so they’re easier to remember.”*

This repeated exposure serves as reinforcement, allowing students to remember vocabulary more effectively without having to learn it through normal methods.

Thus, these findings suggest that the combination of audio-visual input and repeated exposure through the platform’s algorithm helps strengthen cognitive processes in vocabulary learning. Visuals, examples of word usage, and pronunciation models make it easier for students to understand vocabulary in the context of everyday use.

### **3. Engagement and Ease of Access Learning Environment**

The third theme concerns how TikTok’s high level of engagement and ease of access create a more captivating and comfortable learning environment for students. Based on interview data, many participants stated that TikTok provides content that is engaging, easily accessible, and not boring, making more enjoyable learning process.

The main factors that boost student engagement are the short and engaging video length. Some participants explained that the short video format makes them more interested in watching and understanding the content. Participant (P1), for example, stated that they like TikTok because the videos are short and engaging.

*“I like it because it’s short, and the content is really eye-catching.”*

A similar view was expressed by Participant (P13), who explained that short videos presented engagingly make the material easier to understand and less boring.

*“Yes, I enjoy using TikTok to learn new English words because the videos are short and explained in a fun way. The material is easier to understand and not boring...”*

This is also supported by Participant (P10), who compared TikTok with other platforms like YouTube. They noted that TikTok is more practical because the explanatory videos are shorter, making them easier to understand.

*“...TikTok is more practical, and the explanation videos are shorter than YouTube, so they are easier to understand.”*

In addition to video length, the ease of access to the platform is also a key factor driving students to use TikTok as a learning tool. Participant (P4) stated that TikTok is easy to access and offers engaging content, making the learning process more enjoyable.

*“Easy to access and the content is not boring.”*

A similar view was also shared by Participant (P5)

*“...it’s easy to access, the content is fun, and you can learn vocabulary while scrolling.”*

Similarly, Participant B also shared this view (P6)

*“...it’s practical, and the videos are short so they don’t get boring.”*

In addition, some participants described their learning experience through TikTok as a blend of learning and entertainment. Participant (P5) explained that learning vocabulary through TikTok feels relaxed because it is done while enjoying entertainment content.

*“Yes, I like it, because the learning feels relaxed like watching entertainment while also getting new vocabulary.”*

A similar view was also expressed by Participant (P8).

*“...it serves as entertainment, so the usage is voluntary and involves incidental learning.”*

These findings indicate that TikTok’s entertainment-based design, short videos, and easy access create a low-effort learning environment. This environment makes students feel more motivated to be exposed to English more frequently because the learning process feels relaxed, practical, and not boring. Consequently, high engagement levels can increase students’ chances of acquiring new vocabulary through the utilization of TikTok.

#### **4. Conditional and Constrained Learning Outcomes**

Although TikTok has the potential to support English vocabulary learning, the data collected indicate that its effectiveness is conditional and inconsistent. Learning outcomes are significantly influenced by factors such as content type, user focus, and usage conditions.

One of the main hurdles is the high level of distraction caused by the diversity of content. Some participants emphasized that TikTok is not entirely

designed as a learning platform, so users are easily distracted by other videos. As stated by Participant (P3):

*“It might be effective if all the content is educational. Otherwise, you will get distracted.”*

This point was further reinforced by Participant (P11), who noted that it is difficult to stay focused due to the abundance of irrelevant content:

*“It is difficult to stay focused because there are many distractions from other content.”*

Similarly, Participant (P13) also stated that:

*“I often get distracted when using TikTok for learning because I end up watching unrelated videos...”*

In addition to distractions, the short duration of the videos also poses a limitation in the learning process. Although this format is engaging, some participants felt that it hinders deeper understanding. Participant (P2) stated:

*“The difficulty is that the videos are short.”*

Another limitation relates to understanding the context of vocabulary, particularly slang or new words that appear sporadically. Participant (P5) explained that:

*“Sometimes it’s hard to understand the context of words or new slang, and you can forget them if they only appear once.”*

In addition, some participants also faced difficulties in understanding meanings without additional help, such as a dictionary. Participant (P8) noted that:

*“Sometimes, for vocabulary that cannot be understood without a dictionary, I have to look up the meaning.”*

Meanwhile, other linguistic aspects, such as variations in accent, also posed a challenge, as expressed by Participant (P12):

*“Different accents can be challenging, and sometimes it is difficult to understand the meaning from the context.”*

Technical factors also influence the effectiveness of learning, particularly regarding internet access. Participant 1 noted:

*“When we can't access it because of internet issues, or when we don't have mobile data.”*

Furthermore, TikTok's effectiveness also depends heavily on its algorithm and user intent. Randomly appearing content can limit learning outcomes. Participant (P8) stated:

*“It is less effective because the content is random... I think my improvement is not very significant.”*

This indicates that the learning that occurs tends to be incidental rather than structured. Without control over the type of content that appears, users do not always receive exposure to vocabulary relevant to their learning needs. Participant (P11) emphasized that:

*“The content that appears on my FYP cannot be selected according to my learning needs.”*

In addition, the lack of practice is another factor that hinders learning outcomes. TikTok functions more as a medium for exposure than as a medium for active practice. Participant (P14) stated:

*“It is hard to practice vocabulary directly, because TikTok does not provide specific features for practicing.”*

This finding suggests that without further practice, acquired vocabulary tends to be difficult to retain in the long term. Therefore, learning by using TikTok videos needs to be supplemented by other learning strategies that are more structured.

One participant emphasized that TikTok’s effectiveness heavily depends on motivation. Participant (P4) stated that:

*“It’s very effective if we truly want to learn vocabulary.”*

This means internal factors like intent to learn and active engagement determine whether or not learning through this platform is successful.

Therefore, TikTok can be an engaging way for a student to learn vocabulary, but the result may not always be optimal. Its effectiveness is situational and depends on various factors, including distractions, insufficient depth of the explanation, exposure quality, limited learning features, as well as user intents and learning strategies.

## B. Discussion

This discussion aims to interpret the research findings in relation to the research question and by relating them to previous studies and relevant literature.

The first theme is TikTok influences incidental authentic vocabulary acquisition. Watching and scrolling, for instance, is a medium in the process of linguistic acquisition. The variety of videos watched, such as make-up, gaming, and other entertainment, determines the kind of vocabulary one learns, from general vocabulary, content-specific vocabulary, to slang words. These findings reinforce the fact that digital media can provide an authentic environment of contextual learning, where language is not only learned formally, but through exposure to its real-world usage. This matches with the principles of Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, which holds that learners construct their understanding, knowledge is subjective and is based on individual experiences and perspectives, besides interactions with others, in this case, the digital environment. This finding also aligns with previous studies, such as Sely and Priyatmojo (2026), which showed that TikTok enables incidental vocabulary acquisition through contextual and real-world entertainment content. Further, results by the Rosa and Suhartatik (2025) study also confirm that TikTok provides vocabulary understanding with authentic contexts of everyday usage. However, Schmitt (2008) emphasizes that intentional and explicit vocabulary learning leads to faster gains, better retention, and stronger productive mastery than incidental exposure. This contrasts with the finding that TikTok learning is mostly accidental and entertainment-based. While

repeated exposure to the FYP may help recognition, it does not necessarily ensure long-term memory or active use of vocabulary in speaking and writing.

The second theme is TikTok's influence on acquisition, which is strengthened by its use of multimodal and repetition. It was found that these elements ensured that the learning of new words that accompany the videos was comprehensible, and the words could be remembered. In addition to lexical forms, students are exposed to their phonological aspects as well as contextual meanings. This fits within the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2005), which asserts that learning is effective when two channels (visual and verbal) receive information at the same time. Additionally, algorithm such as the For You Page (FYP) enables repeated exposure to specific content topics and vocabulary, indirectly reinforcing the process of memorization. These findings are in line with findings by Sely and Priyatmojo (2026), which suggest that repeated exposure to TikTok content helps in better vocabulary comprehension. In addition, Alharthy (2025) also concluded that the mastery of vocabulary, both in terms of pronunciation and spelling, is enhanced by repeated viewing of TikTok videos with English content. Therefore, TikTok offers a learning environment which is not only input-rich but also caters to the continuous cognitive mechanisms. However, too much multimodal stimulation can create cognitive overload. Mayer (2008) suggests that excessive visuals, music, captions, and fast editing may distract learners rather than help them.

The third theme is regarding a learning environment based on engagement and accessibility. This study shows that TikTok is creating a more relaxed,

engaging, and accessible learning atmosphere. The short-form video format and attractive visual presentation make the learning process feel less daunting and seamlessly integrated with entertainment activities. This circumstance enhances student engagement. From the perspective of social constructivism by Vygotsky (1978), high engagement indicates that learning occurs actively through user participation. This is consistent with findings from previous studies, such as the research by Tari et al. (2026), TikTok is perceived as a user-friendly, engaging, and contextual medium that enhances students' learning motivation. Additionally, Alharthy (2025) also demonstrated that the interactive and contextual nature of TikTok content can boost motivation and learning participation. However, although TikTok was found to create an engaging and enjoyable learning environment, engagement alone does not guarantee effective learning outcomes. Previous studies (Alharthy, 2025) highlight that the same features that increase engagement, such as endless scrolling and entertaining content, may also lead to distraction and reduced learning focus.

The fourth theme concerns conditional and constrained learning outcomes. This study has also revealed that TikTok's effectiveness is inconsistent and is determined by many factors. Distractions from other content are the primary obstacle to distraction. From Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning point of view, high levels of distraction can interfere with cognitive processes, more so in the information selection and organization stages. In addition, the limited duration of videos sometimes reduces a deeper understanding of linguistic contexts. Other factors, such as variations in accents that may hinder understanding, limited

opportunities for active practice, and technical challenges, also influence learning outcomes. These findings aligned with the previous research, such as Alharthy's (2025) study, which identified distractions and the potential for language misconceptions as the main challenges in utilizing TikTok in language learning. Research by Tari et al. (2026) as well as Rosa and Suhartatik (2025) also found similar limitations, such as limited depth of material due to short video durations and a lack of direct interaction. Therefore, the success of utilizing TikTok comes down to the self-directed learning strategies and the user's ability to harness distractions and hence, TikTok is better positioned to complement rather than replace formal learning.

Although this study found that TikTok supports vocabulary learning through incidental and multimodal input, this finding also contrasts with Chiossi et al. (2023), who found that TikTok exposure significantly impaired prospective memory. The study showed that this effect was caused not by engagement but by TikTok's structural features, rapid context switching, fast-paced content, and multimodal stimulation, which overload attention and working memory. This suggests that while TikTok may enhance vocabulary recognition, it may also hinder deeper processing, attention, and long-term retention, making its effectiveness conditional.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter is put together to present the conclusions and recommendations of the research. The conclusions summarize the findings of the study, followed by recommendations.

#### A. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore university students' experiences in utilizing TikTok for vocabulary acquisition. Data were gathered from fourteen participants through an open-ended questionnaire, and the responses underwent data analysis using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework. The data analysis was conducted to address the research question: What is the influence of TikTok on EFL students' vocabulary acquisition?

First, the findings suggest that TikTok influences students to acquire new vocabulary incidentally. The TikTok platform enables vocabulary acquisition by incidental means. The vocabulary that they incidentally acquired included basic everyday vocabulary, words specifically related to a topic they find interesting, and slang words. Therefore, there is a contextual learning environment in which vocabulary is acquired in a natural context, with no conscious or overt learning strategies employed.

Second, the findings also indicate that TikTok encourages learning through its multimodal and repetitive exposure. The multimodal approach was helping to learn not only the meaning of a word but also its use. In addition, the platform's

algorithm that recommends content based on the users' interests ensures that videos of a similar nature appear repeatedly, ensuring increased exposure to certain vocabulary by students.

Third, TikTok offers a learning environment that feels enjoyable and easy to access. The short-video format and engaging content make learning feel less daunting and more entertaining. This increases student engagement and encourages them to be exposed to English more frequently.

Finally, the findings show that while TikTok has potential as a tool for learning English vocabulary, its effectiveness depends on various factors. It can be hindered by distractions from unrelated content, the short length of videos, and sometimes difficulties in understanding the language used. In addition, technical issues, lack of practice opportunities, and the randomness of the algorithm further limit its effectiveness. These challenges show that vocabulary learning through TikTok is usually incidental and not necessarily structured. The success of learning through TikTok is also highly dependent on users' motivation, focus, and learning intentions. If students are passive in their engagement or if there are no clear learning objectives, the platform may not have any benefits. Therefore, although TikTok can provide an engaging exposure to vocabulary, it should be used together with more structured or other learning methods to enhance a deeper understanding.

## **B. Recommendation**

Based on the results of this study, several recommendations can be made that may be of use to the students, teachers, and other researchers.

First, a suggestion for students is to utilize TikTok as a medium for learning vocabulary words carefully. And, because the learning of vocabulary through TikTok tends to occur by accident, students are encouraged to practice their knowledge of the vocabulary words from TikTok with other contexts, such as notebooks, dictionaries, or speaking and writing activities utilizing the new vocabulary words.

Second, the teachers can utilize TikTok by directing their students towards relevant and educational content on the platform. Teachers may also design activities that connect TikTok content with classroom learning. This may include curating relevant TikTok content that aligns with learning objectives, particularly videos that provide contextualized language use through authentic communication.

Finally, future researchers are suggested to explore this topic further by involving a larger number of participants or using different research methods. This would provide a deeper knowledge of how TikTok can be utilized more effectively as a language learning tool.



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## Appendix A. Appointment Letter of Supervisor



### KEPUTUSAN DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH NOMOR: 1497 TAHUN 2025

#### TENTANG: PENGANGKATAN PEMBIMBING SKRIPSI MAHASISWA DENGAN RAHMAT TUHAN YANG MAHA ESA

- DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH
- Menimbang : a. bahwa untuk kelancaran bimbingan skripsi mahasiswa pada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh maka dipandang perlu menunjuk pembimbing skripsi;  
b. bahwa yang namanya tersebut dalam Surat Keputusan ini dianggap cakap dan mampu untuk diangkat dalam jabatan sebagai pembimbing skripsi mahasiswa;  
c. bahwa berdasarkan pertimbangan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam huruf a dan huruf b, perlu menetapkan Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.
- Mengingat : 1. Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional;  
2. Undang-Undang Nomor 14 Tahun 2005, tentang Guru dan Dosen;  
3. Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2012, tentang Pendidikan Tinggi;  
4. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 74 Tahun 2012, tentang perubahan atas peraturan pemerintah RI Nomor 23 Tahun 2005 tentang pengelolaan keuangan Badan Layanan Umum;  
5. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 4 Tahun 2014, tentang penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Tinggi dan Pengelolaan Perguruan Tinggi;  
6. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 64 Tahun 2013, tentang perubahan Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Menjadi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
7. Peraturan Menteri Agama RI Nomor 44 Tahun 2022, tentang Organisasi dan Tata Kerja UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
8. Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 14 Tahun 2022, tentang Statuta UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
9. Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 492 Tahun 2003, tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang Pengangkatan, Pemindahan dan Pemberhentian PNS di Lingkungan Depag RI;  
10. Keputusan Menteri Keuangan Nomor 293/Kmk.05/2011, tentang penetapan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh pada Kementerian Agama sebagai Instansi Pemerintah yang menerapkan Pengelolaan Badan Layanan Umum;  
11. Surat Keputusan Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor 01 Tahun 2015, Tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang kepada Dekan dan Direktur Pascasarjana di Lingkungan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.

#### MEMUTUSKAN

- Menetapkan : Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh tentang Pembimbing Skripsi Mahasiswa.
- KESATU : Menunjuk Saudara :  
**Prof. Safrul Muluk, S.Ag., M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D**  
Untuk membimbing Skripsi  
Nama : Muhammad Safwanulhadi  
NIM : 190203160  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Judul Skripsi : **The Influence of Tik Tok on EFL Students' Vocabulary Acquisition**
- KEDUA : Kepada pembimbing yang tercantum namanya diatas diberikan honorarium sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku;
- KETIGA : Pembiayaan akibat keputusan ini dibebankan pada DIPA UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor SP DIPA-025.04.2.423925/2025 Tanggal 02 Desember 2024 Tahun Anggaran 2025;
- KEEMPAT : Keputusan ini berlaku selama enam bulan sejak tanggal ditetapkan;
- KELIMA : Keputusan ini berlaku sejak tanggal ditetapkan dengan ketentuan bahwa segala sesuatu akan dirubah dan diperbaiki kembali sebagaimana mestinya, apabila kemudian hari ternyata terdapat kekeliruan dalam Surat Keputusan ini.

Ditetapkan di : Banda Aceh  
Pada tanggal : 30 Oktober 2025  
Dekan,

  
Safrul Muluk

#### Tembusan

1. Sekjen Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
2. Doyen Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
3. Direktur Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
4. Kantor Pelayanan Perbendaharaan Negara (KPPN), di Banda Aceh;
5. Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
6. Kepala Bagian Keuangan dan Aministrasi UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
7. Yang bersangkutan;
8. Arsip.



**Appendix B. Recommendation Letter from Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan to Conduct Field Research**



**KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH  
FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**

Jl. Syeikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh Telp/Fax. : 0651-752921

Nomor : B-2611/Un.08/FTK.1/TL.00/4/2026

Lamp : -

Hal : **Penelitian Ilmiah Mahasiswa**

Kepada Yth,

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh  
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry dengan ini menerangkan bahwa:

NIM : 190203160

Nama : MUHAMMAD SAFWANULHADI

Program Studi/Jurusan : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

Alamat : Jl.Prof Aly Hayimi Lr.Hasyim Mahmud No.2 Pango Raya Uleekareng Banda Aceh

Saudara yang tersebut namanya diatas benar mahasiswa Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan bermaksud melakukan penelitian ilmiah di lembaga yang Bapak/Ibu pimpin dalam rangka penulisan Skripsi dengan judul ***THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON EFL STUDENT'S VOCABULARY ACQUISITION***

Banda Aceh, 17 April 2026

An. Dekan

Wakil Dekan Bidang Akademik dan Kelembagaan



Berlaku sampai : 29 Mei 2026

Prof. Dr. Buhori Muslim, M.Ag.

NIP. 197508152001121002

## Appendix C. Confirmation Letter from English Education Department



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY  
**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**  
**PRODI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS**

Jln Syeikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh  
Email : [pbi.ftk@ar-raniry.ac.id](mailto:pbi.ftk@ar-raniry.ac.id), Website : <https://ar-raniry.ac.id>

### SURAT KETERANGAN

Nomor: B-165/Un.08/PBI/Kp.01.2/4/2026

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Darussalam Banda Aceh menerangkan bahwa yang nama tersebut di bawah ini:

Nama : Muhammad Safwanulhadi  
NIM : 190203160  
Prodi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Alamat : Jalan aly Hasyimi Pango raya Uleekareng Banda Aceh

Benar telah melakukan pengumpulan data untuk penelitian pada Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh dalam rangka penyusunan Skripsi yang berjudul:

**"THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK ON EFL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACQUISITION"**

Demikianlah Surat Keterangan ini kami buat agar dapat dipergunakan seperlunya.

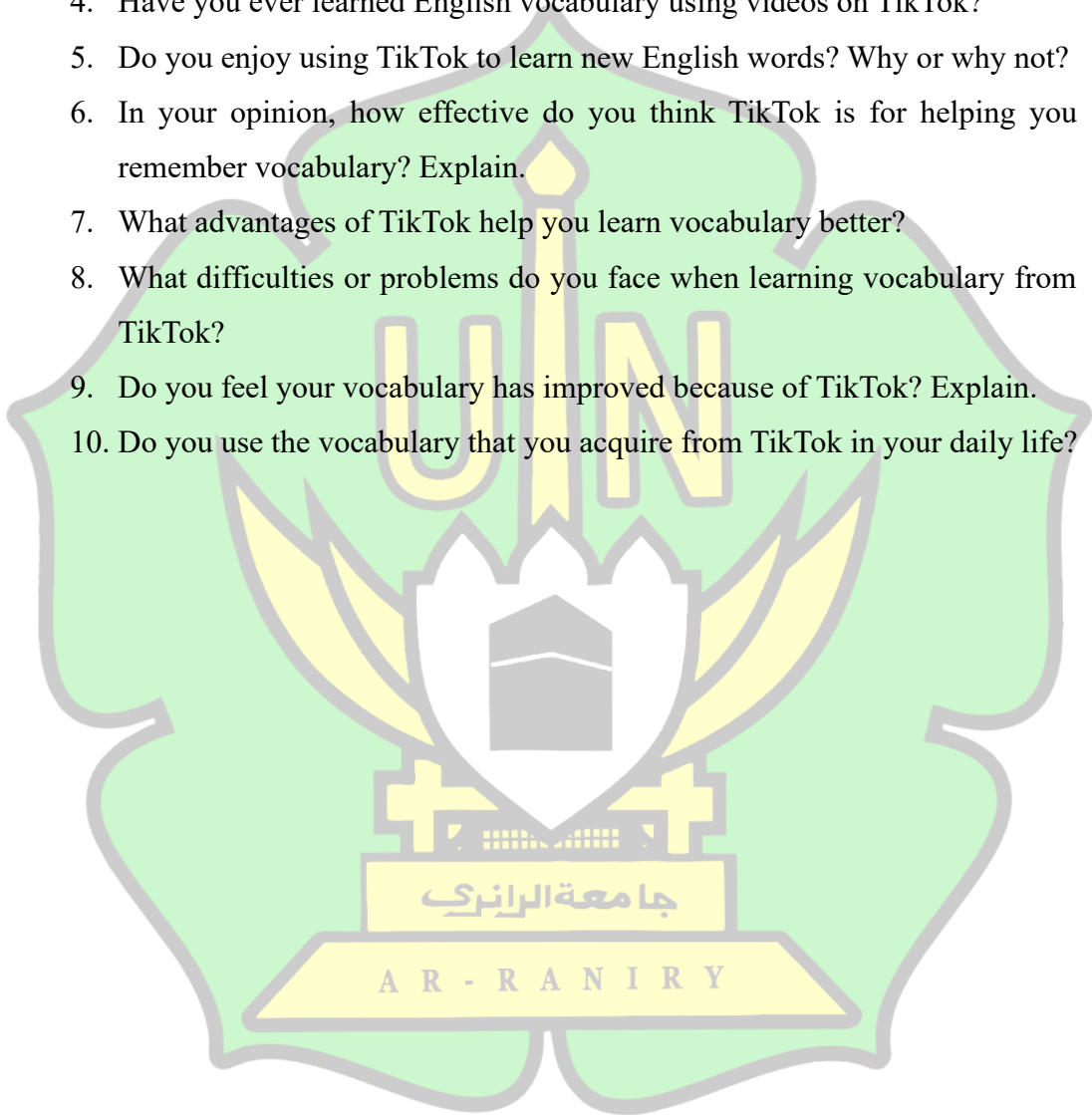
Banda Aceh, 20 April 2026  
Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris,



Syarifah Dahliana

**Appendix D. List of Questions.**

1. How often do you use TikTok? (Explain your average time and frequency.)
2. Do you use TikTok for learning English? If yes, what type of content helps your vocabulary?
3. In your opinion, what vocabulary can be acquired through TikTok?
4. Have you ever learned English vocabulary using videos on TikTok?
5. Do you enjoy using TikTok to learn new English words? Why or why not?
6. In your opinion, how effective do you think TikTok is for helping you remember vocabulary? Explain.
7. What advantages of TikTok help you learn vocabulary better?
8. What difficulties or problems do you face when learning vocabulary from TikTok?
9. Do you feel your vocabulary has improved because of TikTok? Explain.
10. Do you use the vocabulary that you acquire from TikTok in your daily life?



**Appendix E. Questionnaire Transcript.**

**Participant 1 (p1)**

1. 5-6 hours per day
2. Yes, trending topics
3. like casual, slang words
4. Yeah, I have, like casual slang words and how to speak like a native speaker.
5. I like it because it's short, and the content is really eye-catching.
6. It's fairly effective since it's online, but it also has a lot of downsides.
7. It's easy to access anywhere, the content is interesting, and the videos aren't long so they don't get boring.
8. when we can't access it because of internet issues or when we don't have mobile data.
9. I think it's quite helpful since most of the time on TikTok you're hearing native speakers, so you get how they actually use words.
10. I do use some of the vocabulary I get from Tiktok. The ones i end up using are usually the ones that feel natural or easy to use in daily conversation.

**Participant 2 (p2)**

1. 0-2 hours per day
2. Sometimes, entertainment content
3. Vocabulary about a specific theme
4. Rare
5. I don't like it, because the videos are short.
6. For me, it's not very effective, but for others maybe it's okay.
7. The advantage is that it's easy to access.
8. The difficulty is that the videos are short.
9. Not too much.
10. I don't remember, I think Im not

### Participant 3 (p3)

1. 5-6 hours per day
2. Yeah, gaming content that uses English.
3. It can be basic vocabulary or topic-specific, depending on what video we're watching and also depending on FYP.
4. Like phrases such as 'if you know, you know,' 'FYP' meaning 'For You Page,' there are a lot really, it depends on what videos I get. Sometimes I get 'GRWM' videos, which give me vocabulary about how to do makeup and the tools used.
5. I like it because it's not boring.
6. It might be effective if all the content is educational. Otherwise, you will get distracted.
7. The advantages are that it's accessible, the ideas are fresh, and the scope is wide.
8. Distractions happen very easily.
9. It seems like it has improved a little.
10. Some of them stick and actually make sense in context, so yeah I use them. But not all of them some are too niche or they die out too fast

### Participant 4 (p4)

1. More than 6 hours per day
2. Yes, trending content.
3. Vocabulary about songs.
4. Yes, GRMW (Get Ready With Me).
5. Yes, because on TikTok there is a lot of new vocabulary, whether from trends or others.
6. It's very effective if we truly want to learn vocabulary
7. Easy to access and the content is not boring.
8. Maybe the internet/network.
9. Yes, it increases.
10. I do use vocabulary that I learn through tiktok. Sometimes I learn new words from educational content, English learning videos, and I try to use them when speaking or writing. other times, I pick up words unintentionally just by watching daily-life content. bcs those words are often used in real contexts, I often find myself using some of those words naturally in conversations, or social media captions without even realizing it.

### **Participant 5 (p5)**

1. 3-4 hours per day
2. Yes, I have, usually I watch entertainment content.
3. In my opinion, the vocabulary acquired through TikTok is basic everyday vocabulary, as well as slang.
4. Yes, I have, for example, the word “cap” means “a lie.”
5. Yes, I like it, because the learning feels relaxed, like watching entertainment while also getting new vocabulary.
6. I think it depends on what frequently appears on your FYP.
7. I think the advantages are that it’s easy to access, the content is fun, and you can learn vocabulary while scrolling.
8. Sometimes it’s hard to understand the context of words or new slang, and you can forget them if they only appear once.
9. I feel like I’ve improved, because I often come across the same words on my FYP, so they’re easier to remember
10. I do use basic vocabulary.

### **Participant 6 (p6)**

1. 3-4 hours per day
2. Yes. The content was stand-up comedy.
3. In my opinion, you can gain a lot depending on what content you watch.
4. Yes, words like “lowkey.”
5. I like it because I can learn while watching content.
6. I think it’s effective because it relates to the content of the videos we watch, and it’s easier to connect with the meaning.
7. The advantage is that it’s practical, and the videos are short so they don’t get boring.
8. Sometimes I get confused with the use of new slang.
9. I can feel the improvement, especially in slang.
10. I use some of the vocabulary I have learned from TikTok in my daily life

### **Participant 7 (p7)**

1. 3-4 hours per day
2. Learning English
3. Basic vocabulary
4. Vocabulary of sea fish names in English, for example: Kuwe in English is Trevally fish
5. Yes, because TikTok is very easy to use
6. Not very effective, but it has a significant effect
7. Easy to access
8. A video-based platform that contains not only educational content but all kinds of videos on TikTok
9. Yes, but it is not as effective as reading books or other materials in English
10. I do, but not very much

### **Participant 8 (p8)**

1. 0-2 hours per day
2. Entertainment
3. Game vocabulary, politics
4. I learn new vocabulary incidentally. Usually from content I like.
5. Sometimes even though I get new vocabulary from TikTok, I still filter whether I will use it to avoid sounding “alay” (overly slangy/immature), etc.
6. It is less effective because the content is random
7. The advantage is that it serves as entertainment, so the usage is voluntary and involves incidental learning
8. Sometimes for vocabulary that cannot be understood without a dictionary, I have to look up the meaning
9. I think my improvement is not very significant.
10. I do use it sometimes, especially when I write in English.

### **Participant 9 (p9)**

1. 3-4 hours per day
2. Yes, content about learning English and daily conversations.
3. Basic vocabulary and daily-use vocabulary.
4. Daily vocabulary, like “I want to eat”
5. Yes, because it makes learning easier to understand.
6. Around 50% effective because it depends on how often I watch and practice the words.
7. It is interesting and fun, so it keeps me engaged while learning.
8. The lack of subtitles sometimes makes it harder to understand.
9. Yes, it has improved a little.
10. I use it. Words I learn from TikTok often stick in my mind, so I can use them when chatting or speaking English, even without realizing it.

### **Participant 10 (p10)**

1. More than 6 hours per day
2. Yes, I have used TikTok to learn English. The content that helps me the most is daily conversation videos.
3. The vocabulary that can be learned is usually English slang and words that are often used in everyday conversations, for example: get ready with me, etc.
4. Yes, I have. I learned some vocabulary such as the names of body parts.
5. Yes, because TikTok is more practical and the explanation videos are shorter than YouTube, so they are easier to understand.
6. It is quite effective because learning through videos is easier to remember and understand than just reading.
7. TikTok is easy to access anytime and anywhere, so it is flexible for learning.
8. There are no difficulties.
9. Yes, because I often watch English vlogs on TikTok, so my English skills have also improved.
10. Yes, I use vocabulary I’ve learned from TikTok, especially words that are commonly used in conversation and some slang.

### Participant 11 (p11)

1. 5-6 hours per day
2. Rarely. I usually use TikTok just to watch videos and do not specifically look for content to learn English.
3. Basic vocabulary as well as slang in English.
4. Yes.
5. No, because I do not specifically use it for learning.
6. Not very effective, because the content that appears on my FYP cannot be selected according to my learning needs.
7. It is easy to access and flexible for finding various types of content.
8. It is difficult to stay focused because there are many distractions from other content.
9. There has been some improvement, but it has not had a significant impact.
10. yes i do, sometimes i accidentally learn vocab that passes through my fyp and then I use it in daily conversations

### Participant 12 (p12)

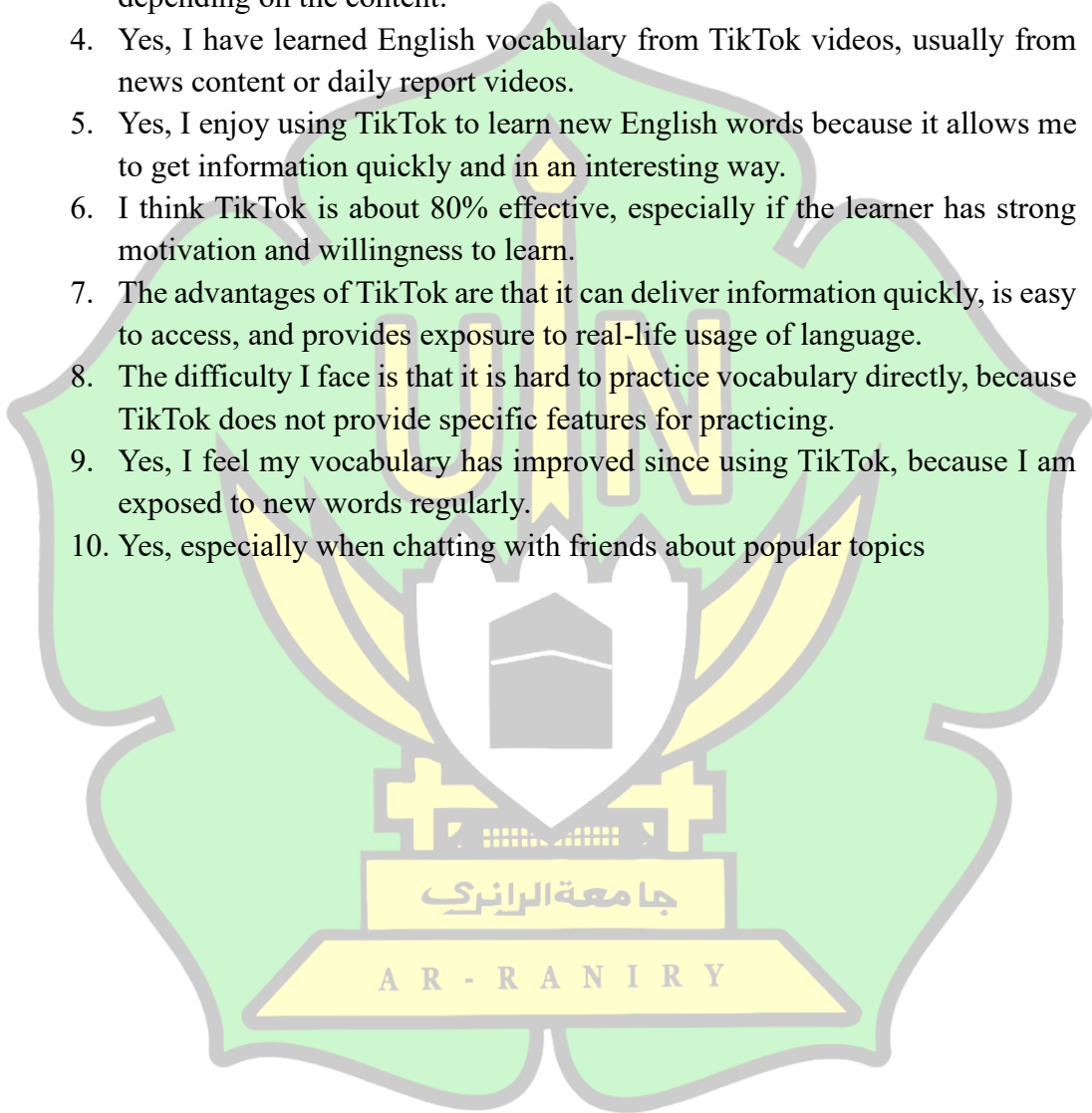
1. 5-6 hours per day
2. Yes, Content about English learning and English slang.
3. basic vocabulary and specific vocabulary used in certain situations, such as at the airport, train station, and other daily contexts.
4. Yes, I have. One example is pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis, which is the longest word in English.
5. Yes, I enjoy it because TikTok helps me discover many new words and slang that are rarely found in textbooks.
6. It is quite effective, especially if the videos are related to real-life situations and daily contexts.
7. The content is diverse, interesting, and easy to access anytime and anywhere.
8. Different accents can be challenging, and sometimes it is difficult to understand the meaning from the context.
9. Yes, I feel my vocabulary has improved because the learning process is based on reallife context, which makes it easier to understand and remember.
10. Yes, I do use vocabulary that I learn through TikTok, especially casual expressions.

### Participant 13 (p13)

1. More than 6 hours per day
2. Yes, I use TikTok to learn English. The types of content are entertainment videos.
3. In my opinion, we can learn vocabulary with specific themes, such as daily conversation, cooking, or other topic-based vocabulary.
4. Yes, I have. For example, I learned about adjective order
5. Yes, I enjoy using TikTok to learn new English words because the videos are short and explained in a fun way. The material easier to understand and not boring. Sometimes, the videos also include example sentences and pronunciation, so I can practice as well.
6. TikTok is quite effective for helping me remember English vocabulary because the videos are short and presented in an interesting way, making them easier to remember. In addition, sometimes there are example sentences that help me understand how to use the words. Since similar videos appear repeatedly on my feed, I see the same words more often, which helps me memorize them faster. However, I still need to practice on my own to fully retain the vocabulary.
7. TikTok is easy to access, interesting, and provides short and clear videos. It also often includes pronunciation examples, which help improve my speaking skills.
8. I often get distracted when using TikTok for learning because I end up watching unrelated videos. Also, it is sometimes difficult to remember all the words because the videos change quickly, and some vocabulary is easily forgotten.
9. Yes, I feel that my vocabulary has slightly improved because of TikTok, although it is not very significant.
10. I do, The vocabulary I use is usually casual language or terms that are currently trending.

### Participant 14 (p14)

1. 3-4 hours per day
2. Yes. The type of content that helps my vocabulary is mostly trending content such as fashion and style videos.
3. In my opinion, the vocabulary that can be acquired through TikTok includes basic vocabulary as well as specific vocabulary related to certain topics, depending on the content.
4. Yes, I have learned English vocabulary from TikTok videos, usually from news content or daily report videos.
5. Yes, I enjoy using TikTok to learn new English words because it allows me to get information quickly and in an interesting way.
6. I think TikTok is about 80% effective, especially if the learner has strong motivation and willingness to learn.
7. The advantages of TikTok are that it can deliver information quickly, is easy to access, and provides exposure to real-life usage of language.
8. The difficulty I face is that it is hard to practice vocabulary directly, because TikTok does not provide specific features for practicing.
9. Yes, I feel my vocabulary has improved since using TikTok, because I am exposed to new words regularly.
10. Yes, especially when chatting with friends about popular topics



## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name : Muhammad Safwanulhadi  
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### Educational Background

Elementary School : MIN 5 KOTA BANDA ACEH  
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### Parental Information

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