


# Tiktok as a Language Learning Media: Investigating Students' Motivational Factors to Learn English at Tadulako University

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## A B S T R A C T

This study examines students' motivation to use TikTok as a language-learning medium and explores how the quality of TikTok content influences their motivation to learn English. The focus is on intrinsic motivations such as enjoyment, curiosity, and personal interest, as well as extrinsic motivations such as academic goals, career preparation, and social recognition. A qualitative research design was chosen, comprising interviews with three students in the English Language Teaching program at Tadulako University. The results showed that the participants used TikTok because of its short, engaging, and interactive video format, which made learning more entertaining and less formal. Intrinsically, they experienced increased interest and satisfaction when engaging with creative English content. Extrinsically, they were motivated by the desire to improve their language skills, achieve academic success, and prepare for a future career as an English teacher. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the quality of TikTok content significantly influenced students' motivation. Clear, concise, and well-structured learning content promotes understanding and confidence, while content that was overly entertainment-oriented or unclear can reduce learning effectiveness. Overall, the study concluded that TikTok could serve as a supportive learning medium when students intentionally selected high-quality educational content to support their language learning goals.

**Keywords:** *Tiktok, Language Learning Media, Students' Motivational Factors, English*

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## INTRODUCTION

Motivation plays a central role in language learning because it shapes learners' persistence, effort, and overall achievement. Students who are highly motivated tend to demonstrate sustained engagement and consistent progress in developing language proficiency. In the context of English as a foreign language, motivation not only affects immediate learning outcomes but also determines whether learners continue practicing beyond the classroom. Empirical evidence shows that motivated learners are more likely to achieve higher levels of language competence and maintain long-term learning commitment (Wang et al., 2024). Without sufficient motivation, even well-designed instructional materials and effective teaching strategies may fail to produce optimal results.

From a theoretical perspective, motivation is commonly categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Intrinsic motivation refers to internal drives such as curiosity, interest, and personal satisfaction derived from the learning process. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is influenced by external factors, including academic rewards, social recognition, and career-related goals (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Both forms of motivation are essential in shaping learners' engagement. A balanced interaction between intrinsic enjoyment and external incentives often leads to more meaningful and sustained learning experiences.

In higher education, particularly in English Education programs, student motivation becomes more complex and multidimensional. Students are expected not only to master language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but also to develop pedagogical competence as future English teachers. Their motivation is influenced by

academic demands, professional expectations, and personal aspirations. Some students are driven by an interest in global communication and English-speaking cultures, while others focus on achieving academic success or preparing for future teaching careers.

Instructional media play an important role in enhancing student motivation. Traditionally, lecturers rely on textbooks, printed modules, classroom discussions, and presentations. In recent years, digital technologies such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), PowerPoint, and online video platforms have been widely integrated into teaching practices to improve accessibility and engagement (Guo, 2023; Park & Lee, 2023). However, these platforms are often structured and formal, which may not fully align with the preferences of Generation Z learners who favor interactive, dynamic, and personalized digital content (Chen & Li, 2023; Wang et al., 2024).

The emergence of social media has introduced new opportunities for language learning. TikTok, in particular, has gained significant attention due to its short-video format and highly personalized content delivery. The platform allows users to access authentic and engaging language input in a concise and visually appealing manner. Its algorithm recommends content based on user interaction, creating a tailored learning experience that can increase user engagement (Chen & Li, 2023). As a result, TikTok has become a popular platform among students, especially those belonging to Generation Z.

TikTok offers considerable potential as a language learning medium, particularly in fostering student motivation. Creative and easy-to-understand content can enhance intrinsic motivation by making learning enjoyable and accessible. At the same time, interactive features such as likes, comments, and challenges can stimulate extrinsic motivation through social recognition and participation (Smith et al., 2021; Park & Lee, 2023). Nevertheless, the educational value of TikTok depends heavily on the quality and accuracy of its content, as misleading or superficial materials may reduce its effectiveness (Davis et al., 2023).

Despite its potential, the use of TikTok in formal educational contexts remains limited and underexplored. Many students primarily use the platform for entertainment rather than structured learning. In addition, TikTok's algorithm tends to prioritize engaging content over educational depth, which may not always support academic learning objectives (Zhang & Yu, 2023). This situation highlights a gap between informal digital learning practices and formal language instruction in higher education.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to investigate how TikTok influences students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learning English at Tadulako University. It also seeks to identify the factors that encourage students to use TikTok as a language learning medium. By examining students' experiences and perceptions, this study contributes to a better understanding of how social media platforms can be integrated into language learning to enhance motivation and engagement.

## METHOD

This study applied a qualitative descriptive design to explore how TikTok influences students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in learning English. The research focused on three students from the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Tadulako University. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on clear criteria, including active use of TikTok for language learning for at least six months and willingness to participate in interviews. This approach allowed the researcher to capture detailed insights into students' real experiences, perceptions, and engagement with TikTok as a learning medium within a natural academic context.

Data were collected through two main techniques: TikTok content observation and semi-structured interviews. In the observation stage, participants were asked to show examples of videos they frequently used for learning English. The researcher used a structured checklist to record types of content, duration of use, and indicators of motivation such as enjoyment, curiosity, and goal-oriented behavior. After that, individual interviews were conducted in a face-to-face setting, each lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. The interviews

explored students' motivations, learning experiences, and perceptions of TikTok content. All interviews were recorded with consent and transcribed to ensure accurate data representation.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher first organized and reviewed all transcripts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Relevant segments were then coded and grouped into broader themes, including intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, content quality, and algorithm influence. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied data triangulation by comparing findings from observations and interviews. Member checking was also conducted by confirming the accuracy of the data with participants. This systematic analysis enabled the researcher to identify clear patterns and provide a deeper understanding of how TikTok functions as a language learning medium that influences students' motivation.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the influence of TikTok on students' motivation in learning English. The interview analysis can be divided into two main categories: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The interview results and resulting topics are presented below.

### Motivations for Using TikTok in English Learning

According to interviews, students' primary motivation for using TikTok to learn English lies in the platform's convenience and flexibility. TikTok offers an engaging and entertaining learning experience that's available anytime, anywhere. This is especially important for students with busy schedules who have little time to study outside of class hours.

Table 1. Motivations for Using TikTok in English Learning

Question 1:	<i>"What motivates you to use TikTok for language learning? And do you prefer fun or educational content? Why?"</i>
Participant 1:	<i>"I use TikTok for language learning because the content is very accessible and engaging. I prefer entertaining content because it makes me more engaged and keeps learning from becoming boring."</i>
Participant 2:	<i>"With TikTok, I can learn languages in a more relaxed and enjoyable way. I prefer entertaining content because it makes me feel more relaxed and less stressed, and I still learn something."</i>
Participant 3:	<i>"I'm particularly drawn to educational content presented playfully. This way, I receive useful information without feeling pressured."</i>

Participant 1(P1) explained that TikTok motivates her because the content is easily accessible, concise, and engaging. She prefers entertaining content because it makes learning relaxed and enjoyable. P1 stated that TikTok offers a more relaxed way to learn English compared to formal methods that require classroom instruction or reading textbooks. TikTok creates a casual and flexible learning environment that allows for continuous learning without feeling pressured. The short video format makes learning more engaging and less overwhelming, as learners can focus on one topic at a time.

P1 also added that she felt more comfortable learning English through TikTok because the video format was easy to understand and immediately applicable. By watching videos demonstrating pronunciation and vocabulary in more natural contexts, she quickly understood how the language was used in everyday life. This was a stark contrast to classroom learning materials, which she sometimes found too theoretical and lacking a direct connection to real-world language use.

P1 also stated that TikTok offers access to a wide variety of content tailored to her personal interests—from vocabulary learning and daily conversation practice to learning about culture through native speakers. TikTok allows her to choose content tailored to her learning abilities and interests, making the learning process more personalized and enjoyable. She emphasized that following content from her favorite creators motivates her to keep learning and return to TikTok daily.

However, P1 also mentioned that while TikTok is very effective for informal learning, it's still important to complement learning with other resources like books and learning apps. While TikTok is fun and offers a lot of language stimulation, achieving higher language learning goals still requires more in-depth and structured materials. TikTok should be seen as

an entertaining addition to language learning, but not as the sole and reliable learning resource.

Participant 2(P2) stated that TikTok motivates her because it allows her to learn in a relaxed and flexible way. She prefers entertaining content, as it reduces stress and improves comprehension. P2 stated that she preferred the learning content because it offered more practical information, especially in the context of English language learning, where the focus was on everyday vocabulary and pronunciation. According to P2, the learning content helped her develop a clear understanding of language usage and apply what she had learned directly. She's emphasized that structured vocabulary and pronunciation lessons were more beneficial than content that was simply for entertainment.

P2 found the learning content on TikTok to be a solid foundation for her English learning, particularly regarding pronunciation and vocabulary. She reported feeling more confident in pronouncing words and sentences after watching videos where native or fluent English speakers demonstrated correct pronunciation. Correct pronunciation and a common vocabulary are very important in everyday life, especially when interacting with native speakers. Learning content that focuses on real-world language use provides a sense of accomplishment and thus strengthens the motivation to continue learning English via TikTok.

While she prefers educational content, she also understands the importance of balancing entertainment and learning. She explained that while educational content offers greater benefits, TikTok is also entertaining, making learning more enjoyable. P2 worried that she would lose interest in learning if she focused solely on content that was too serious. TikTok successfully combines the two, allowing her to learn in a fun and lighthearted way.

P2 also emphasized the importance of content quality. While they found it highly educational, some TikTok videos contained inaccurate or exaggerated information. Therefore, P2 preferred to follow reputable creators and focus on content with verified credibility. Furthermore, they considered it important to combine the knowledge gained from TikTok with other, more reliable sources to deepen their understanding.

Participant 3 (P3) stated that TikTok motivates her because it entertainingly presents educational content. P3 stated that TikTok is an entertaining learning experience, particularly because of its interactive features that allow her to participate directly in challenges or duets. This increased their motivation and interest in continuing learning. According to P3, participating in challenges or duets not only improved her language skills but also gave her a strong sense of accomplishment. The fun interactions made the learning process more engaging and less boring, which in turn increased her motivation to learn.

P3 also stated that TikTok's Duet and Stitch features allowed her to practice speaking and listening directly with other users or content creators. She found these interactions to be a more authentic learning experience, similar to a real English conversation. Through live listening and speaking, her language skills developed more quickly, which boosted her confidence in her English.

P3 emphasized that TikTok's social features, such as comments, likes, and reactions, significantly increased her motivation to learn. Positive feedback from other users or content creators encouraged her to practice more actively and confidently. This experience illustrates how TikTok fosters both intrinsic motivation through fun and confidence and extrinsic motivation through social recognition and feedback.

While interactive features are helpful, she also recognizes that too many challenges or duets without clear guidance can distract from structured learning objectives. Therefore, she emphasizes the importance of a balance between interactive and educational content. While TikTok is highly entertaining, its use must be judicious to avoid hindering the learning process. By selecting relevant content and combining it with challenges or duets, the learning process can be made more enjoyable yet effective.

## The Influence of TikTok Content on Interest in Learning English



TikTok offers a diverse range of content that can help students enhance their English skills and deepen their interest in the language. According to participant feedback, engaging and creative content is a key factor in increasing their interest in learning English.

Table 2. The Influence of TikTok Content on Interest in Learning English

Question 2:	<i>"How does TikTok content (videos, creators, or challenges) influence your interest in learning English?"</i>
Participant 1:	<i>"Creators who speak fluent English and use authentic expressions make me feel closer to the real language. The language challenges also motivate me to participate and practice speaking."</i>
Participant 2:	<i>"The videos cover topics I enjoy, like music and everyday life. Therefore, English feels like a part of my life and not just a school subject."</i>
Participant 3:	<i>"The creators use everyday language and slang, which makes me feel closer to the language. The challenges also motivate me to test my English skills."</i>

Participant 1 stated that TikTok content had piqued her interest because it seemed authentic and relevant to her everyday life. P1 was drawn to the language challenges on TikTok because they allowed her to try out new vocabulary and interact directly with other users. This direct exchange with people from diverse backgrounds boosted her confidence, especially when speaking English. She stated that the relaxed and fun atmosphere of the language challenges helped her overcome her fear of making mistakes. The live interaction during the challenges or video collaborations made her more open to conversations with native speakers and other TikTok users. This made learning through these challenges feel more natural and less stressful, which strengthened her intrinsic motivation to continue learning English.

Furthermore, P1 stated that TikTok allows her to learn English more flexibly. She can choose challenges or videos that suit her language level and are particularly interesting to her. TikTok offers a wide variety of topics and content, from formal to everyday language, making it easy for her to find relevant material. She found this particularly helpful in improving her vocabulary and speaking skills, as she can choose content that aligns with her personal interests, such as challenges related to everyday or professional conversation.

P1 also stated that TikTok allows her to learn English more flexibly. She can choose challenges or videos that suit her language level and are of interest to her. TikTok offers a wide variety of topics and content, from formal to everyday language, so she can easily find relevant material. She found this very helpful in improving her vocabulary and speaking skills, as she can choose content that aligns with her personal interests, such as everyday conversation challenges or professional ones.

Participant 2 explained that the TikTok content aligns with her personal interests, such as music and everyday life, making learning more meaningful. P2 found TikTok content from creators who taught English in an easy-to-understand way to be very helpful in improving her speaking and listening skills. The videos, with their clear explanations and engaging visuals, significantly contributed to her comprehension. The concise yet accessible presentation of the material helped her feel less overwhelmed and gradually learn new vocabulary and phrases. The images used in the videos also significantly helped her understand the use of words and phrases in more relevant contexts, which improved her English comprehension.

P2 explained that TikTok allowed her to experience a wide variety of English accents and speech patterns from different content creators. This experience helped her develop a broader understanding of how English is used in different cultural and social contexts. Unlike textbooks or traditional learning materials, TikTok offers authentic and diverse language input. This experience boosted her confidence in using spoken English and encouraged her to speak more flexibly, using different accents and expressions.

P2 also stated that the learning content on TikTok was more enjoyable and less stressful. Unlike structured classroom lessons, TikTok offered the freedom to learn in a more relaxed and uninterrupted manner. Participants could choose content that suited their interests and set their own pace. This sense of freedom motivated them to continue learning and access English-language content that suited their needs.

Participant 3 (P3) noted that the diverse content and casual language on TikTok made learning more entertaining and motivating. P3 was particularly enthusiastic about videos that demonstrated the use of English in real-life contexts, such as everyday conversations or social situations. She stated that this content made her feel more prepared to use English in everyday life. P3 found it helpful to see people speaking English in natural contexts, as it gave her a clearer picture of everyday language use and boosted her confidence. She added that this helped her better understand the practical application of English in relation to her everyday experiences.

P3 also stated that she really enjoyed the interactive content she could participate in. The duet and challenge features allowed her to try out and practice the phrases and vocabulary she had learned in a fun way. Seeing the results of her efforts motivated her to continue learning. Furthermore, the direct interaction with others in duets or challenges allowed her to receive constructive feedback, further developing her speaking skills.

P3 stated that TikTok content featuring everyday conversations helped him better understand the language and its cultural context. He felt a stronger connection to English because the content showed how the language is used naturally in everyday life. Social interaction videos helped him learn sentence structures, expressions, and appropriate language use in different situations. This exposure to the language gave him a more comprehensive understanding of English usage and boosted his confidence in using the language in authentic social contexts.

### TikTok's Role in Enhancing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

TikTok plays a key role in enhancing students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Interviews revealed that TikTok fosters both types of motivation in a complementary way. Entertaining and creative content enhances intrinsic motivation, while challenges or social recognition support extrinsic motivation.

Table 3. TikTok's Role in Enhancing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Question	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
Question 3: "Do you feel more motivated when the content is fun and engaging, or when it is more educational? Why?"	"I'm more motivated when the content is entertaining and engaging because I learn better when I'm having fun."	"I'm more motivated when the content is entertaining and creative because it doesn't feel like a classroom."	"I'm more motivated when the content is entertaining because it makes me feel relaxed. But I also enjoy it when it's educational."
Question 4: "How do TikTok's features (duet, stitch, For You Page, challenges) support your learning English?"	"Duet and Stitch help me practice speaking and listening. The 'For You' page shows me content that matches my interests, so I study more often."	"Duet helps me imitate pronunciation, and FYP provides me with relevant content that matches my level. The challenges also allow me to practice without stress."	"Duet and Stitch help me practice speaking, and the challenges encourage me to actively participate without fear."
Question 5: "How do you stay motivated to continue using TikTok for language learning when you face challenges or distractions?"	"I stay motivated because I can learn anytime, anywhere, thanks to TikTok. If I get bored, I take a break and come back later."	"TikTok is flexible. I can watch short videos during breaks, and the community feedback motivates me to keep learning."	"TikTok gives me the freedom to decide when and how I learn, so I stay motivated even when distracted."
Question 6: "In your opinion, what role does TikTok play in your motivation to keep learning English?"	"TikTok plays a big role because it makes learning flexible, personalized, and engaging."	"TikTok motivates me because it enables informal learning and gives me more confidence."	"TikTok motivates me because it constantly offers new and creative learning opportunities."
Question 7: "Do you feel more motivated to learn English on TikTok because it connects to your personal interests or hobbies?"	"Yes, when TikTok combines English with my hobbies like music or technology, I'm more motivated."	"Yes, I'm more motivated when TikTok connects English with my interests, like movies or songs."	"Yes, learning about topics I love keeps me connected and motivated."
Question 8: "Does community support (comments, likes, followers) increase your motivation to	"The support of the community greatly boosts my motivation. Positive	"Likes and comments motivate me and give me the confidence to keep learning."	"The support of my followers makes me feel valued and motivates me to continually improve."

*learn a language through comments make me feel  
TikTok?" valued."*

Participant 1 (P1) revealed that TikTok significantly contributed to her intrinsic motivation because it made the learning process fun and relaxed. She felt less burdened by overly formal learning materials. With TikTok, she could learn English through content that suited her personal interests, such as language challenges or videos of everyday conversations relevant to her. This made her feel more connected to English, and she found learning less boring. TikTok allowed her to learn stress-free, anytime, anywhere.

Extrinsic motivation also plays a role when P1 takes on challenges or receives positive feedback on their uploaded content. They are more motivated to continue practicing when they see tangible results from their efforts, such as likes, positive comments, or even recognition from their followers. TikTok provides them with quick and clear feedback, which helps them stay motivated, especially when they receive recognition from the broader TikTok community. In this sense, TikTok helps encourage them to continue learning and improving their English skills.

P1 also added that TikTok's algorithm, which adapts to their preferences, helps maintain their intrinsic motivation. TikTok recommends content that interests them, further motivating them to continue learning. This feature significantly supports their English learning by providing access to appropriate and relevant videos tailored to their individual needs and interests. This encourages them to continue their English learning process independently without feeling overwhelmed by material that doesn't align with their interests.

Participant 2 (P2) added that TikTok's algorithm, which adapts to her preferences, maintains their intrinsic motivation. TikTok recommends content that interests them, further motivating them to continue learning. This feature significantly supports their English learning by providing access to appropriate and relevant videos tailored to their individual needs and interests. This encourages them to continue their English learning process independently without feeling overwhelmed by material that doesn't align with their interests.

However, TikTok also boosts its intrinsic motivation. Engaging videos, such as tutorials with easy-to-understand explanations or engaging graphics, make the learning process more engaging and less boring. TikTok gives them the freedom to choose content that aligns with their interests and goals without having to follow a fixed curriculum. This gives them a sense of control, boosts their confidence in the learning process, and ultimately increases their intrinsic motivation to continue learning English.

Furthermore, P2 stated that participating in challenges and interacting with content creators boosted her confidence. The feedback she received from the TikTok community and her followers further motivated her to continue learning. She felt valued when she received recognition or praise from others, which also contributed to her extrinsic motivation to further improve her English skills.

Participant 3 (P3) revealed that TikTok, with its fun and interactive approach, significantly contributed to her intrinsic motivation. She particularly enjoyed videos that allowed her to directly participate in activities like duets or language challenges. This allowed her to practice her English skills directly and interactively, without feeling anxious or pressured. TikTok made the learning process more relaxed and entertaining, which increased her interest in continuing to learn English spontaneously.

TikTok also contributed to P3 extrinsic motivation, particularly through the social recognition she received. Every time she uploaded a video or participated in a challenge, she felt rewarded with likes, positive comments, or new followers. This gave her a sense of accomplishment and encouraged her to become more actively involved in learning English. TikTok provided a platform for social validation that directly motivated her to further improve her English skills.

Furthermore, P3 stated that TikTok gave him access to a wide variety of content that significantly improved his speaking and listening skills. He reported that watching English content in real-life contexts made him feel better prepared for everyday situations, such as conversations with native speakers or in professional settings. This increased his intrinsic

motivation, as he felt that learning English through TikTok was not only relevant but also immediately useful and applicable to his daily life.

### **TikTok's Impact on Language Learning and Skill Improvement**

This indicates that TikTok improves students' English skills. Respondents reported feeling more confident in English after interacting with videos from other content creators and receiving feedback through features like duets and challenges.

Table 4. TikTok's Impact on Language Learning and Skill Improvement

Question 9:	<i>"Have you ever used TikTok to achieve an external goal, such as improving grades, preparing for exams, or career development?"</i>
Participant 1:	<i>"Yes, I use TikTok to prepare for exams and expand my job-related vocabulary."</i>
Participant 2:	<i>"I use TikTok to prepare for exams and improve my English for professional purposes."</i>
Participant 3:	<i>"I often use TikTok to learn English for job interviews and exams."</i>
Question 10:	<i>"How do you feel when you succeed in understanding or imitating language content on TikTok?"</i>
Participant 1:	<i>"I feel very satisfied and confident when I have successfully understood or imitated the content."</i>
Participant 2:	<i>"I feel proud and motivated to learn more when I can correctly imitate the pronunciation."</i>
Participant 3:	<i>"I feel very proud and motivated to continue learning when I am successful."</i>

Participant 1 (P1) stated that TikTok played a significant role in her English learning, particularly in improving her speaking and listening skills. TikTok offers a variety of interactive content that helps her understand everyday English contexts. She mentioned that challenges and videos featuring native speakers allow her to hear correct pronunciation and imitate speaking styles directly. This boosted her confidence in speaking English because she could see and imitate real conversations, not just theories from textbooks. Thus, TikTok helped her improve her speaking skills in a fun and easy way.

TikTok also helped P1 improve her vocabulary. She explained that many videos on TikTok teach new vocabulary in a fun way, for example, through songs, language challenges, or spontaneous conversations. These videos offer the opportunity to hear vocabulary in relevant, real-life contexts, making it easier to remember and use in conversations. She found it easier to memorize English vocabulary because TikTok videos often use engaging visuals and realistic situations, making learning more lively and enjoyable.

Additionally, TikTok offers them the opportunity to practice their listening skills in a relaxed and flexible way. They don't feel pressured to listen to long lectures like in class. Instead, short TikTok videos allow them to focus on specific aspects of the language, such as pronunciation or sentence structure, in short bursts. This way, they learn more efficiently and improve their listening skills in a fun and stress-free way.

Participant 2 (P2) explained that TikTok played a significant role in improving their English skills, particularly in understanding different accents and variations of the language. TikTok offers numerous videos featuring English speakers from around the world, allowing participants to become exposed to a variety of accents and speech patterns. This helped them become more comfortable using English in various contexts, such as daily life and work. Through TikTok, they were able to see and hear how English was used in everyday situations, which improved their comprehension and resulted in more natural pronunciation.

P2 also acknowledged that TikTok was very helpful in improving his reading skills. Although TikTok is primarily known for its video content, he found it helpful that some videos also include captions or subtitles, which helped him follow and understand the conversation. This allowed him to learn English in a fun way outside of a traditional classroom setting. He was more motivated to read and learn new vocabulary because TikTok videos often included relevant captions and easy-to-understand dialogue.

Additionally, TikTok allows users to learn sentence structure and grammar practically. In some videos, TikTok creators explain grammar using everyday examples, making concepts that might seem complicated when explained theoretically easier to understand. Videos with clear explanations and contextually relevant examples are very helpful for improving English speaking and writing skills.

Participant 3 (P3) stated that TikTok has significantly contributed to improving her speaking skills, particularly through the duet and language challenge features. Interacting with TikTok content allows her to practice English in a more relaxed and natural environment. The duet feature allows her to imitate or interact directly with English-speaking creators, providing a more interactive speaking experience. This has made her feel more confident using English, as she can practice her speaking skills in a fun and interactive way.

Furthermore, P3 also reported improvements in listening comprehension. He stated that through TikTok, he has heard a wide variety of English content, ranging from casual conversations to more formal texts. Thanks to this diversity, he feels better equipped to understand different varieties of English from around the world. TikTok has allowed him to see and hear more authentic and natural conversations than he would find in books or traditional language course materials.

TikTok also helps them expand their vocabulary in a fun way. Through videos demonstrating language usage in various contexts, they learn new everyday vocabulary. They find the vocabulary taught in the videos easier to understand and remember because it's presented in real-life and engaging situations, such as everyday conversations or other social settings. They say TikTok allows them to learn English in a more practical and applicable way, giving them a sense of accomplishment and a deeper understanding.

### **Discussion**

The findings demonstrate that TikTok plays a significant role in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation in learning English. Participants described learning as more enjoyable, flexible, and less stressful when using TikTok compared to traditional classroom settings. This supports the framework of Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation grows when learners experience autonomy, competence, and enjoyment (Ryan & Deci, 2020). TikTok allows students to choose content based on their interests, which increases their sense of control over the learning process. Similar findings were reported by Dörnyei (2001) and Ushioda (2011), who argue that learner autonomy and personal relevance are key drivers of sustained motivation in second language acquisition.

In addition to intrinsic motivation, TikTok also strengthens extrinsic motivation through its social and interactive features. The presence of likes, comments, followers, and challenges creates a system of immediate feedback and social recognition that encourages students to remain engaged. This aligns with findings by Wang et al. (2024), who highlight the role of external reinforcement in improving learning persistence and outcomes. The duet and challenge features provide opportunities for performance and participation, which function as motivational triggers. Similarly, Vallerand (1997) explains that external rewards and social acknowledgment can positively influence learner behavior when integrated with meaningful activities.

The study also reveals that TikTok facilitates language skill development through authentic and contextualized input. Students reported improvements in speaking, listening, and vocabulary due to exposure to real-life language use, including diverse accents and informal expressions. This supports Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of comprehensible and meaningful input in language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). In addition, research by Nation and Newton (2009) highlights that exposure to varied and contextual language forms enhances both receptive and productive skills. TikTok provides this exposure in a concise and engaging format, making it easier for learners to process and retain new language forms.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of content quality and critical selection in maximizing the benefits of TikTok. While the platform offers a wide range of educational content, not all videos provide accurate or reliable information. Students who actively select credible creators and combine TikTok with other learning resources show better learning outcomes. This finding aligns with previous studies that emphasize the need for digital literacy in online learning environments (Guo, 2023; Park & Lee, 2023). Mayer (2009) also argues that effective multimedia learning depends on the clarity, coherence, and relevance of content, which directly influences learner understanding and motivation.

Finally, this study confirms that TikTok can serve as a complementary learning tool rather than a replacement for formal instruction. Its informal and engaging nature supports continuous learning outside the classroom, bridging the gap between formal and informal learning environments. As suggested by Benson (2011), informal digital learning allows learners to extend their learning experiences beyond institutional settings. However, structured guidance from educators remains essential to ensure that learning objectives are achieved. Therefore, integrating TikTok into language learning practices in a guided and strategic manner can enhance both motivation and learning outcomes.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that TikTok functions as a meaningful supplementary medium that supports students' motivation in learning English. The findings show that TikTok enhances intrinsic motivation by creating an enjoyable, flexible, and personalized learning environment where students can explore content based on their interests. At the same time, it strengthens extrinsic motivation through interactive features such as likes, comments, challenges, and social feedback, which encourage active participation and continuous engagement. In addition, TikTok contributes to the development of practical language skills, particularly speaking, listening, and vocabulary, through exposure to authentic and contextualized language use. However, the effectiveness of TikTok depends on the quality of content and students' ability to select reliable sources. Therefore, TikTok should not replace formal learning but rather complement it. Integrating TikTok with structured instructional approaches can create a more engaging and relevant learning experience for students in higher education contexts.

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