Utilising Tiktok Features for Speech Communication

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Abstract

The art of teaching speech communication should be varied according to current trends. Teaching speaking should focus on the practice of the language, which should be done in pairs or groups. However, the COVID-19 pandemic restricted students from attending schools, making speaking in English impossible. Social distancing was enforced and still is now, when they returned to school, ruling out group activities or much speaking in classrooms. This was an issue among English language teachers in Malaysia as the teaching of English uses a modular system that comprises Listening and Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Listening and speaking could not be conducted at will. Pupils were deprived of opportunities to practice the English language in classrooms. Therefore, the suggested course of action was to improve speech communication by utilising the technologically useful application TikTok and its essential functionalities. This study aims to investigate how TikTok features can improve speech communication and examine learners' perceptions after applying the TikTok features to improve their speaking skills. The instruments used for this study are speaking rubrics for speaking tests and a questionnaire. A purposive sampling of 100 students was used. The results show that the respondents scored higher in their post-test than their pre-test after using TikTok to improve their speech communication. All respondents perceived the use of TikTok as positive and encouraging. The implication of the findings includes introducing innovative speaking practice measures such as the development of mobile learning, and a renewed teaching methodology to teach speech communication.

Keywords: TikTok features, speech communication, ESL, mobile learning, innovative teaching

1. Introduction

The advent of social media has brought about various functions for this type of media. Initially designed for reuniting with friends, it quickly evolved into a commercial marketplace and subsequently evolved into a platform that serves nearly every need (Abbas et al., 2021). English mastery has historically placed considerable emphasis on speech communication (Tan et al. 2021). The concept of fluent speaking remains elusive to a considerable number of Malaysian students.

Pursuing mastery of the English language has consistently emphasised speech communication. One of the challenges impeding the effectiveness of speaking in the classroom, according to Kashinathan (2021), are hesitancy, lack of motivation, and large class sizes that prevent instructors from focusing on each student. The notion that students desire to learn but lack the self-assurance and drive to communicate is additionally corroborated by Azizi et al. (2011). This demonstrates that serious concerns regarding speech communication in the classroom exist, and the school closure due to COVID-19 has only worsened them. To ensure that students continue to have opportunities to hone their speaking abilities amid the school closure, instructors must, therefore, adopt an innovative strategy.

Video-based speaking style development and the modelling of speaking abilities are two areas in which ICT enables students to engage in speaking practise via a variety of applications. Practising and enhancing one's speaking abilities has been facilitated by videos. Studies by Zaitun, Muhammad Sofian & Emma (2021), Tan et al. (2022), and John & Melor (2021) have supported this claim. Video-based applications such as TikTok have managed to allow pupils to use the application interactively and improve their speaking skills.

The purpose of this research is to determine how learners perceive the application of TikTok features to their speaking abilities and to examine the efficacy of such features in enhancing speech communication. Therefore, the present study is predicated on the following research inquiry:

What is the influence of incorporating TikTok into speech communication and how do ESL learners perceive TikTok's functionalities?

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2. Literature Review

2.1 Mobile-Assisted Language Learning

Mobile-assisted language learning can be carried out anywhere as the development of mobile phones has revolutionised the teaching and learning of English. Mobile-assisted language learning has allowed international students to experience more constructive and engaging learning compared to traditional teaching methods, as technology has allowed for independent learning to happen (Kukulska-Hulme, Lee & Norris, 2017). According to Bock, Candelon & and Choi (2015), current 4G technology offers 12,000 times faster data transmission speeds than 2G. This data illustrates the extent to which mobile technology has evolved to the point where it can facilitate language learning.

Likewise, e-learning has been an essential alternative to traditional teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, it has been regarded as the future of education and has the potential to eventually supplant traditional teaching methods. (Ceci, 2022). Many mobile applications including TikTok were developed as the demand for the education sector has increased rapidly.

2.2 Tiktok Application for Learning English

As a result of its distinctive functionalities and interactive layouts, TikTok has become one of the most popular social media platforms, which has contributed to its increasing popularity as an English-learning platform over time. (Xiuwen & Razali, 2021).

Students can utilise TikTok's primary functionalities to create brief videos and engage in duets with videos created by other users. They have the opportunity to hone their speech communication abilities during their free time, which is a substantial benefit. This is achieved through the provision of content creation for oral communication. Additionally, individuals can review their recordings, detect errors, and reshoot their videos on an extensive number of occasions until they achieve satisfactory results (Syah, Nurjanah, & Mayu, 2020). Practice is vital for their English-speaking communication development, and each of these facilitates it.

3. Methodology

The subsequent section describes the research method employed in this investigation. This is followed by a comprehensive elucidation of the demographic data, sample, study methodology, data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This is a quantitative study. Two tests were conducted. Prior to the implementation of the intervention, students were required to complete a pre-test and subsequently undertake a post-test. The primary objective is to discern improvements in students' speaking scores both prior to and after utilising TikTok as a platform for honing their speaking abilities for a specified duration. This study aimed to ascertain the changes in scores by analysing the pupils' pre-test and post-test scores. The subjects or material covered during the speaking examination were taken from the Malaysian Ministry of Education syllabus and the textbook. Students are, therefore, acquainted with speaking topics, having previously studied them. As a result, there are no concerns regarding students' comprehension of the assignment, as had been previously instructed. The speaking evaluation utilised the Ministry's rubrics in order to determine the student's band placement. Consequently, the enhancement of the grade was contingent upon the advancement of the speaking segment.

3.2 Sampling

The selection of participants was not conducted in a random manner. Based on purposive sampling, students with limited proficiency were selected in order to determine whether or not the TikTok intervention was relevant and effective for them. This is to enable a clearer observation of any progress made in terms of attitude, behaviour, and proficiency, in comparison to individuals who have achieved exceptional performance in Band 4 or Band 5. In addition, this intervention served as a scaffold to encourage weaker students to practise well at home and to determine whether it could be an effective independent remedial activity. The selection of the students was predicated on their prior language bands in the Speaking module. With the administrators' consent, every piece of information was extracted from the students' School-Based Assessment report cards.

One hundred individuals participated in this study. The determination of the participant count was conducted utilising Krejcie and Morgan's sampling method. Given the total number of pupils in the population, which is 130, 97 participants are sufficient. Nevertheless, to facilitate the study and data analysis, a consensus has been reached that 100 participants are adequate for the research. Due to the fact that speaking activities are typically carried out in pairs, an even number was required.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

A speaking test and questionnaire were used to collect data. There were two types of data that were collected using these research instruments. The first data collection method was the speaking scores. The speaking scores were given based on the speaking rubrics by Marek & Wu (2011). The teacher referred to the speaking rubrics conducted following the requirement of the Malaysian School-Based Assessment whereby the designated rubrics will be applied and used for scores allocation. The second data collection is through a questionnaire. The data provided by the pupils are gathered and analysed.

The speaking scores were collected in each given timespan by conducting the test in the classroom. As a speaking activity cannot be undertaken simultaneously as the grading was done manually and orally, it took a bit of time, depending on various factors. Each pair was allocated 5 minutes to speak. Thus, a total of 10 teams, which comprised 20 pupils, could complete the assessment in a one-hour session. It is postulated that a total of 5 sessions were required to collect data and record the marks from the rubrics.

Before pupils used TikTok, they would first be assessed, and their speaking scores recorded. The topic for speaking was daily routine conversations with phrases that have been taught in the English syllabus. Then, pupils used TikTok to practise their speaking skills. The teacher will first demonstrate how it can be used in the classroom by projecting videos on its application and the steps to utilise TikTok using the LCD. Pupils will be given a period of two to three weeks to practice their speaking skills before being assessed by their respective English teachers. The topic is the same as the topic during the pre-test, which revolves around daily routine and conversation. The teacher recorded their scores for both the pre-test and post-test. Subsequently, the teacher administered the questionnaire to all the participants to understand their perceptions of using TikTok to improve their speaking skills. Pupils were guided to provide their responses based on the statements that are in the questionnaire. The items are arranged according to their category.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using basic statistical methods. The collected data was tabulated in the SPSS software using descriptive statistics of mean and frequency. The pre-test and post-test marks were analysed and compared. If there was a significant difference between the pre-test before TikTok was applied and after application. To analyse the questionnaire, the data are tabulated and Pimentel (2010) likert scale interpretion is used. It is then analysed using inferential statistics. The questionnaire is appropriate as it uses the ordinal variable in a 5-point Likert scale.

4. Findings and Discussion

The findings are presented in accordance with the research question. The data for this study was collected using pre and post-tests. The three main types of data analysis are (1) pre-test, (2) post-test, and (3) pre-test versus post-test to answer the research question. Each category analysed is followed by an interpretation of the data and a brief discussion.

4.1 Research Questions

4.1.1 Analysis of the Pre-Test Score and the Post-Test Score

This subsection examined the functionality and the usage of features of TikTok to enhance speech communication.

The pre-test was conducted before TikTok was introduced, while the post-test was conducted after a few sessions of using TikTok. The table below shows the mean scores of the pre-test and the post-test.

Table 1. Mean score for pre-test score and post-test score

Test	N	Mean	
Pre-test	100	13.40	
Post-test	100 14.74		
The difference in the means between Pre-test and post-test	+1.34		

Table 1 shows the score distribution frequency for the pre-test and post-test. The mean score for the pre-test is 13.4, while the mean score for the post-test is 14.74. The difference in the mean score between the pre-test and the post-test is +1.34, showing that there is an increase in the post-test mean compared to the pre-test mean score.

Pre-test score frequency mostly ranges between 11 and 18, with 11 being the mode of the score. There are a few students who recorded scores above 20 marks.

However, the post-test score frequency, as illustrated in Figure 1, showed that most students scored 14 and 15 marks on their speaking tests compared to their pre-test scores.

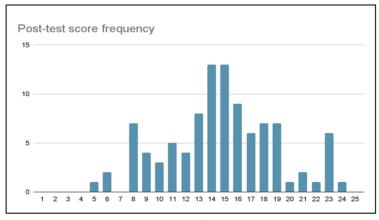


Figure 1. Post-Test Score Frequency

There was also a surge in the number of students scoring more than 20 marks compared to pre-test scores. The scores for the pre-test and post-test were further analysed by comparing their increase and decrease in frequency.

Table 2. Frequency table for pre-test and post-test scores

	Pro	e-test	est Post-test		
Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Increase/ Decrease
1	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0
3	1	1.0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0
5	4	4.0	1	1.0	-3
6	3	3.0	2	2.0	-1
7	5	5.0	0	0	-5
8	1	1.0	7	7.0	+6
9	3	3.0	4	4.0	+1
10	3	3.0	3	3.0	0
11	12	12.0	5	5.0	-7
12	8	8.0	4	4.0	-4
13	10	10.0	8	8.0	-2
14	10	10.0	13	13.0	+3
15	8	8.0	13	13.0	+5
16	8	8.0	9	9.0	+1
17	7	7.0	6	6.0	-1
18	7	7.0	7	7.0	0
19	4	4.0	7	7.0	+3
20	0	0	1	1.0	+1
21	2	2.0	2	2.0	+2
22	2	2.0	1	1.0	-1
23	2	2.0	6	6.0	+4
24	0	0.0	1	1.0	+1
25	0	0.0	0	0	0

Table 2 shows the frequency of the scores obtained by the students for the speaking test for both pre-test and the post-test. The minimum score is 0, while the maximum score is 25. The frequency of the scores obtained during the pre-test and the post-test were analysed. There had been a decrease in the frequency of 9 respondents obtaining 5 to 7 marks in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Thus, these respondents had an increased post-test score compared to their pre-test scores. This can be seen as there was an increase of 6 respondents

obtaining 8 marks in their post-test compared to their pre-test and 1 respondent receiving 9 marks in the post-test. The pattern continues as there are decreases in the frequency of respondents obtaining 11 to 13 marks by 13 respondents. This was countered by an increase in the frequency of respondents obtaining 14 to 16 marks with an increase of 9 respondents. This emerging pattern showed that the respondents have obtained improved post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores. There was a decrease in frequency for 17 marks but this improved as those obtaining 19 to 24 marks recorded an increase in the number of respondents with the range between +1 to +4, except for 22 marks which recorded a -1 decrease. However, it is not a concern as the respondent recorded an increase in score showing that the respondent has shown improvement in his/her post-test.

4.1.2 Analysis of the Questionnaire

Addressing the research question, "What are the perceptions of ESL learners on the features of TikTok?". After the post-test, the respondents completed the questionnaire (Appendix) that consists of 4 sections mainly focusing on their perception of learning a language using TikTok as well as the impact of TikTok on their motivation, attitude, and creating a positive environment for sustainable learning. There were 15 items which are in sentence format. A five-point Likert scale is used in the questionnaire to gather data. Figure 2 depicts the frequency of Overall Mean Based on 15 Items from the 100 respondents.

There were mixed reactions among the respondents regarding the perception of using TikTok to enhance their language learning experience. The respondents strongly agree with statements 4, 7, 8, 11 12, 13, 14, and statement 15. The mean ranges from 4.21 to 4.49. Most of the gist of these statements revolves around the fact that TikTok can increase confidence, and motivation, creating a positive attitude as well as a warm environment. Meanwhile, the remaining statements were in the 'agreed' category with the mean ranging from 3.55 to 4.20. It is interesting to note that statement number 2 recorded a low mean of 3.55, with the minimum Likert scale given as 2. Statement 10 also recorded a low mean of 3.74, which is also related to reading materials.

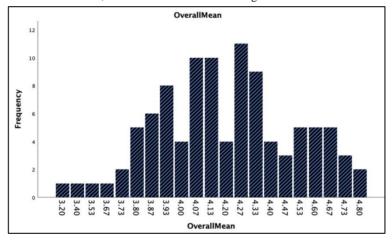


Figure 2. Frequency of Overall Mean Based on 15 Items

To further analyse the overall perception of the respondents, Table 3 is tabulated which categorises the frequency of the respondents with the range of the mean in the Likert scale as interpreted according to Pimentel (2010).

Table 3. Frequency of overall mean based on the Pimentel (2010) interpretation of the Likert scale

Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.00 - 1.80	0	0
1.81 - 2.60	0	0
2.61 - 3.40	2	2
3.41 - 4.20	51	51
4.21 - 5.00	47	47
Total	100	100

According to the data presented in Table 3, a mere two respondents (2% of the total) expressed a neutral stance regarding the utilisation of TikTok as a tool for enhancing language proficiency. Concurrently, fifty-one percent of respondents (51%) concur that TikTok promotes positive attitudes among students, increases their motivation and confidence, and has a positive impact. Finally, a substantial 47 respondents (47% of the total respondents) express strong agreement that TikTok positively influences students by fostering positive

attitudes, increasing motivation, and confidence.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion on the Impact of Using Tiktok to Improve Speech Communication

There are several significant findings worthy of discussion. All the findings led to the impact of using TikTok to improve speech communication among students. Based on the result, there is a positive difference between the mean score of the pre-test and the post-test. The mean score is recorded as M=1.34. Therefore, using TikTok to improve the speaking skills of the respondents who participated in the study has a significant and positive impact. Similar results were also reported by Cagas (2022), stating that learners showed increased test scores after utilising TikTok in their learning process. Subsequently, their speech communication skills and grammar have shown a certain degree of improvement.

The improvement in test scores also means that learners have improved their confidence in using English as corroborated by other studies on the positive impact of TikTok (Zaitun, Muhammad Sofian, Emma, 2021; Escamilla-Fajardo, Alguacil, & López-Carril, 2021)

TikTok also evoked a positive attitude among learners to accept the English-related content and listen to the speakers and the songs, allowing them to feel English is less offensive and easy to learn compared to other studies (Fahdin, 2020; Haerazi, Utama, & Hidayatullah, 2020; Md Yunus, Zakaria, & Suliman, 2019).

5.2 Discussion on the Perception of Students Towards The Use of Tiktok Features to Improve Speaking Skills

This study also identifies the respondents' perception of using TikTok. The questionnaire elicited information from four categories: perception of language learning, motivation, confidence, and attitude. All 100 respondents took part in the study. Based on the results, all the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that TikTok was beneficial and improved their speech communication. This shows corroboration between their improved test scores whereby almost all respondents showed improvement in test scores from their speaking pre-test to their speaking post-test. This demonstrated the acceptance of the respondents towards TikTok to develop a positive attitude which led to an improved test score.

There was a high level of satisfaction and a positive perception of using TikTok to improve their speaking skills as also illustrated in other studies that TikTok improved language acquisition (Manggo, Liando & Wungow, 2022; Nurul, Sari & Hanifah, 2021; Yang, 2020; Rajan & Hanita, 2022. The use of TikTok introduced a new idea and redefined social media, not merely as a tool for socializing but reinventing education and improving collaboration with its built-in applications such as the Dual Challenge.

6. Conclusion and Implications

This study aims to identify ESL Learners' perceptions of utilising TikTok features for speech communication. TikTok positively impacts ESL learners' perceptions in utilising TikTok features as a speaking strategy. M-learning was made possible by TikTok's presence in the education sector.

As this research investigates novel approaches to incorporating TikTok into educational settings, it may prove transformational for Malaysian English instructors to leverage the platform's community-generated content and free services to customise their own speech communication teaching and learning methodologies. Students will possess the autonomy to assume responsibility for their own educational development as they master the speaking elements they have studied in class, aided by content contributed by TikTok users, particularly native English speakers. Students could fully immerse themselves in the culture and usage even when they were not physically present in the classroom.

In addition, this study supports the 21st-century learning process, which considers the integration of technology in a broader sense. The Ministry of Education is solely responsible for advocating for English teachers and furnishing a manual on how to accomplish this, given that the technology and its platform are offered without charge to both students and instructors, to be utilised according to their individual preferences. A healthy uptrend, given the pervasiveness of technology in our daily lives. Consequently, it must be integrated into the educational process, commencing with English, given its status as the predominant digital language in the realm of technology.

The emergence of TikTok, particularly in the English language, in the realm of education laid the foundation for the evolution of mobile learning, also known as M-learning. Learners are aided by TikTok's settings, likes, comments, reactions, broadcast music videos, short musical clips, special effects, notifications, search box video feed, video feed, and settings. Additionally, the platform offers opportunities to generate income through video editing and sharing. Engaging videos are the reason why students utilise TikTok (Pratiwi, Huda, & Kurniawan, 2021). They can acquire knowledge more rapidly and with less exertion by watching brief videos. All age groups can derive maximum benefit from utilising this platform. Users of TikTok are permitted to utilise this application at any time and in any location. Furthermore, this underscored the significance of educational methodologies, including collaborative learning and digital learning, which harmonise with the functionalities demonstrated on TikTok. These characteristics facilitate the strategies that educators employ, thereby guaranteeing that the utilisation of TikTok is consistent with the progression of educational opportunities and not simply a passing fad or a fashion-forward idea.

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Kim Hua Tan, Agila Rajendran - Conceptualising and writing; Kim Hua Tan - Supervision and Amendments; All authors contributed equally- Review of the final draft:

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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Appendix

Questionnaire Instrument

Part 1. Length of Time as A Tik Tok User

Length of time using Tik Tok					
Less than 6 months	1 year	2 years	3 years		

Part 2. Language used in Tik Tok duet challenge to improve conversation skills

English
Malay
English and Malay

Part 3. Perception of language learning using Tik Tok duet challenge

No	Items	Strongly	Disagree	Slightly	Agree	Strongly Agree
		Disagree		Agree		
1	I practice speaking in English via Tik Tok.					
2	I practice reading in English via Tik Tok.					
3	Tik Tok enhances my English communication skills.					
4	Tik Tok enhances my confidence to speak in English.					
5	Tik Tok helps me to overcome language mistakes.					

Part 4. Enhancing students' motivation via Tik Tok.

	_	0.0	Disagree		Agree	Strongly
No	Items	Disagree		Agree		Agree
6	Tik Tok increases my motivation to speak using English with peers.					
7	Tik Tok increases my motivation to speak by using English materials					
8	Tik Tok increases my motivation to speak in English.					_

Part 5. Enhancing Students' Confidence Level in Using Tik Tok in English

No	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
9	It enhances my confidence level to speak in English.					
10	It enables me to read English materials.					
11	It enhances my confidence to communicate using English.					

Part 6. Students' Attitude Towards Learning English Using Tik Tok

No	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Learning English using Tik Tok makes learning English					
12	more interesting.					
13	I have positive attitudes towards learning EFL via Tik Tok.					
14	The use of Tik Tok makes learning English easier.					
15	Tik Tok encourages me to spend more time in learning English.					