

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

In the digital era, technology and social media have become integral aspects of everyday life, significantly influencing various sectors, including education. One of the platforms whose popularity has rapidly increased is TikTok, known for its short, engaging, and entertaining videos. TikTok, while initially recognized as a platform for entertainment, has increasingly been acknowledged as a potential educational tool, especially for English language learners. By integrating multimodal elements such as text, sound, visuals, gesture and movement, TikTok provides a dynamic learning experience that resonates with students' digital media habits, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

In the field of EFL learning, conventional methods are increasingly complemented by digital and multimodal text approaches that emphasize interactivity, authenticity, and engagement. Today's learners are increasingly drawn to interactive, visual, and real-world content, making multimodal texts learning a necessity. TikTok multimodal texts, which combine audio, subtitles, facial expressions, gestures, and creative editing, provide learners with authentic language use, cultural references, and diverse language functions in an accessible and familiar format. This resource is compelling for improving English language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through these skills, students can gain more natural pronunciation and intonation from listening activities, improve

fluency and confidence when speaking, enrich vocabulary and understanding of language structure through reading activities, and develop the ability to organize ideas and express thoughts in writing more effectively.

In learning English, mastering language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, is an important aspect that students must master to achieve effective communication. Through learning English activities, students not only acquire linguistic knowledge but also learn to understand the meaning, context, and usage of language in real life situations. For students whose lives are closely intertwined with social media, especially thru TikTok multimodal texts, the process of learning English becomes more engaging and contextual. TikTok multimodal texts help students recognize the pronunciation and intonation of native speakers, understand sentence structure and meaning, expand their vocabulary, and express ideas both orally and in writing. However, in reality, many EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students still face difficulties in understanding and using English effectively. These difficulties are often caused by a lack of motivation, limited vocabulary, and low interest in learning through conventional media, which is considered monotonous.

Current developments in digital technology have given rise to opportunities for platforms such as TikTok multimodal texts. These are popular and familiar to young people today. TikTok multimodal texts can help students understand meaning through a combination of various modes of communication, such as linguistic, visual, audio, gesture, and spatial. According to Susanto & Suparmi (2024), in the context of learning English, the use of TikTok multimodal texts allows students to

develop language skills in an integrated manner, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These things are integrated into learning English. Through listening activities, students can understand the pronunciation, intonation, and articulation of native speakers. Through speaking, they can imitate expressions and gestures to improve fluency and confidence. Through reading, they can understand the meaning of texts and enrich their vocabulary. And through writing, students can express ideas and construct sentences with correct structure. Thus, the use of TikTok multimodal texts not only makes the English learning process more engaging and enjoyable but also helps improve students' overall communication skills.

The use of multimodal TikTok texts in learning is highly dependent on how students perceive this social media platform. How they perceive social media is important, even though social media can offer many benefits. In the context of its use in language teaching, students' perceptions are very important (Susanto & Suparmi, 2024). Student perceptions are an important factor that can influence their motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how students perceive the use of TikTok multimodal texts in English learning.

Previous studies have also discussed students' perceptions of TikTok usage, but they focused on perceptions of TikTok usage rather than TikTok multimodal texts in learning English. Such as research conducted by (Diana Sarkila et al., 2024), which focused on students' perceptions of using TikTok for learning speaking English. Then there was research conducted by (Susanto & Suparmi, 2024), which focused on students' perceptions of using TikTok to improve their English skills.

Then, research conducted by (Abidah, 2024), focused on students' perceptions of using TikTok for vocabulary acquisition. This study provides valuable insights into social media, namely TikTok as multimodal texts, but it is also necessary to explore further how students use TikTok, which is a type of multimodal social media text, for learning English. These limitations must be explored to understand the student's perceived benefits and barriers in using TikTok multimodal texts, which have various modes of communication.

This study aims to explore the perceptions of 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji in overcoming the gap in the use of TikTok multimodal texts in learning English. Focusing on their experiences using TikTok multimodal texts that have various modes of communication, this study aims to provide insights into how students view the benefits, challenges, and implications of TikTok multimodal texts in their learning process. Understanding this perception will also contribute to choosing a good strategy to support effective and appropriate learning. Thus, the researcher intended to determine the extent to which 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji perceived the use of TikTok multimodal texts in learning English. Therefore, this study was conducted with the title: "Students' Perceptions on Using TikTok Multimodal Texts in English Learning."

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the researcher identifies several problems, such as:

1. Some students are not yet aware that TikTok multimodal texts can be used as a medium for learning English.
2. Many students still use TikTok only for entertainment, not for educational purposes.
3. Students often find it difficult to choose TikTok multimodal texts content that is suitable for learning English.
4. Some students do not yet fully understand how multimodal texts elements in TikTok can support learning English.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

Based on the problem identification above, the focus of this study is on students' perceptions on using TikTok multimodal texts in learning English. The participants are 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji.

1.4 Research Question

The researcher developed the following research questions regarding the issues mentioned above: “What are the perceptions of 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji in the 2025/2026 academic year toward the use of TikTok multimodal texts in learning English?”

1.5 The Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find out the perceptions of 7th semester students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji in the

2025/2026 academic year toward the use of TikTok multimodal texts in learning English.

1.6 Significance of The Study

1. Theoretically

It is expected that the results of this study can strengthen the theory that social media, particularly TikTok multimodal texts, can serve as a relevant and innovative language learning medium and support further related studies.

2. Practically

- a. For Students, this research helps them understand the benefits and challenges of using TikTok multimodal texts, which can increase their motivation and engagement in learning English.
- b. For future researchers, this study serves as a reference for developing further studies related to the use of multimodal texts and social media in learning English.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1. Perception

Perception refers to the views, opinions, and attitudes of 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program regarding the use of multimodal TikTok texts as a medium in learning English.

2. TikTok Multimodal Texts

TikTok multimodal texts are content in the form of videos lasting 30 seconds to 10 minutes that combine linguistic, visual, audio, gesture, and spatial elements, as a medium for learning English for 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program.

3. Learning English

Learning English refers to the process experienced by 7th semester students in the 2025/2026 academic year of the English Education Study Program in improving their learning English, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

