

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English has become one of the most important international languages used for communication, education, business, science, and technology. In today's era of globalization, the ability to communicate effectively in English is considered an essential skill for students because it enables them to participate in academic, professional, and social interactions at both national and international levels. Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—speaking is often regarded as one of the most challenging skills to master because it requires learners to produce language spontaneously while maintaining accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical correctness (Brown, 2004).

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL). Although students learn English from junior high school through higher education, many still experience difficulties in speaking English confidently and fluently. Several factors contribute to these difficulties, including limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, anxiety, insufficient opportunities for practice, and limited exposure to authentic English communication (Harmer, 2007; Thornbury, 2005). Traditional classroom instruction often focuses more on grammar, reading, and written examinations than on communicative speaking activities. Consequently, many students have limited opportunities to practice speaking English in meaningful contexts.

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed the way students learn languages. Mobile devices, online platforms, and social media applications have become integral parts of students' daily lives. These technologies provide learners with

access to authentic learning materials beyond the classroom and allow them to engage in self-directed learning. As a result, technology-enhanced language learning has received considerable attention from educators and researchers in recent years.

One social media platform that has gained remarkable popularity is TikTok. Since its global launch, TikTok has attracted millions of users worldwide through its short-form video format and interactive features. Initially developed for entertainment, TikTok has gradually evolved into a platform for educational content, including language learning. Many English teachers, content creators, and language enthusiasts use TikTok to share pronunciation tips, vocabulary lessons, grammar explanations, speaking practice, conversation simulations, and communication strategies. These videos are generally concise, visually engaging, and easily accessible, making them appealing to learners, especially university students.

TikTok offers several features that may support English speaking development. Students can repeatedly watch authentic English conversations, imitate native or proficient speakers, learn common expressions used in everyday communication, and interact with English-speaking communities through comments, duets, and live sessions. These activities may enhance learners' exposure to authentic language input and encourage independent speaking practice outside formal classroom settings.

The effectiveness of educational technology is often influenced by students' perceptions toward its usefulness and ease of use. According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989), users are more likely to adopt a technology if they perceive it as useful and easy to use. In the context of language learning, students' perceptions play a significant role in determining whether they are willing to utilize technological applications as learning tools. Positive perceptions may increase motivation, engagement, and learning autonomy, whereas negative

perceptions may discourage students from using the technology despite its educational potential.

Several recent studies have reported positive findings regarding the use of TikTok in English language learning. Research has shown that TikTok can increase students' motivation, improve vocabulary acquisition, provide authentic language exposure, and enhance speaking confidence. Other studies indicate that the platform creates a more enjoyable learning environment and encourages students to practice English more frequently. Nevertheless, previous studies also highlight several limitations, such as students' distractions from entertainment content, inconsistent quality of educational videos, and excessive screen time. These mixed findings suggest that students' perspectives on learning English speaking through TikTok deserve further investigation, particularly within specific educational contexts.

At Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, TikTok has become one of the most frequently used social media applications among students. Informal observations indicate that many students follow English learning accounts and regularly watch videos containing speaking tips, pronunciation exercises, and conversational English. However, the extent to which students perceive TikTok as an effective tool for improving their English-speaking skills has not yet been systematically explored. Understanding these perspectives is important because students' experiences and perceptions can provide valuable insights for educators who intend to integrate social media into English language instruction.

This study therefore adopts a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative phase aims to identify students' overall perspectives through a structured questionnaire, while the qualitative phase seeks to explore students' experiences, opinions, and reasons through semi-structured interviews. By integrating both forms of data, the study is expected to

provide a comprehensive understanding of how university students perceive learning English speaking through TikTok.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on technology-assisted language learning, particularly regarding the educational use of TikTok in English speaking instruction. Furthermore, the study may provide practical recommendations for English lecturers, students, and educational institutions seeking to incorporate social media into language learning activities effectively.

1.2 Identification of The Problem

Based on the background above, several problems can be identified:

1. Many university students still experience difficulties in speaking English confidently and fluently.
2. Students have limited opportunities to practice speaking English outside the classroom.
3. Traditional English learning methods often provide insufficient authentic speaking practice.
4. Students' perspectives toward learning English speaking through TikTok have not been sufficiently explored in the context of the selected university.

1.3 Limitation of The Study

Based on the identification of the problems, this study is limited to investigating students' perspectives on learning English speaking through TikTok among 8th semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji in the 2025/2026 academic year.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the background of the research and the limitation of the study, the researcher formulated question as follows:

1. What is the students' perspective on learning English Speaking through TikTok at 8th semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to explore the perspective of 8th semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji regarding of their English-speaking skill

1.6 Significance of The Study

This This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The findings are expected to enrich the literature on Technology-Assisted Language Learning (TALL), Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), and the educational use of social media in English language teaching. The study also contributes to research applying the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in English language learning contexts.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1. For Students

The study may encourage students to use TikTok more effectively as a supplementary resource for improving English speaking skills.

2. For English Lecturers

The findings may provide insights into students' learning preferences and support lecturers in integrating social media into speaking instruction.

3. For Educational Institutions

The study may assist universities in developing technology-supported learning environments that align with students' digital learning habits.

4. For Future Researchers

The research can serve as a reference for future studies examining the role of social media and digital platforms in English language learning.

1.7 Definition of key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the following terms are defined as follows:

1.7.1 Students' Perspective

Students' perspective refers to students' perceptions, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences regarding the use of TikTok as a medium for learning English speaking

1.7.2 English Speaking

English speaking refers to the productive language skill that enables learners to communicate ideas, opinions, and information orally with appropriate pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension.

1.7.3 TikTok

TikTok is a social media application that allows users to create, watch, and share short-form videos. In this study, TikTok refers specifically to its use as a platform for learning English speaking through educational content such as pronunciation tutorials, vocabulary lessons, speaking practice, and conversational English videos.

1.7.4 Learning English Speaking through TikTok

Learning English speaking through TikTok refers to students' use of TikTok videos and interactive features as supplementary resources for improving English speaking skills outside or alongside formal classroom learning