



THE EFFECT OF TIKTOK LIP-SYNC CONTENT ON IMPROVING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: FROM ENTERTAINMENT TO EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The accelerated growth of social media has repositioned digital platforms as innovative resources for language learning. This study examines the impact of TikTok lip-sync activities on the enhancement of English pronunciation among university-level EFL learners. Adopting a quantitative methodology through a one-group pre-test–post-test experimental design, the research was conducted with 25 fourth-semester students from the English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara. Pronunciation performance was measured using assessment instruments focusing on fluency, accuracy, and learners' confidence. The collected data were processed through descriptive statistical analysis, normality testing, and a paired-sample t-test. The results demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in students' pronunciation abilities following the implementation of TikTok lip-sync-based instruction. Specifically, the mean score increased markedly from 66.38 in the pre-test to 86.41 in the post-test, with the obtained t-value (28.65) surpassing the critical t-values at both the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels. These findings confirm that TikTok lip-sync content is an effective pedagogical tool for improving learners' pronunciation proficiency and self-confidence. Consequently, the study highlights the potential of integrating social media–based instructional strategies to enrich pronunciation teaching in EFL learning environments.

Keywords: *TikTok, lip-sync content, English pronunciation, EFL learners, digital learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation constitutes a core dimension of oral language proficiency, as it plays a decisive role in ensuring speech intelligibility, communicative effectiveness, and learners' self-confidence in spoken interaction. Accurate pronunciation enables speakers to convey meaning clearly and reduces the likelihood of miscommunication, even in spontaneous discourse (Salim et al., 2020; Royani, 2023; Celce-Murcia et al., 2017). Nevertheless, within many EFL instructional contexts, pronunciation instruction tends to

receive comparatively limited attention when contrasted with grammatical structures and vocabulary acquisition (Jin, 2023; Oktari, 2024; Qassrawi et al., 2024). As a consequence, learners who demonstrate adequate grammatical competence may still encounter significant communication breakdowns due to inaccurate segmental and suprasegmental features of speech, such as stress, intonation, and rhythm (Torky & Ahmed, 2025; Karanjakwut, 2024; Shi et al., 2024).

In parallel with pedagogical challenges in formal classrooms, the rapid expansion of

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digital technology has reshaped language learning environments, particularly through the emergence of social media platforms that promote informal, self-directed, and experiential learning. Social media has increasingly been recognized as a viable medium for language exposure and practice, allowing learners to engage with authentic input beyond traditional classroom settings (Kukulska-Hulme, 2020; Patty & Noija, 2023; Devi Kusuma Wardhani et al., 2022). Among these platforms, TikTok a short-form video application predominantly used by Generation Z offers rich audiovisual affordances that facilitate multimodal language learning experiences. Its format allows learners to access native-speaker models of pronunciation, observe mouth movements, and repeatedly listen to authentic speech in meaningful contexts.

One of TikTok's most prominent features, lip-sync content, enables users to imitate native speakers' pronunciation, intonation patterns, and speech rhythm by synchronizing their speech with prerecorded audio. This process aligns with principles of imitation and repetition, which are widely acknowledged as effective strategies in pronunciation learning (Hoesny et al., 2024; Syafiq et al., 2021; Choirunnisa & Sari, 2021). Through repeated exposure and active reproduction of target sounds, learners are provided with opportunities to refine their phonological awareness and develop greater confidence in oral performance. Additionally, the engaging and low-anxiety nature of TikTok activities may help reduce learners' affective barriers, thereby fostering a more supportive environment for pronunciation practice (Krashen, 2019; Morrel, 2022; Anik et al., 2021).

Previous studies have reported positive outcomes of TikTok integration in language learning, particularly in enhancing learners' motivation, engagement, and pronunciation accuracy (Zaitun et al., 2021; Anggraeni, 2022). However, despite the growing popularity

of TikTok in educational contexts, empirical research specifically examining the effectiveness of TikTok lip-sync activities for improving EFL learners' pronunciation remains relatively scarce. In response to this research gap, the present study aims to investigate the effect of TikTok lip-sync content on students' English pronunciation skills, with particular emphasis on fluency, accuracy, and learner confidence.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Pronunciation Skills*

Pronunciation is a key element of effective communication in English because it directly affects how well others can understand the speaker. It involves how words are spoken, including the articulation of sounds, as well as the use of intonation, stress, and rhythm. Incorrect pronunciation can cause misunderstandings and create a negative impression on listeners (Srakaew, 2021). Supporting this, students with poor pronunciation are often seen as less proficient and face more challenges with language transfer compared to those who pronounce words correctly (Yowani, 2021). Research also shows that learners who focus on improving their pronunciation tend to achieve better overall language skills, as they can participate more confidently in conversations and express their ideas clearly (Axtamova, 2025; Jaya et al., 2025; Fadilah et al., 2023). Therefore, pronunciation should be given equal importance alongside grammar and vocabulary in language learning materials, the platform exposes users to natural speech patterns - complete with casual expressions, current slang, and diverse accents. Furthermore, it can be deduced that TikTok had a notable beneficial influence on their oral proficiency and facilitates more fluent communication.

2.2 *TikTok as a Social Media Platform*

A defining feature of TikTok is its lip-sync functionality, which allows users to mime audio tracks from popular songs to movie

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dialogues. According to Hu (2023) lip-sync has been an “expedient”, a simpler and more practical “shortcut” to compensate for the lack of technical competency and to cope with a growing urge for new forms of expression. Also Anderson (2020) stated that large portion of TikTok content comes from users recreating existing videos or sounds. As a result, when a particular sound becomes popular, it can inspire hundreds of different videos that are linked to it. Furthermore, TikTok’s algorithm tends to promote trending content, encourage learners to stay up-to-date and motivated by contemporary language usage and cultural references. This relevance increases learner engagement and adds an entertainment value to the educational process.

Importantly, what makes TikTok particularly valuable for language learners is its wealth of authentic, real-world English content. Unlike traditional learning materials, the platform exposes users to natural speech patterns - complete with casual expressions, current slang, and diverse accents. As Adhani, Fadhillah, Yahya, & Wintolo (2023) stated that unlike traditional learning materials, the platform exposes users to natural speech patterns - complete with casual expressions, current slang, and diverse accents. Furthermore, it can be deduced that TikTok had a notable beneficial influence on their oral proficiency and facilitates more fluent communication.

2.3 *Understanding Lip-sync and TikTok*

Lip-Sync is a performance technique where individuals move their lips in precise harmony with a pre-recorded audio track, such as a song or dialogue. According to Alshahrani and Maashi (2024) Lip-Sync process involves analyze the audio waveform and generate precise lip movements that accurately reflect the spoken words’ timing, duration, and intensity. This method allows performers to create the illusion that they are singing or speaking live, though they are actually mime the words. Moreover, engaging in lip-sync activities contributes to foreign language development, particularly by supporting

pronunciation practice (Peixoto, Melo, Cabral, & Bessa, 2021).

TikTok is a widely popular short-form video platform, capitalizes on this trend by provide users with an easy-to-use lip-sync feature. Users can select audio clips, range from popular songs to movie dialogues, and create creative videos where their lip movements align with the sound. TikTok encourages students’ language confidence by creating a relaxed environment where they can observe and imitate natural language use, which reduces language anxiety and promotes more authentic interactions (Siraji, 2025; Cahyono & Perdhani, 2023; Dwipa et al., 2024). By connecting people from diverse linguistic backgrounds, TikTok allows students to engage dynamically with different content. Students also use TikTok as a platform for self-expression, which is often associated with narcissistic tendencies.

2.4 *Pronunciation and Learners Confidence*

Pronunciation plays a crucial role in foreign language acquisition because it directly affects how well others understand us. When pronunciation is clear, communication flows smoothly, but even small mistakes can lead to confusion. When learners make certain pronunciation errors while speaking, these mistakes can noticeably impact their fluency and overall communication.

According to Kissova (2020) pronunciation is responsible for intelligibility speaking in a way that most listeners, both native and non-native speakers, can understand without too much effort or confusion. Learning pronunciation in a foreign language can be especially difficult when the language is very different from the native tongue.

Learners with strong pronunciation can still be understood even if they make mistakes in other areas. In contrast, poor pronunciation can prevent effective communication, even when grammar is used correctly, making the speaker difficult to understand. In addition to

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improving intelligibility, good pronunciation contributes significantly to learner confidence.

2.5. *The Role of TikTok and Lip-sync Content in Pronunciation Development*

In the digital era, social media extends beyond mere entertainment and social interaction, playing an important role in supporting informal learning, including language acquisition. TikTok, in particular, has attracted significant attention because of its popularity among young users and its distinctive video-based format. For learners of English as a foreign language, especially those from Generation Z, TikTok offers an interactive, engaging, and easily accessible way to encounter spoken English. Utilizing TikTok to learn English pronunciation has proven beneficial, as learners can quickly notice and correct their mispronunciations by watching short videos (Mutiarra & Rosari, 2024). By observing and practicing pronunciation through this application, English learners become more aware of their mispronunciation and can immediately adjust their speech by imitating the correct pronunciation demonstrated by content creators. Furthermore, because learners are already familiar with the app and find it entertaining, they are more likely to use it consistently, which increases their overall exposure to the target language.

2.6. *The Role of TikTok and Lip-sync Content in Pronunciation Development*

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This practice helps EFL learners to listen carefully to English sounds, recognize the sound patterns of words, and train themselves to produce accurate pronunciation. This kind of practice is similar to shadowing, a technique widely used in pronunciation training, where learners repeat speech almost simultaneously with a model speaker (Ardana, Suyadi, & Yurni, 2023). What makes TikTok different is that it provides both audio and visual input. Learners can not only hear the correct pronunciation but also see how the speaker moves their mouth, which is especially helpful for distinguish and producing unfamiliar sounds.

3. METHODS

3.1 *Research Design*

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a one-group pre-test–post-test experimental design (Sugiyono, 2021; Leavy, 2017; Neuman, 2019). This design was chosen to measure the effectiveness of TikTok lip-sync content on students' English pronunciation by comparing their performance before and after the treatment. The absence of a control group was considered appropriate due to classroom limitations and the exploratory nature of integrating social media-based learning.

In this approach, a single group was first assessed through a pretest (*O*), then subjected to a treatment (*X*), and finally evaluated again with a post-test (*O*).

Table 3.1. Experimental Class

| GROUP | Pre-Test | Treatment | Post-Test | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|--|--|
| Experimental | <i>O</i> ₁ | <i>X</i> | <i>O</i> ₂ | | |

3.2 *Participants*

The participants of this study were 25 fourth-semester students of the English

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Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara. Purposive sampling was applied, as the participants had already taken basic speaking and pronunciation courses, making them suitable for pronunciation-focused treatment.

3.3 Instruments

The instruments consisted of pronunciation tests administered before and after the treatment. Students' pronunciation was assessed based on fluency, accuracy, and confidence.

The main instrument used in this study was a pronunciation test consisting of short spoken texts and selected sentences. Students' pronunciation performance was assessed using a scoring rubric covering three aspects: Fluency, Accuracy, and Confidence.

Each aspect was rated using a standardized scale adapted from previous pronunciation assessment frameworks to ensure consistency and objectivity.

3.4 Procedure

Participants completed a pre-test, followed by a TikTok lip-sync intervention in which they practiced mimicking English audio clips. After the intervention, a post-test was administered.

1. After collecting the students' data from the test, the researcher calculated the mean score using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where :

X = Mean score

$\sum X$ = The sum of all scores

N = The total number of samples

2. Established the criteria for hypothesis testing as follows:

Table 3.2. Hypothesis Testing

| Comparison | Hypothesis | |
|------------------|------------|----------|
| | H0 | H1 |
| t-test < t-table | Accepted | Rejected |
| t-test > t-table | Rejected | Accepted |

The table above indicated that (1) when the t-test value was smaller than the t-table value, the null hypothesis was accepted and the alternative hypothesis was rejected, and (2) when the t-test value was equal to or greater than the t-table value, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate a statistically significant improvement in students' English pronunciation following their engagement with TikTok lip-sync activities. The experimental group demonstrated substantial progress across all assessed aspects of pronunciation, namely fluency, accuracy,

and confidence. Quantitatively, the students' mean pronunciation score increased markedly from 66.38 in the pre-test to 86.41 in the post-test, reflecting a considerable enhancement in overall pronunciation performance. These findings are consistent with the proposed hypothesis that TikTok lip-sync content exerts a positive effect on learners' English pronunciation development.

To ensure the robustness of the statistical analysis, the data were examined using inferential statistical procedures. Normality testing was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test, which confirmed that both pre-test and post-test scores were normally distributed (pre-test Sig. = 0.167; post-test Sig. = 0.174). As the significance values exceeded the threshold of 0.05, the assumption of

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normality was satisfied, thereby justifying the application of parametric testing. Subsequently, a paired-sample t-test was employed to compare students' pronunciation performance before and after the intervention.

The paired-sample t-test yielded a t-obtained value of 28.65, which substantially exceeded the critical t-values at both the 0.05

and 0.01 significance levels. This result led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1), confirming that the observed improvement in pronunciation was statistically significant and attributable to the TikTok lip-sync intervention.

Table 3. Summary of Pre-Test and Post-Test Pronunciation Scores

| Test Type | Mean Score | Significance (Shapiro-Wilk) |
|-----------|------------|-----------------------------|
| Pre-Test | 66.38 | 0.167 |
| Post-Test | 86.41 | 0.174 |

| Statistical Test | t-value | Significance Level | Result |
|----------------------|---------|--------------------|-------------|
| Paired Sample t-Test | 28.65 | 0.05 | Significant |

The observed improvement in fluency can be attributed to the repetitive, rhythm-oriented nature of lip-sync activities. By consistently imitating native speaker models available in TikTok videos, students were exposed to authentic pronunciation patterns, including appropriate intonation, stress, and temporal alignment of speech. Such repeated exposure and simultaneous reproduction of spoken input resemble shadowing techniques, which have been shown to effectively enhance fluency by training learners to articulate speech in close synchrony with a model speaker (Ardana et al., 2023). Moreover, the informal and engaging learning atmosphere provided by TikTok likely reduced learners' speaking anxiety, thereby enabling them to produce smoother, more confident, and natural oral output.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that TikTok lip-sync activities significantly contributed to the improvement of students' English pronunciation skills, particularly in terms of fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The statistically significant increase in post-test scores confirms that integrating social media-based audiovisual content can effectively support pronunciation instruction in EFL contexts. This result aligns with

contemporary perspectives in second language acquisition, which emphasize the importance of meaningful exposure, imitation, and repeated practice in developing phonological competence (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2020).

The improvement in students' fluency can be attributed to the repetitive and rhythm-driven characteristics of lip-sync activities. By repeatedly imitating native speaker models in TikTok videos, learners were exposed to natural speech tempo, intonation, and stress patterns. This process closely resembles the shadowing technique, in which learners attempt to speak simultaneously with a model speaker, thereby enhancing speech automatization and fluency (Ardana et al., 2023). Consistent with Jurafsky and Martin (2023), frequent exposure to authentic spoken input enables learners to internalize speech rhythm and produce more continuous and natural utterances. Additionally, TikTok's short-video format allows learners to replay content multiple times, facilitating intensive listening and oral repetition without cognitive overload.

In terms of accuracy, the observed improvement suggests that TikTok lip-sync content effectively supports learners' acquisition of segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. The audiovisual nature of TikTok enables learners to observe

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articulatory movements, such as lip positioning and mouth opening, while simultaneously hearing accurate sound production. According to Uli Banjarnahor et al. (2023), visual cues play a crucial role in helping learners perceive and reproduce unfamiliar phonemes accurately. Moreover, repeated imitation of native speaker pronunciation enhances phonological awareness, allowing learners to gradually reduce fossilized pronunciation errors (Alberth, 2023).

The enhancement of learners' confidence represents another significant outcome of this study. Engaging in TikTok lip-sync activities provided students with a low-anxiety learning environment, as pronunciation practice was conducted individually and informally outside the traditional classroom setting. This finding is consistent with Krashen (2017) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that reduced anxiety and increased motivation facilitate more effective language acquisition. The entertaining and familiar nature of TikTok likely encouraged students to participate more actively, experiment with pronunciation, and take risks without fear of negative evaluation. As a result, learners developed greater self-confidence in their spoken English performance.

Furthermore, the results support previous studies that highlight the pedagogical potential of TikTok in language learning. Zaitun et al. (2021) and Anggraeni (2022) reported that TikTok-based learning activities improved students' pronunciation accuracy and engagement. However, the present study extends existing research by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of lip-sync activities specifically, supported by rigorous statistical analysis. This indicates that TikTok is not merely an entertainment platform but can function as a meaningful instructional medium when integrated purposefully into language learning.

Overall, the findings suggest that TikTok lip-sync activities can serve as an effective supplementary tool for pronunciation instruction in EFL classrooms. By combining

authentic language input, repetitive practice, and a low-anxiety learning environment, TikTok supports the development of fluency, accuracy, and learner confidence. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its one-group experimental design and relatively small sample size. Future research is therefore recommended to employ control groups, larger populations, and mixed-method approaches to further explore learners' perceptions and long-term effects of TikTok-based pronunciation learning.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that TikTok lip-sync content is an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing English pronunciation skills among EFL university students, as evidenced by a statistically significant improvement in fluency, accuracy, and confidence following the intervention. The substantial increase in post-test scores confirms that TikTok's audiovisual features and informal learning environment facilitate meaningful pronunciation practice while reducing learners' speaking anxiety and fostering self-confidence. Pedagogically, these findings imply that integrating social media-based learning strategies into pronunciation instruction can increase learner engagement, promote autonomous practice, and better align teaching methods with the characteristics of Generation Z learners. However, given the study's limited sample size and one-group experimental design, future research is recommended to employ control groups, larger and more diverse populations, and mixed-method approaches to further examine learners' perceptions, long-term learning outcomes, and the effectiveness of TikTok-based pronunciation instruction across different EFL contexts.

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