Gen Z's Utilization of Tiktok as a Tool to Improve English Vocabulary Mastery

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the use of the TikTok application as a medium to improve English vocabulary acquisition among Generation Z. Generation Z is very familiar with technology and social media, but many still have difficulty in expanding their English vocabulary. This study used a qualitative method using interviews with 10 respondents, consisting of students from the English education study program at Kuningan University who are included in Gen Z. The results of this study indicate that TikTok acts not only as an entertainment medium but also as an effective learning medium. Interesting educational content and a visual approach provided by the TikTok application will help respondents to remember and understand new vocabulary faster. User interaction with TikTok content such as liking, saving, and repeated pronunciation (repetition) contributes to vocabulary preservation. While TikTok has proven to be beneficial, it must also be noted how important it is to combine more structured learning methods to get optimal results. This study is expected to provide new knowledge to educators in using technology to improve the English learning process for Generation Z.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Gen z is defined as a person who was born between 1997 and 2012 and is characterized by integration with technology and social media. Admist other platforms that have achieved widwspread popularity, TikTok stands out as a crucial tool for social media interaction and communication. According to the Ministry of Communications and Information, the number of TikTok users will surge to 10 million in Indonesia alone by 2020, highlighting the platform's broad appeal. Despite this interest, many members of Generation Z find learning English vocabulary challenging and find the learning process tedious and uninteresting. This is a paradox. While they are immersed in the digital environment, they struggle with language acquisition, especially when it comes to vocabulary. The potential of TikTok as an educational tool has begun attract attention, with is short, engaging video format offering a unique approach to language learning. Social media can boost creativity and involvement in school settings, according to earlier research. For example study by Nugraha and Winarti (2014) indicated that video technology can considerably increase learning results, while Luisandrith and Yuniarti (2020) propose that TikTok can encourage students' creativity through video creation. Nonetheless, there is still a lack of information in the literature about TikTok's precise effects on Generation Z's acquisitions of English Vocabulary. With an emphasis on the kinds of content that users find engaging and the

interactions that promote learning, this study attempts to investigate how TikTok might be used to improve vocabulary knowledge.

2. METHODOLOGY

The method used by the researcher is qualitative as a measuring tool to find out TikTok as a bridge to enrich them in English words. The targeted participants were ten English education students from Kuningan university aged ranging from 20 to 24 years who made TikTok their favorite platform as a fun learning medium for them. The data that has been collected is through the semi-structured interview stage and direct observation. The interview is to export their experience of TikTok, and I need to know how often they use the platform, especially what content they watch and need their opinions about the effectiveness of TikTok as a tool for learning to enrich vocabulary. In addition, direct observation was held to mark how often they practiced the conversations they learned from the platform and began to be applied in their daily lives. The collected data was then analyzed using thematic analysis to bring out themes and patterns from the audience's answers and responses.This stage of analysis involves grouping and organizing data to get a good understanding of the role of TikTok in the vocabulary collection process. the way to break down the elements is done to make small groups that are more conical and then interpreted to check how TikTok videos can be used as a tool to practice their English.From this analytical approach, researchers can conclude that by using this approach there is potential for TikTok as a tool to explore creative and innovative second language learning for the gen Z generation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigated how Kuningan University's English Education Department's Generation Z students utilize TikTok as a tool to enhance their command of the English language. Several important conclusions on TikTok's function in vocabulary learning and how users engage with the platform to improve their language skills were drawn from participant observation and interviews.

1) Most participants agreed that TikTok is a useful informal learning tool in addition to being an entertainment platform. Compared to more conventional approaches, several students said that watching the brief, interesting movies made learning English terminology more fun and less daunting. Students were able to recall new words longer and assimilate them more rapidly thanks to the bite-sized format, visuals, and audio components. This confirms earlier findings that multimedia information, which offers context-rich, multimodal input, might enhance vocabulary memory.

2) Participants found that instructional videos, vlogs of everyday living with native English speakers, and amusing skits that organically incorporated new vocabulary were the most beneficial TikTok content for vocabulary acquisition. Since Generation Z prefers interactive and visually stimulating learning experiences, content providers that blend comedy and realistic events with concise explanations were especially preferred. Accounts that successfully combine instruction with pleasure, like @englishwithgeorgie and @eranitri, were regularly cited as reliable sources.

3) By enjoying, storing, and replaying videos, as well as by mimicking pronunciation, participants showed that they were actively engaged with TikTok material. Additionally, a lot of people mentioned searching for unfamiliar terms on websites like Google or ChatGPT, writing them down, and trying to use the new words in everyday discussions and social media captions. Participants felt that their vocabulary knowledge improved as a result of the contextual and repetition learning that this active interaction promoted. These methods are in line with successful language learning techniques that prioritize frequent exposure and real-world application.

4) The flexible, visual, and fast-paced content that Generation Z prefers was thought to be particularly well-suited to TikTok's learning method. TikTok learning, according to participants, was less inflexible and more in line with their lifestyle, which made it simpler to maintain motivation. Duets, challenges, and comment sections are just a few of the interactive elements on the site that promoted participation and peer learning, which further increased engagement and motivation.

5) Participants stressed that TikTok by itself is not enough for thorough language knowledge, notwithstanding the benefits. They recommended that rather than taking the place of more formal and structured teaching strategies like reading, classroom instruction, and writing assignments, TikTok should be used in addition to them. It was generally agreed that the most efficient and long-lasting learning results would be obtained by fusing traditional methods with TikTok's captivating medium.

The results of this study demonstrate TikTok's great potential as a helpful resource for Generation Z pupils acquiring English vocabulary. The platform's ability to present instructional materials in engaging and contextually rich ways is in line with current theories of language acquisition that support contextual and multimodal learning. Additionally, active participation is encouraged by TikTok's interactive features, which is essential for language retention and real-world application. However, there are limitations to these benefits. Concerns regarding the precision and breadth of language input are raised by the reliance on unstructured, user-generated content. TikTok should therefore be used as an additional tool by teachers and pupils, carefully included into a larger curriculum to guarantee thorough language development.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that TikTok is a most promising effective supplementary material to enhance the English vocabulary ability of Gen Z students of Universitas Kuningan. Short entertaining videos on the platform are suitable for the learning culture of this generation, so learning vocabulary is fun, contextualized, and accessible. Through an active role in the form of watching, saving, copying, and using new words, students are able to enhance their receptive and productive vocabulary skill. But TikTok can never substitute institutional learning processes but may prove to be a secondary tool to facilitate the learning process. A combination of TikTok and institutionalized learning methodologies will provide a better rounded and effective vocabulary growth plan. Practice and research in the future must look for ways to harness the educational potential of TikTok for the language learners to their benefit without jeopardizing academic quality.

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