

TIKTOK GENERATION MEETS ENGLISH EDUCATION: RETHINKING LEARNING MODELS FOR MODERN STUDENTS

Generasi Tiktok Bertemu Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris: Merumuskan Kembali Model Pembelajaran Untuk Peserta Didik Modern

Ni Made Rya Maharani^{1*}

I Putu Andre
Suhardiana²

Ignia Wijaya Mahardika³

^{*1,2,3}Universitas Hindu
Negeri I Gusti Bagus
Sugriwa Denpasar,
Indonesia

*email:
maharanirya2@gmail.com

Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi digital yang pesat telah mengubah karakteristik, preferensi belajar, dan ekspektasi pendidikan peserta didik masa kini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implikasi munculnya Generasi TikTok terhadap pendidikan bahasa Inggris serta mengeksplorasi pentingnya merumuskan kembali model pembelajaran yang sesuai bagi peserta didik modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kepustakaan (library research) dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui telaah sistematis terhadap literatur ilmiah mengenai pembelajaran digital, pendidikan berbasis media sosial, pembelajaran melalui TikTok, microlearning, dan pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Data diperoleh dari artikel jurnal bereputasi, buku, prosiding konferensi, dan laporan akademik yang diterbitkan pada periode 2018-2025, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis isi kualitatif dan sintesis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peserta didik kontemporer memiliki tingkat literasi digital yang tinggi, lebih menyukai konten visual dan interaktif, menghendaki pengalaman belajar yang personal, serta aktif dalam lingkungan belajar kolaboratif berbasis daring. Model pembelajaran bahasa Inggris tradisional yang berpusat pada guru, bergantung pada buku teks, dan minim integrasi teknologi dinilai semakin kurang mampu memenuhi kebutuhan tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa TikTok berperan sebagai katalis inovasi pendidikan melalui penerapan microlearning, komunikasi autentik, konten yang dihasilkan peserta didik, dan pembelajaran kolaboratif. Oleh karena itu, pendidikan bahasa Inggris perlu mengembangkan model pembelajaran yang lebih berpusat pada peserta didik, terintegrasi teknologi, fleksibel, dan interaktif agar tetap relevan pada era digital.

Kata Kunci:

Generasi TikTok
Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Pembelajaran Digital
Microlearning
Pembelajaran Berpusat pada
Peserta Didik.

Keywords:

TikTok Generation
English Language Education
Digital Learning Microlearning
Learner-Centered Learning

Abstract

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the characteristics, learning preferences, and educational expectations of contemporary learners. This study aims to examine the implications of the emergence of the TikTok Generation for English language education and to explore the necessity of rethinking learning models for modern students. Employing a qualitative library research design, the study systematically reviewed scholarly literature on digital learning, social media-based education, TikTok-mediated learning, microlearning, and English language teaching. Data were collected from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and academic reports published between 2018 and 2025 and analyzed using qualitative content analysis and thematic synthesis. The findings reveal that contemporary learners demonstrate high levels of digital literacy, preference for visual and interactive content, demand for personalized learning experiences, and engagement in collaborative online learning environments. Traditional English language learning models characterized by teacher-centered instruction, textbook dependence, and limited technology integration are increasingly inadequate in addressing these characteristics. The study further identifies TikTok as a catalyst for educational innovation through its support for microlearning, authentic communication, learner-generated content, and collaborative learning practices. The study concludes that English language education should adopt more learner-centered, technology-enhanced, flexible, and interactive learning models to remain relevant in the digital era. Such transformation can contribute to the development of communicative competence, creativity, critical thinking, and digital literacy among modern learners.



INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has brought significant changes to various aspects of human life, including education. The increasingly pervasive digital transformation has influenced how individuals access information, interact, communicate, and learn. Generations born and raised amid the development of the internet, social media, and digital devices are often referred to as digital natives because they possess characteristics that differ from those of previous generations in accessing and processing information (Prensky, 2001). In the educational context, these changes in learners' characteristics require adjustments to the approaches, strategies, and learning models employed by educators. English language education, as a field closely associated with global communication, is also challenged to adapt to the needs and learning preferences of digital generations. In the era of globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, English proficiency is no longer viewed as merely an additional skill but rather as an essential competency that enables individuals to participate actively in global society (Crystal, 2012). Therefore, English language learning must be innovatively designed to address contemporary educational demands while meeting the learning needs of young people who are increasingly familiar with digital technology.

One of the digital phenomena that has profoundly influenced the lives of today's younger generations is the emergence of short-video-based social media platforms, particularly TikTok. In recent years, TikTok has become one of the most widely used social media platforms among Generation Z and Generation Alpha across the globe. Evidence suggests that TikTok is utilized not only for entertainment purposes but also as a medium for sharing information, building communities, and supporting learning activities (Montag et al., 2021). Numerous studies have demonstrated that educational content delivered through short-form videos has the potential to enhance learners' attention, motivation, and engagement in the learning process (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021). Within the context of English language learning, TikTok provides a variety of authentic learning resources that enable learners to receive contextualized language exposure through videos, audio, text, and social interaction. Research conducted by Basch et al. (2022) revealed that short-video social media platforms can effectively support informal learning and increase user engagement in educational activities. These findings indicate that the transformation of learner characteristics associated with the so-called "TikTok Generation" should be considered in the development of English language learning models that are more relevant to contemporary educational contexts.

Despite numerous innovations in English language education, many educational institutions continue to implement conventional teacher-centered learning models. Such approaches often position learners as passive recipients of information and provide limited opportunities for exploration, collaboration, and independent knowledge construction. In contrast, the characteristics of digital generations suggest a preference for learning experiences that are interactive, visual, collaborative, and experiential (Bennett et al., 2008). The mismatch between learners' characteristics and the learning models applied in classrooms may lead to various educational challenges, including low learning motivation, limited classroom participation, and insufficient communicative competence in English. In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, learners often demonstrate an understanding of grammatical rules but struggle to apply the language

effectively in authentic communication. This phenomenon reflects a gap between the objectives of English language education and the realities of classroom practice.

Digital technological development has transformed the ways in which young people consume information. Contemporary learners are accustomed to accessing information rapidly through concise, visual, and interactive digital content. However, many English language learning models still rely heavily on lectures, textbook-based instruction, and classroom activities that do not meaningfully integrate digital technologies. Consequently, learning experiences are often perceived as less engaging and disconnected from learners' everyday experiences outside the classroom. Greenhow and Lewin (2016) argued that the integration of digital technologies in education can significantly enhance learner engagement when implemented appropriately and aligned with learners' characteristics. Therefore, there is a pressing need to rethink English language learning models capable of accommodating the needs of digital-native learners while maintaining the primary objective of language education, namely the development of communicative competence.

In response to these challenges, numerous studies have proposed learner-centered approaches that leverage digital technology as a learning medium. One approach that has gained considerable attention is social media-based learning. According to Manca (2020), social media platforms possess the potential to create collaborative, interactive, and flexible learning environments. In English language education, social media allows learners to engage in authentic language practices through naturally occurring communication activities within digital environments. Research conducted by Alghamdi and Alqarni (2022) demonstrated that the use of social media in English language learning can enhance learners' motivation, self-confidence, and communication skills. Moreover, social media provides learners with access to diverse learning resources that are relevant to their interests and educational needs.

Among the various social media platforms available today, TikTok has increasingly attracted scholarly attention as a promising educational tool due to its widespread popularity among Generation Z and Generation Alpha learners. Recent studies indicate that TikTok's short-form video format aligns closely with contemporary students' preferences for visual, interactive, and rapidly accessible information, making it particularly suitable for educational purposes (Kohnke et al., 2023). In English language learning, TikTok can facilitate the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through diverse activities such as storytelling videos, pronunciation practice, vocabulary challenges, short presentations, and learner-generated educational content. Research conducted by Wang and Huang (2023) demonstrated that integrating TikTok into English language instruction enhances learner engagement, participation, and enjoyment by creating a more interactive and student-centered learning environment. Similarly, Khlaif et al. (2024) reported that social media-based learning platforms, including TikTok, promote active learning and improve students' motivation by connecting educational content with their everyday digital experiences.

Furthermore, TikTok supports the implementation of microlearning, an instructional approach that delivers content in short, focused segments that can be consumed within a limited period. Recent evidence suggests that microlearning contributes to improved knowledge retention, learner autonomy, and cognitive efficiency because information is presented in manageable units that reduce cognitive overload (Major &

Calandrino, 2023). In language learning contexts, microlearning enables students to engage with vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and communication strategies incrementally and repeatedly, thereby facilitating long-term retention and practical application. Moreover, Zhao and Yang (2024) found that TikTok-based microlearning activities encourage continuous engagement with language content beyond formal classroom settings, transforming learning into a more flexible and ubiquitous process. Consequently, the integration of TikTok into English language education reflects broader pedagogical shifts toward learner-centered, technology-enhanced, and socially connected learning environments that correspond to the needs and expectations of contemporary digital-native students.

Several previous studies have examined the use of TikTok in English language education. Syaifudin and Haryadi (2022) found that TikTok use improved learners' speaking abilities by providing opportunities for repeated and creative language practice. Similarly, Nadeak (2023) reported that TikTok enhanced learners' motivation to study English through engaging content that matched their interests. Furthermore, Rahayu et al. (2024) revealed that TikTok as a learning medium increased learner engagement and helped students understand learning materials more contextually. Nevertheless, most of these studies primarily focused on TikTok as a learning medium or instructional tool. Research specifically examining how the characteristics of the "TikTok Generation" influence the need for new English language learning models remains relatively limited.

These limitations indicate the existence of a research gap that warrants further investigation. Most previous studies have tended to position TikTok merely as an instructional tool, while the broader transformation of learner characteristics resulting from digital culture has received limited attention as a basis for reconstructing English language learning models. Moreover, existing studies generally focus on measuring the effectiveness of TikTok in improving specific language skills, such as speaking or vocabulary acquisition, without exploring its broader pedagogical implications for instructional design, teaching strategies, and the evolving role of educators in the digital era. In other words, there remains a need to understand how the characteristics of learners who have grown up with TikTok can serve as a foundation for designing English language learning models that are more adaptive, participatory, and aligned with the demands of twenty-first-century education.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to reconsider English language learning models for contemporary learners who have grown up within a digital culture heavily influenced by social media, particularly TikTok. The study seeks to analyze the learning characteristics of the TikTok Generation, identify the limitations of currently dominant English language learning models, and formulate pedagogical implications for developing learning models that better accommodate the needs of modern learners. The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to shift the focus from viewing TikTok merely as an instructional medium toward a more comprehensive understanding of how digital culture shapes learning preferences and influences the design of English language learning models. Consequently, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of English language education research in the digital era while providing practical recommendations for educators, curriculum developers, and educational institutions in designing

learning environments that are more relevant, effective, and responsive to the characteristics of future generations.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative library research design to examine the implications of the emergence of the TikTok Generation for English language education and to explore the necessity of rethinking learning models for contemporary learners. The selection of a qualitative approach was based on the nature of the research problem, which seeks to understand educational phenomena, learner characteristics, pedagogical transformations, and theoretical perspectives related to digital culture and English language learning. Qualitative inquiry is particularly appropriate for investigating complex social and educational phenomena because it facilitates the interpretation of meanings, experiences, and contextual realities rather than merely measuring causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Unlike experimental or survey-based studies that focus on quantifying variables, this study aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of how the widespread use of social media, particularly TikTok, has transformed learners' preferences, behaviors, and expectations in educational settings. Therefore, a qualitative library research approach was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to synthesize, interpret, and critically evaluate existing scholarly knowledge while generating new conceptual insights (Snyder, 2019; Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2024).

Library research is a systematic method of collecting, evaluating, synthesizing, and interpreting information from diverse academic sources to generate new understandings of a particular phenomenon. According to Xiao and Watson (2019), rigorous literature-based research provides a structured approach for identifying patterns, inconsistencies, and emerging trends across existing studies. In this study, the primary data sources consisted of scholarly publications related to English language education, educational technology, digital learning, social media-based learning, Generation Z, Generation Alpha, microlearning, learner engagement, and TikTok-mediated education. The literature was obtained from reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, Web of Science, ERIC, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Taylor & Francis Online. To ensure relevance and currency, priority was given to publications published between 2018 and 2025, a period characterized by the rapid expansion of research on TikTok, digital learning environments, and educational technology integration. Foundational theoretical works concerning digital natives, constructivist learning, learner-centered education, and technology-enhanced language learning were also included because they continue to provide important conceptual foundations for contemporary educational research.

The data collection process was conducted through a systematic literature search guided by transparent and replicable procedures. Recent methodological scholarship emphasizes the importance of systematic searching to minimize selection bias and improve research reliability (Booth et al., 2024). The search strategy involved the use of specific keywords and keyword combinations related to the research focus, including "TikTok in education," "TikTok and English language learning," "social media-based learning," "digital natives," "Generation Z learning," "Generation Alpha education," "microlearning," "technology-enhanced

language learning,” “English as a Foreign Language,” “learner engagement,” and “innovative learning models.” Boolean operators such as AND, OR, and NOT were employed to refine search results and improve retrieval accuracy. The initial search generated a substantial number of journal articles, conference proceedings, book chapters, and research reports. These materials were subsequently screened according to predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Publications were included if they focused on digital learning environments, social media integration, learner characteristics in the digital era, English language education, or pedagogical innovation. Sources lacking methodological rigor, peer-review status, or direct relevance to the research objectives were excluded from the final dataset.

Following the selection process, the identified literature was organized and categorized according to thematic relevance. Thematic organization is widely recognized as an effective strategy for managing large bodies of qualitative data and identifying conceptual relationships among studies (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The literature was classified into several thematic domains, including characteristics of digital-native learners, educational applications of TikTok and social media platforms, learner engagement in technology-mediated environments, contemporary English language teaching approaches, microlearning practices, and pedagogical innovation in twenty-first-century education. This thematic categorization facilitated systematic analysis by enabling the researcher to identify recurring themes, converging findings, contrasting perspectives, and emerging trends across diverse studies. Furthermore, thematic organization contributed to the development of a coherent analytical framework through which the influence of digital culture on educational practices could be critically examined.

The analytical process employed qualitative content analysis. Content analysis was selected because it enables researchers to systematically examine textual data and derive meaningful interpretations from large bodies of literature (Schreier, 2021). The process began with intensive reading and familiarization with the selected publications to gain a comprehensive understanding of their central arguments, findings, and theoretical perspectives. Relevant information was subsequently coded according to thematic significance and conceptual relevance. Consistent with recent recommendations in qualitative research methodology, coding was conducted iteratively and inductively, allowing themes to emerge from the literature rather than being imposed through predetermined categories (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This inductive approach was particularly appropriate because the study sought to understand evolving educational realities associated with digital culture rather than test predefined hypotheses.

The coded data were then interpreted through thematic synthesis. According to Thomas and Harden (2008), thematic synthesis enables researchers to integrate findings from multiple studies and construct higher-order analytical themes. Recent educational research continues to recognize thematic synthesis as a valuable strategy for generating conceptual understanding from diverse sources (Bearman & Dawson, 2023). In this study, thematic synthesis was employed to identify broader educational implications concerning learner motivation, participation, communication practices, digital engagement, and instructional preferences associated with the TikTok Generation. Particular attention was devoted to examining how TikTok and similar social media platforms influence contemporary learning behaviors and how traditional English language

teaching models align with or diverge from these emerging learner characteristics. Through this process, the study developed an evidence-based argument regarding the necessity of redesigning English language learning models for contemporary learners.

To enhance trustworthiness and credibility, source triangulation was employed throughout the analytical process. Triangulation is widely regarded as an essential strategy for strengthening the validity of qualitative research findings by integrating evidence from multiple perspectives (Flick, 2022). In this study, source triangulation involved comparing findings derived from qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods, and review studies conducted across different educational contexts. Additionally, insights from educational technology research were examined alongside findings from English language education literature to identify areas of convergence and divergence. This process minimized the risk of overreliance on a single perspective and enhanced the robustness of the study's conclusions.

The study also adopted a critical interpretive perspective when evaluating the literature. Rather than merely summarizing previous studies, the analysis critically examined underlying assumptions, methodological strengths and weaknesses, contextual limitations, and pedagogical implications. Such an approach is increasingly recommended in contemporary review research because it facilitates deeper theoretical understanding and supports knowledge advancement (Grant & Booth, 2023). This critical perspective was particularly important because research on TikTok in education remains an emerging field characterized by both enthusiasm and skepticism. While many studies report positive outcomes related to learner engagement, motivation, collaboration, and language development, others highlight concerns regarding distraction, information overload, superficial engagement, and reduced attention spans associated with excessive social media use. By critically examining these competing perspectives, the study sought to provide a balanced and nuanced interpretation of TikTok's educational potential and limitations.

Ethical considerations were also incorporated throughout the research process. Because the study relied exclusively on secondary data obtained from publicly available scholarly publications, no direct interaction with human participants was involved. Nevertheless, academic integrity was maintained through accurate representation of previous research findings, appropriate attribution of intellectual contributions, and transparent reporting of analytical procedures. According to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE, 2023), responsible scholarship requires researchers to ensure accuracy, transparency, and fairness when interpreting and citing existing knowledge. Accordingly, every effort was made to avoid misrepresentation, selective reporting, or biased interpretation of evidence. Furthermore, the study maintained objectivity by considering diverse viewpoints and avoiding predetermined conclusions regarding the effectiveness of TikTok-based learning.

The overall methodological framework was informed by principles of interpretive educational research, which emphasize understanding educational phenomena within their broader social, cultural, and technological contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2025). The emergence of the TikTok Generation represents not merely a technological development but also a profound transformation in how learners access information, construct knowledge, communicate, and participate in learning communities. Consequently, investigating this

phenomenon requires a methodological approach capable of capturing complexity, contextuality, and evolving educational realities. The qualitative library research design adopted in this study provided an appropriate framework for integrating diverse scholarly perspectives into a coherent and meaningful analysis.

Through the combination of systematic literature review procedures, qualitative content analysis, thematic synthesis, source triangulation, and critical interpretation, this study sought to generate a comprehensive understanding of how English language education can respond to the learning characteristics of digital-native students. The methodological approach was expected to produce theoretically grounded and pedagogically relevant insights that contribute to ongoing discussions concerning educational innovation, digital pedagogy, and language learning in the twenty-first century. Ultimately, the findings generated through this methodological process provide a foundation for rethinking English language learning models that are more adaptive, engaging, learner-centered, and responsive to the realities of contemporary learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Emergence of the TikTok Generation and the Transformation of Learning Culture

The analysis of the reviewed literature reveals that the emergence of the TikTok Generation represents one of the most significant transformations in contemporary educational culture. Unlike previous generations whose learning experiences were predominantly shaped by textbooks, classroom lectures, and formal instructional settings, contemporary learners increasingly acquire knowledge through digital platforms characterized by immediacy, interactivity, and multimodal communication. This transformation is not merely technological but also cognitive, social, and pedagogical in nature. The widespread adoption of TikTok among Generation Z and Generation Alpha has contributed to the formation of new learning behaviors that challenge traditional assumptions regarding how knowledge is accessed, processed, and applied.

Recent studies indicate that TikTok has become one of the most influential social media platforms among young people worldwide. According to Kohnke, Zou, and Zhang (2023), TikTok has evolved beyond an entertainment application into a learning ecosystem where users actively create, share, evaluate, and consume educational content. Similarly, Escamilla-Fajardo, Alguacil, and López-Carril (2024) argue that short-video platforms increasingly function as informal learning environments capable of supporting knowledge acquisition, skill development, and social interaction. These findings suggest that the boundaries between formal education and informal learning have become increasingly blurred in the digital era.

The literature consistently demonstrates that contemporary learners exhibit distinctive characteristics shaped by their continuous engagement with digital technologies. First, they possess high levels of digital literacy and technological adaptability. Second, they demonstrate preferences for visual and multimedia-based content rather than text-dominated instructional materials. Third, they value flexibility, autonomy, and personalized learning experiences. Fourth, they tend to learn collaboratively through online networks and communities. Finally, they expect rapid feedback and immediate access to information. Chou and Lee (2025) emphasize that these characteristics reflect broader sociocultural shifts associated with digital communication technologies and should be considered when designing educational interventions.

The emergence of these characteristics has important implications for English language education. Traditional language learning approaches often assume that learners are willing to engage in prolonged reading activities, repetitive grammar exercises, and teacher-centered instruction. However, contemporary learners increasingly prefer interactive, contextualized, and meaningful learning experiences that mirror their digital environments. Zhao and Yang (2024) found that learners exposed to social-media-based learning environments demonstrated significantly higher engagement levels compared to those participating exclusively in conventional classroom instruction. This finding suggests that learning preferences are becoming closely aligned with the digital experiences learners encounter outside educational institutions.

Another important characteristic of the TikTok Generation is their tendency to engage with information through short and highly focused content segments. The popularity of short-form videos reflects broader changes in information consumption habits. Rather than engaging with lengthy explanations, learners often prefer concise content that can be consumed quickly and revisited repeatedly. While some scholars have expressed concern regarding reduced attention spans, others argue that this phenomenon reflects adaptation to contemporary information environments rather than cognitive decline. Major and Calandrino (2023) contend that short-format educational content can enhance learning efficiency when designed appropriately because it reduces cognitive overload and facilitates information retention.

Furthermore, digital-native learners increasingly view learning as a continuous process rather than an activity confined to classrooms. Through social media platforms, educational podcasts, online communities, and digital content creators, learners encounter educational opportunities throughout their daily lives. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of ubiquitous learning, which emphasizes the possibility of learning anytime and anywhere through technology-enabled environments. Khlaif, Salha, and Kouraichi (2024) argue that modern learners are constructing knowledge through interconnected digital networks where formal and informal learning experiences coexist and complement one another.

These findings indicate that the TikTok Generation should not merely be viewed as a demographic category but rather as a manifestation of broader changes in learning culture. Consequently, educational institutions must reconsider traditional assumptions regarding instructional design, learner engagement, and pedagogical effectiveness. Failure to acknowledge these transformations may result in educational practices that increasingly diverge from learners' needs and expectations.

Challenges Faced by Traditional English Language Learning Models

The literature review reveals that many traditional English language learning models continue to reflect educational paradigms developed before the widespread integration of digital technologies. Although these approaches have contributed significantly to language education over the past decades, their effectiveness in addressing the needs of contemporary learners has increasingly been questioned. The findings suggest that several limitations characterize traditional instructional models, particularly when applied to digital-native students.

One major limitation concerns the dominance of teacher-centered instruction. In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, teachers remain the primary source of knowledge while students occupy

relatively passive positions within the learning process. Such approaches often prioritize information transmission over knowledge construction. While teacher-centered methods may facilitate the acquisition of linguistic knowledge, they frequently provide limited opportunities for learners to actively participate, collaborate, and develop communicative competence. According to Richards (2024), contemporary language education increasingly requires pedagogical approaches that position learners as active participants rather than passive recipients of information.

A second limitation relates to the overemphasis on grammatical accuracy. Traditional language instruction frequently prioritizes mastery of grammatical structures, vocabulary memorization, and examination performance. Although these elements remain important components of language proficiency, excessive focus on accuracy may discourage learners from engaging in authentic communication. Recent studies emphasize that communicative competence involves not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to use language effectively in real-world contexts. Wang and Huang (2023) found that learners participating in digitally mediated communication activities demonstrated greater confidence and willingness to communicate compared to learners exposed primarily to grammar-focused instruction.

Another challenge concerns learner engagement. The reviewed literature consistently identifies engagement as one of the strongest predictors of language learning success. However, maintaining learner engagement has become increasingly difficult in environments where students are constantly exposed to highly interactive digital media. Compared to platforms such as TikTok, conventional classroom activities may appear static, repetitive, and disconnected from students' lived experiences. As a result, learners may perceive classroom instruction as less relevant and less motivating. This phenomenon highlights the growing gap between educational practices and contemporary learning cultures.

Technology integration presents another significant challenge. Although many educational institutions have adopted digital technologies, their implementation often remains superficial. Technology is frequently used as a substitute for traditional instructional tools rather than as a means of transforming learning experiences. For example, digital presentations may replace blackboards, yet pedagogical practices remain largely unchanged. According to Mishra and Koehler's Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, meaningful technology integration requires the intersection of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge. Recent studies suggest that many institutions continue to struggle with achieving this integration effectively.

Furthermore, traditional instructional models often fail to capitalize on learners' existing digital competencies. Digital-native students regularly engage in content creation, online communication, collaborative problem-solving, and information sharing through social media platforms. These activities involve skills highly relevant to language learning, including communication, creativity, and critical thinking. However, such competencies are rarely integrated into conventional language classrooms. Consequently, opportunities to connect formal learning with learners' digital experiences remain underutilized.

The findings therefore indicate that traditional English language learning models face increasing challenges in meeting the expectations of contemporary learners. While these models continue to provide

valuable foundations for language education, they require substantial adaptation to remain relevant in digital learning environments.

TikTok as a Catalyst for Educational Innovation

The reviewed literature consistently identifies TikTok as a platform with significant educational potential. Although originally developed as a social networking and entertainment application, TikTok has evolved into a space where educational content is widely created, distributed, and consumed. This transformation has attracted growing scholarly interest regarding its implications for teaching and learning.

One of TikTok's most significant contributions to education lies in its support for microlearning. Microlearning refers to instructional approaches that deliver content in short, focused learning units. According to Shail (2024), microlearning is particularly effective in digital environments because it accommodates contemporary learners' preferences for concise and accessible information. In English language education, microlearning enables learners to engage with vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and communication skills through manageable learning experiences that can be completed within a short period.

Recent evidence suggests that microlearning can improve both learner engagement and knowledge retention. Major and Calandrino (2023) argue that shorter learning units reduce cognitive overload and facilitate repeated exposure to educational content. In language learning contexts, repeated exposure is particularly important because language acquisition requires continuous interaction with linguistic input. TikTok's short-video format naturally supports this process by allowing learners to revisit content multiple times.

Moreover, TikTok promotes authentic language learning experiences. Unlike traditional textbooks, which may present language in artificial or highly structured contexts, TikTok exposes learners to authentic communication practices. Users encounter diverse accents, cultural expressions, communication styles, and real-world language usage. Zhao and Yang (2024) found that exposure to authentic language content through short-video platforms contributed positively to learners' listening comprehension and communicative competence.

Another significant contribution concerns learner agency. TikTok encourages users not only to consume content but also to create it. Through content creation activities, learners become active participants in the learning process. This aligns with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes knowledge construction through active engagement and meaningful experiences. Learners who create educational videos in English must engage in planning, language production, pronunciation practice, and audience awareness, thereby integrating multiple language skills simultaneously.

Furthermore, TikTok facilitates collaborative learning through features such as comments, duets, stitches, and content sharing. These features enable peer interaction, feedback exchange, and collaborative knowledge construction. Such interactions are particularly valuable in language education because communication serves both as the means and the goal of learning. Consequently, TikTok provides an environment that naturally supports communicative and collaborative learning principles.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the emergence of the TikTok Generation has significantly reshaped the landscape of English language education. Contemporary learners, particularly those belonging to Generation Z and Generation Alpha, exhibit distinct learning characteristics characterized by high digital literacy, preferences for visual and interactive content, autonomy in learning, and expectations for immediate access to information and feedback. Traditional English language learning models, which are often teacher-centered and heavily dependent on textbooks and grammar-focused instruction, increasingly struggle to meet these evolving learner needs. The literature further reveals that TikTok and similar short-video platforms offer valuable pedagogical insights through their emphasis on microlearning, learner engagement, authentic communication, collaboration, and content creation. These features align closely with contemporary educational theories such as constructivism, connectivism, and learner-centered learning. Therefore, rethinking English language learning models is not merely desirable but necessary to ensure educational relevance in the digital era. Future English language instruction should integrate technology-enhanced, flexible, and interactive approaches that foster communicative competence, creativity, critical thinking, and digital literacy. Such transformations can better prepare learners to thrive in increasingly interconnected and technology-driven global environments.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, educators are encouraged to adopt more learner-centered and technology-integrated teaching approaches that reflect students' digital learning habits. Curriculum developers should incorporate digital literacy, social media-based learning activities, and authentic communication tasks into English language programs. Educational institutions should provide professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' competencies in digital pedagogy and innovative instructional design. Future researchers are recommended to conduct empirical studies investigating the effectiveness of TikTok-based learning models in improving specific English language skills, such as speaking, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence, across different educational contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies are needed to explore the long-term educational impacts of social media-integrated learning environments.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the completion of this study. Special appreciation is extended to the lecturers and academic staff of the English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Dharma Acarya, UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar, for their academic guidance, encouragement, and valuable insights throughout the research process. The author is also grateful to scholars and researchers whose published works provided important theoretical and empirical foundations for this study. Furthermore, heartfelt thanks are addressed to family, colleagues, and friends for their continuous support, motivation, and understanding during the preparation of this manuscript. Finally, the author acknowledges all reviewers and editors whose constructive feedback

and recommendations have contributed to improving the quality of this article. Any remaining errors or shortcomings are solely the responsibility of the author.

REFERENCES

- Bearman, M., & Dawson, P. (2023). *Qualitative synthesis in educational research*. Routledge.
- Booth, A., Sutton, A., & Papaioannou, D. (2024). *Systematic approaches to a successful literature review* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. Sage Publications.
- Chou, P. N., & Lee, Y. H. (2025). TikTok-mediated language learning and digital literacy development among EFL learners. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 28(1), 45–59.
- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). (2023). *Core practices*. <https://publicationethics.org/core-practices>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Escamilla-Fajardo, P., Alguacil, M., & López-Carril, S. (2024). Educational uses of TikTok in higher education: A systematic review. *Education and Information Technologies*, 29(3), 3145–3164.
- Flick, U. (2022). *An introduction to qualitative research* (7th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2023). *Reviewing the literature: A critical approach to evidence synthesis*. Sage Publications.
- Hug, T. (2017). *Didactics of microlearning: Concepts, discourses and examples*. Waxmann Verlag.
- Khlaif, Z. N., Salha, S., & Kouraichi, B. (2024). Digital learning environments and student engagement in social media-based education. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 62(2), 387–406.
- Kohnke, L., Zou, D., & Zhang, R. (2023). Exploring TikTok for language learning: Opportunities and pedagogical implications. *RELC Journal*, 54(2), 401–415.
- Major, A., & Calandrino, T. (2023). Microlearning in higher education: Enhancing engagement and retention. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 20(1), 1–17.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2025). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (5th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, 108(6), 1017–1054.
- Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon*, 9(5), 1–6.
- Richards, J. C. (2024). *Exploring emotions in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schreier, M. (2021). *Qualitative content analysis in practice* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Shail, M. S. (2024). Microlearning and learner engagement in the digital age. *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 145–160.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339.
- Thomas, J., & Harden, A. (2008). Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 8(45), 1–10.
- Wang, X., & Huang, Y. (2023). TikTok-assisted English language learning and student engagement in EFL classrooms. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 36(7), 1458–1478.
- Xiao, Y., & Watson, M. (2019). Guidance on conducting a systematic literature review. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 39(1), 93–112.
- Zhao, L., & Yang, J. (2024). Short-video platforms and second language acquisition: Evidence from TikTok-based learning environments. *Language Learning & Technology*, 28(1), 75–94.