

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking is considered one of the most difficult skills for junior high school students in Indonesia due to limited exposure to English and minimal opportunities to practice speaking in real-life contexts. Speaking requires learners to actively produce language by integrating pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and confidence. In the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), speaking activities are expected to be contextually relevant to learners' real communication needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). However, many junior high students remain passive and experience speaking anxiety due to fear of making mistakes and being taught in a teacher-centered manner (Harmer, 2007). Because this level represents a crucial stage in developing communicative competence and confidence, conducting research at the junior high school level is essential for exploring effective strategies to improve students' speaking performance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes.

In the digital age, English language learning has evolved beyond traditional classroom practices. However, speaking skills have become one of the biggest challenges faced by junior high school students in Indonesia. Initial observation at SMPN 1 Tarumajaya Bekasi revealed that most students showed low participation in speaking activities and avoided using English in speaking practice.

However, the main problem identified was speaking anxiety, where students felt a lack of confidence and became nervous when speaking in front of their classmates. This condition can be justified by Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), which emphasizes that emotional factors can interfere with language acquisition. In addition, there is also a lack of opportunities to practice speaking performance.

To address the above-stated issues, TikTok video blogging is proposed as an alternative strategy to improve students' EFL speaking skills. TikTok is a digital tool that is more familiar and student-friendly. Students can use these digital tools to develop their speaking skills in EFL through video recording in a non-threatening way. Video blogging can be conducted in such a way that students can record their speaking performance several times. This strategy can also be more effective in terms of authentic speaking practice, in which students can express their ideas in a meaningful way rather than speaking according to the teacher's instructions. In addition, the use of digital media in language learning has been widely recognized as an effective way to create more engaging and meaningful learning experiences.

Video blogging through platforms such as TikTok offers an interesting new approach to overcoming these limitations. The short video features allow students to record and upload English videos, such as a story about themselves or a simple tutorial, to make learning part of their daily routine. This method not only makes the learning process more entertaining and motivating for students but also gives them a chance to practise speaking in real situations, thus reducing the usual awkwardness felt in class. As Richards (2015) in *The Changing Face of Language Learning* states, the use of digital media like this can turn language learning into something more interactive and relevant to students' lives.

Several previous studies have reported that video blogging and the use of social media platforms can improve students' speaking skills and motivation in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). The studies concluded that video-based activities and TikTok-assisted learning had positive effects on students' fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in speaking (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022; Mahrus & Kiptiyah, 2024; Pratama, 2025). However, most of the studies only focused on the general use of video or different levels of education, while research that specifically examines the effectiveness of TikTok-based video blogging on the speaking performance of

8th-grade junior high school students with a pre-experimental design is still limited. Therefore, there is a need to fill this gap with further research.

Based on the problems identified and the research gap, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of video blogging using TikTok in improving the speaking performance of eighth-grade junior high school students at SMPN 1 Tarumajaya, Bekasi. The study specifically aims to improve the speaking performance of eighth-grade junior high school students in terms of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence through a pre-experimental pre-test and post-test design.

B. Research Questions

To evaluate the effectiveness of TikTok video blogging in improving the speaking skills of eighth-grade students, this study used a pre-test and post-test comparison to measure changes in five aspects of speaking (pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence). This study was guided by the following questions:

1. What is the speaking performance of 8th-grade students before participating in video blogging activities using TikTok?
2. What is the speaking performance of 8th-grade students after participating in video blogging activities using TikTok?
3. What is the significant difference in the speaking performance of students before and after participating in video blogging activities using TikTok?

C. Research Purpose

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of TikTok video blogging in improving 8th-grade students' speaking performance through a pre-experimental, pre-test, and post-test design. Specifically, the research seeks to:

1. To describe the speaking performance of 8th-grade students before participating in video blogging activities using TikTok.
2. To identify the speaking performance of 8th-grade students after participating in video blogging activities using TikTok.

3. To determine whether there are significant differences in students' speaking performance before and after the implementation of TikTok-based video blogging.

D. Research Significances

This study has significant implications for the development of English language education, particularly through the integration of digital tools such as TikTok for language learning. By exploring the theoretical and practical implications of technology-supported activities, this study aims to fill gaps in the existing literature while providing actionable insights for educators, students, and educational institutions.

1. Theoretical Significances

This research is hoped to add theoretical and practical contributions to the domain of English education through learning using the English language. On a theoretical level, this research may add to the current literature on online and technology-supported learning, especially regarding video blogging sites such as TikTok and their effect on improving speaking skills in students. This research is a clear case that supports current theoretical views on technology-supported language learning and how it helps decrease students' anxiety and enhance their motivation to communicate.

2. Practical Significances

In practical terms, this study can offer valuable insights for English teachers, especially those who teach junior high school students, by presenting alternative and engaging strategies for improving speaking skills through TikTok-based activities. For students, this study can help them develop greater confidence, creativity, and fluency in using English as they engage in meaningful, enjoyable, and real-world communication tasks. For schools and curriculum developers, the results of this study can serve as a reference for integrating technology-supported activities into English language learning programs, making the learning process more relevant to students' digital lifestyles. In addition, future researchers can use this study as a reference for conducting further investigations into technology-supported language learning.

E. Research Scope

This study is limited to investigating the use of video blogging activities through TikTok to improve the speaking performance of 8th-grade junior high school students in the context of Indonesian EFL. This study focuses only on speaking performance, specifically fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and coherence, which were assessed through five structured speaking topics used across the pre-test, treatment, and post-test sessions, “My Daily Activities” (pre-test), “Introduce Yourself” (first treatment session), “My Favorite Hobby” (second treatment sessions), “A Place the Student had Previously Visited” (third treatment sessions), and “My Favorite Place” (post-test). The participants involved will be students aged 13–14 years, and this study used a quantitative pre-experimental design with a single-group pre-test and post-test model. During the video blogging activities, students were allowed to record their videos either at school or at home, depending on the learning situation and the time available to complete the assigned task. This research does not encompass other components of language skills, and students of different classes and other internet media apart from TikTok are not explored.

F. Conceptual Framework

Speaking is a very important skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) because it allows students to communicate their ideas and feelings orally. However, many junior high school students face difficulties such as limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, anxiety, and lack of practice opportunities. Speaking is the ability to combine pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension simultaneously (Brown, 2004), and it is one of the most difficult skills to acquire. Therefore, appropriate teaching strategies are needed to help students to speak more actively and confidently.

To address these needs, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach emphasises meaningful interaction and real communication in the classroom. Richards (2006) states that students learn to speak better when they use language for authentic purposes. Harmer (2007) identifies the importance

of engaging students in speaking activities that are student-centered. Beside strategies, the use of learning media also plays an important role. Smaldino et.al (2008) states media can increase motivation and participation of students, especially if the learning process uses technology that is commonly used by students.

Video blogging through TikTok is one useful media where students record and share short videos of themselves speaking. This activity aligns with Kress's Multimodality Theory (2010) that says that learning becomes more meaningful when students combine visual, audio and linguistic modes. Using speech, images, captions and music allows students to express their ideas in a clearer and more creative way. The speaking practice becomes more fun and less stressful.

Furthermore, Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985) explains that students' language skills will be enhanced if they are made to produce oral output. Creating vlogs encourages students to organise their thoughts and use English actively, which improves their fluency and accuracy. Further, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) indicates that students learn thru observing and imitating others. Watch videos of peers and receive feedback to boost motivation and confidence.

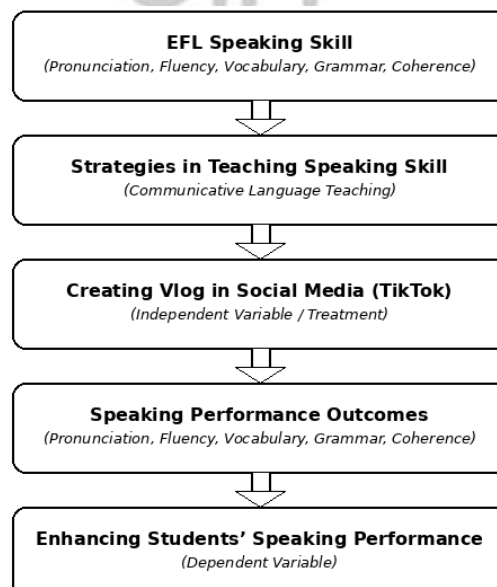


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Overall, this conceptual framework consists of three interconnected elements: input, process, and output. Input includes students' initial speaking abilities and learning materials. The process involves conducting TikTok-based blogging activities for speaking practice. Output is an improvement in students' speaking performance, particularly in terms of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence. Thus, the integration of communicative strategies and digital media is expected to effectively improve students' speaking performance.

G. Previous Studies

Several previous studies have examined the role of video-based learning and social media platforms in improving students' speaking skills in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). These previous studies provide clear evidence that the use of technology, such as video blogging and social networking, can significantly affect student performance in speaking experience. Several previous studies have explored the use of video-based activities to improve students' speaking performance in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

A study conducted by Herlisya and Wiratno (2022) examined the use of the TikTok app to improve English speaking skills among 20 third-semester students in the English Language Education Department at STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. Using a classroom action research approach, this study revealed that TikTok-based learning activities consistently improved students' speaking performance in each learning cycle. In addition to academic outcomes, this study highlights that TikTok not only improves students' speaking skills but also enhances their confidence and creativity, as the platform allows students to share content and receive feedback from peers, which in turn enhances their motivation to continue practicing.

Similarly, Pratama (2025) studied the effect of using vlogs as a learning medium in English language teaching through classroom action research. This experiment was carried out by 30 students of the eighth grade in UPT SMPN 22 Gresik, Indonesia. The results showed significant improvement in the

students' speaking skills, especially in fluency, pronunciation and coherence. Moreover, the qualitative data showed that vlogging reduced students' anxiety in speaking and increased their motivation and self-confidence in communicating in English.

In line with these findings, Mahrus and Kptiyah (2024) investigated the influence of vlogs on the speaking abilities of 20 eighth-grade students of MTS Nurul Cholil 02 Bangkalan, Indonesia, employing the methodology of pre-experimental research. It was found that there was considerable progress in the performance of students in terms of grammar fluency and pronunciation after the experiment. Furthermore, it is important to mention that although the students felt uncomfortable and afraid to talk in front of the camera at the beginning of the study, regular blogging practice improved their confidence in using English

From an international perspective, Hongsa et al. (2023) examined the use of the TikTok app to improve the English-speaking skills of 60 EFL students enrolled in a public speaking course at Kalasin University, Thailand, using a mixed-methods classroom action research approach. The study showed improvements in several aspects of speaking skills, including content, vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and pronunciation. In addition, students reported positive perceptions of using TikTok, as the platform provides a fun, engaging, and less stressful environment for practicing speaking. These findings suggest that TikTok-based video activities can effectively improve students' speaking performance and confidence.

Similarly, Chuah & Ch'ng (2023) investigated TikTok voice-over challenges as speaking activities among 60 first-year university ESL students in Malaysia. The results demonstrated that the TikTok voice-over challenges helped the participants develop their speaking skills in terms of pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and vocabulary. Besides, the participants were more motivated to practice their speaking skills on TikTok because they had meaningful speaking activities in a low-anxiety environment.

Based on previous studies, it was concluded that video-based learning and the application of TikTok had a positive impact on students' speaking performance. However, it was found that most previous studies focused on university-level students, emphasized student perceptions, and used qualitative research approaches. Additionally, there is a lack of research regarding the application of the TikTok video blogging activity of a pre-experimental quantitative research approach at the middle school level, especially for eighth-grade students. Therefore, this research was conducted with the aim of exploring the effect of TikTok video blogging on the speaking abilities of eighth-grade junior high school students.

H. Research Hypothesis

This study proposes a hypothesis to examine whether video blogging using TikTok significantly improves the speaking performance of 8th-grade junior high school students. The hypothesis is formulated as follows:

- H_0 (null hypothesis): there is no significant difference between students' speaking performance scores before and after the implementation of TikTok-based video blogging.
- H_a (alternative hypothesis): there is a significant difference between students' speaking performance scores before and after the implementation of TikTok-based video blogging.

The hypothesis testing will be conducted through a paired sample t-test to compare the results of the pre-test and post-test, in order to determine whether the improvement in students' speaking performance after implementing TikTok-based video blogging is statistically significant.