

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

This research explores EFL students' experiences, perceptions, and speaking performances utilizing the News Anchor Challenge in TikTok. It is essential to conduct the research regarding the growth of TikTok's popularity among EFL students and the importance of English language in this era. Alam and Aktar (2021) pointed out that social media had become one of the most widely used forms of communication by people of all ages—especially EFL students—with the support of technological advances. Social media can be used not only for communication but also as a tool that can assist students in practicing the foreign language that they are learning (see Al Arif, 2019; Alam and Aktar, 2021 for further readings). In particular, the use of social media offers some opportunities to develop students' foreign language skills, significantly English language skills. TikTok is currently one of the most popular social media platforms among EFL students, and its popularity could have a big impact on their academic activities. That is, TikTok could be used as a learning medium to help students practice their English language.

This study exploits News Anchor Challenge in TikTok as a learning media alternative to assist students in learning English speaking skills that are required the most to master in period. With this regard, Nguyen (2021) acknowledged that language learning becomes more convenient and flexible with the support of technology. Moreover, TikTok can brighten up the EFL classroom, and students are eager to interact with various content directly in the classroom. As a result, TikTok, with over ten million education-related videos, is considered advantageous to students worldwide. Then, TikTok is becoming more commonly implemented in the classroom to improve English language skills.

English has become the most widely used foreign language communication for non-native speakers, particularly foreign language students, making it more and more essential today. Szmigiera (2021) showed that there are approximately 1.35 billion English speakers. Consequently, learning English will make it easier for people to understand certain world information. Then nowadays, learning English

is in great demand to be mastered to actively participate in the global society. Therefore, in order to be fluent in English, students must master four fundamental skills; they are: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Given that speaking is a significant challenge for the majority of language learners, Thornbury (2005) believed that speaking is the most important of all four English skills. Mastering oral skills enable students to converse with others, put forward ideas, and exchange information. Additionally, due to the rapid development of time and technology, the transmission of ideas and the interchange of information are now completely unrestricted to any other country. In this regard, transferring information between countries has become easier and faster, especially with social media.

Yang (2020) elaborated on the four primary purposes people use social media: entertainment, socialization, information content, and academic. Besides, the number of social media users worldwide has reached 3.96 billion and keeps increasing day by day. The statistic shows that the average user has 8.6 accounts on different network sites. In general, the average user spends two hours and 24 minutes per day on social media.

Some students who frequently use social media believe it to be appealing and occasionally develop addictions in their selves. For some students, it distracts them from studying or attending classes. In other words, Dontre (2021) argued that social media platforms could negatively affect students' academic performances. As cited in Dontre (2021), Gupta and Irwin assumed that students who are not particularly interested in lectures, especially speaking classes, are often more easily distracted by social media. As such, some students prefer to scroll down their social media during classes. Regarding this, Machmud (2018) also noted that students in Indonesia admitted that social media distracts their learning processes. Thus, they experience less focused on following the teaching-learning process.

A good speaking activity should be highly engaging for students (Harmer, 2007). For Wu (2020), as for Cao and Meng (2020), nowadays, TikTok is one of the most popular social media among students, and its popularity among them is constantly increasing. Therefore, Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021) believed that

integrating TikTok in the classroom might be transformed into a driving force that enables students to engage in academic learning in the new digital environment. TikTok could be utilized for educational purposes, significantly as an alternative learning media to assist students in enhancing their speaking skill performances entertainingly and encouragingly. Doyle (2021) pointed out that TikTok has one billion active users globally, and the average user time spent 52 minutes per day on the app. Wu (2020) claimed that young people under the age of 30 (i.e., active students) are the preeminent users of TikTok, and they spend an average of 52 minutes on TikTok every day.

For Zaitun et al. (2021), utilizing TikTok application in learning English is very interactive and practical to enhance students' English skills. Furthermore, using the lively and fun learning platform TikTok improved speaking performance (Nguyen, 2021). For these reasons, the News Anchor Challenge is one of the TikTok challenges that could be used as learning media to engage students in the learning process, especially in developing their speaking skills performances.

Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021) viewed TikTok as a tool to increase student engagement in creating an engaging learning environment and developing English language skills. Aranego (2020) found out that TikTok offers students the opportunity to demonstrate that the TikTok challenge is of tremendous help to them in decreasing their fears, hesitations, and resistance when speaking. In addition, using TikTok as a learning medium for English skills can increase students' speaking performance (Zaitun et al., 2021). Also, TikTok has the potential to be interactive and convenient for students. Although TikTok was seen as interactive and practical in previous research to help students improve their English skills, a similar method has not yet been implemented at Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung Islamic University. That is to say, this research aims to examine students' experiences, perceptions using TikTok and their speaking performances by implementing the News Anchor Challenge as an alternative to learning media for the second-semester students of the Department of English Education.

B. Research Questions

As refer to the above background, the research aims to answer the following question:

1. How are students' experiences using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok?
2. How are students' perceptions of using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok?
3. How are students' speaking performances using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok?

C. Research Purposes

According to the questions above, the intentions of this research are as follows:

1. To explore students' experiences using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok.
2. To explore students' perceptions using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok.
3. To explore students' speaking performances using News Anchor Challenge in TikTok.

D. The Significances of the Research

This research proposes information about students' experiences, perceptions, and speaking performances utilizing News Anchor Challenge in TikTok as a learning media alternative to construct a delightful teaching-learning process.

Theoretically, this present study is beneficial for teachers as a source of information and insight regarding alternate learning media to create a delightful teaching-learning process for teachers and students in speaking classes. For future researchers, this research offers a source of information to create an astonishing learning media. Likewise, this research gives practical significance to:

a. Teachers

The study result will grant new insight into a distinct alternative learning media to be employed in learning speaking activities by the teacher.

b. Students

The study results attempt to give an alternate learning media to help students improve their speaking performances more conveniently.

E. Research Scope

The limitations of this study are as follows:

- a. The research is accomplished in 2A class of English Education Department in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
- b. The research is limited to students who already use TikTok in their daily lives.
- c. This study focuses on exploring students' experiences, perceptions of the News Anchor Challenge in TikTok, and their speaking performances.

F. Framework of Thinking

Speaking is one of the foremost important English skills students have to master. Writing in a similar vein, Ur (1996) stated that speaking seems to be the most important of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Furthermore, speaking is the ability to speak fluently based on knowledge of language features and the ability to process information and language in a sudden circumstance (Harmer, 2001). For Thornbury (2005), speaking has two strands of purposes. Language is a transactional purpose since the primary goal is to convey information and promote goods or services. It is also an interpersonal purpose because it establishes and sustains social relationships. In this regard, English speaking skills are indispensable for students as they may assist them in exchanging information with others, especially in the current digital age where information is more open around the world.

For Namaziandost and Nasri (2019), students in the 21st century can never learn to speak through the language they practice or know by heart. If learning itself is appealing, students would be more driven to learn. Social media absorbs much of the students' time, and therefore, it can be regarded as an instructional tool. In order to make students more interesting and motivating in learning English language skills, teachers can use social media. Social media can be used as an interactive learning medium to improve students' speaking skills if used with the appropriate methods and techniques (Zaitun et al., 2021). Accordingly, Al Arif et al. (2019) claimed that EFL learners show a positive attitude towards using social media while learning English, which helps enhance their motivation and willingness to speak and acquire English.

Furthermore, TikTok is now one of the most distinguished social media among students. For Galuh and Fahdin (2020), TikTok is construed as a set of Internet-based applications built on Web 2.0 ideas and technologies that enable user-generated content creation and sharing. Nguyen (2021) claimed that TikTok was great opportunity to be implemented as a learning medium to motivate language learners and enhance their speaking skills in a more enjoyable and motivating way. For that reason, one of the TikTok challenges, namely News Anchor Challenge, could be leveraged as a learning medium to improve speaking skills. The exposure to the TikTok challenge allows students to engage the model in communication. In addition, TikTok offers students the opportunity to show that the TikTok Challenge is of tremendous help to them in minimizing their fears, hesitations, and resistance when speaking (Aranego, 2020).

The present study investigates EFL students' experiences using the News Anchor Challenge in TikTok. Experience is practical knowledge, skills, or practices acquired through direct observation or involvement in events or specialized activities (Merriam-Webster, 2021). For Zaitun et al. (2021), using TikTok could assist students in improving their speaking skills and add them to new experiences to freely express their ideas on TikTok. Then, this research aims to explore students' perceptions using the News Anchor Challenge in TikTok. Perception, on the other hand, is an idea, belief, or image that a person has when seeing, experiencing, or understanding something (Oxford, 2022). Yang (2020) fleshed out that students perceived that integrating Tik Tok into the EFL classroom as a video aid, as TikTok could enhance their interests and motivation for learning English, enrich classroom activities and increase their English proficiency. Also, this research aims to explore students' speaking performances using the News Anchor Challenge in TikTok. Collins (2022) explained that performance is how someone does something excellently. Moreover, Nguyen (2021) specifically identified how speaking performance could be improved through TikTok, a lively and fun learning platform.

Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2021) fleshed out that students' motivation to speak is because they are gaining new experiences while learning a language. They have fun and enjoy learning speaking skills with TikTok learning tool. As a result,

students' speaking performance improved throughout their scores from one test to the next.

G. Previous Study

Little is known about TikTok as a learning medium, especially for EFL students. Nonetheless, here are some relevant studies on using TikTok as a learning medium. Pratiwi et al. (2021) craved to understand how TikTok can be a learning medium for students' pronunciation skills or pronunciation. This research revealed that the respondents have a positive attitude regarding using TikTok as an English learning strategy to support and improve literacy and speaking skills through TikTok. Aranego's work (2020) highlighted an intention to investigate the efficiency of TikTok Video Challenge exposure in reducing the dynamic filtering of Filipino students. This study found out that utilizing TikTok challenge allows students to set an example in communication. Enabling students to present the TikTok challenge helps them reduce their fear, hesitancy, and resistance when speaking. In other words, the exposure of TikTok video challenge could diminish students' dynamic filtering by enhancing their motivation and confidence. Escamilla et al. (2021) analyzed the impact of TikTok use on students. The findings indicated that TikTok might become a driving force in enabling students to engage in academic learning in the modern digital field. TikTok could be utilized for educational purposes, significantly as a substitute for learning media to assist students improve their speaking skills delightfully and engagingly. Zaitun et al. (2021) employed a study to find out students' speaking skills by telling stories about a person, object, or place they want to describe using TikTok. The result showed that using TikTok as an English language learning medium could enhance students' speaking skills, and it offers a new experience for students to express their ideas freely on TikTok. Nguyen (2021) filled this research gap by examining how TikTok positively impacts students' speaking skills in an EFL class at the Academy of Journalism and Communication (AJC). The results presented that students' speaking performance improved through TikTok, a lively and fun learning platform. Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2021) presented the effect of TikTok on developing speaking motivation in SMA Kristen Kalam Kudus students. The results indicated that the

implementation of TikTok proved that it was an effective means of developing students' motivation concerning speaking ability performance. The result also reported that TikTok encouraged students to enjoy the learning process, especially by motivating them to speak.

