

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the research background, questions, purposes, significance, scope, conceptual framework, hypothesis, and previous studies. Besides, this chapter provides the reason why this research took TikTok as the independent variable to find out its correlation with EFL students' pronunciation ability.

#### **A. Background**

This research aims to investigate the correlation between EFL students' habits of watching English lesson TikTok videos and their pronunciation ability. EFL students often find English around them, particularly on social media. The use of social media is very much among EFL students, both for interacting, studying, and only for entertainment purposes (Hastomo et al., 2022). In this case, EFL students can learn English from social media because it can be used wherever and whenever. Nevertheless, the challenge of learning English from social media is whether or not the usage of English in social media content is related to English language abilities (Anwas et al., 2020).

When studying English, four abilities, known as micro-skills, are considered: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling (Maulina & Sari, 2022). These four abilities are crucial to acquire or understand. However, this research focuses on pronunciation ability. Pronunciation is how the sounds of a language are made, how and where the word stress and sentence stress are placed, and how pitch and intonation are used to indicate a person's feelings and meaning (Harmer, 2007). Nuari (2022) stated that we need to learn pronunciation first to communicate well in English. When a speaker lacks pronunciation ability, the listener may get confused about the exact word the speaker pronounces. It leads to audience misunderstandings. Therefore, mastering pronunciation will help EFL students master English.

Nowadays, learning English pronunciation can take place both inside and outside of the classroom. Yunita (2020) stated that the typical learning process employs a traditional method known as face-to-face learning inside the classroom.

Some students find it difficult and boring to follow face-to-face learning. As a result, the learning goals are not properly achieved. Besides, students can learn English pronunciation on social media through their mobile devices. Learning through mobile devices can be called mobile learning (m-learning). According to Bidin & Ziden (2013), m-learning emerged as a result of people communicating with one another through mobile devices. Mobile technology is necessary to support m-learning, focusing on the flexibility and mobility of students. This type of learning can be either formal or informal, and students have the ability to choose when and what to learn. Furthermore, students can improve their pronunciation skills through traditional learning in the classroom and strengthen them by learning through their mobile devices.

Regarding this digital era, there are many social media platforms that EFL students use, including TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. However, this research focused on the utilization of TikTok. Pratiwi et al. (2021) stated that TikTok was launched by Zhang Yiming in 2016 and is now owned by ByteDance. Originally called Douyin, the app became very popular in China and subsequently expanded to other countries, adopting the name TikTok. In 2017, TikTok became available in Indonesia, gaining significant popularity among various groups (Xiuwen & Razali, 2021). In addition, Rahmawati & Anwar (2022) defined TikTok as a social media app on mobile phones that allows users to create, watch, and share short videos of up to three minutes. Rahman (2021) added that TikTok allows users to create an interesting short video using special and unique effects.

Additionally, TikTok provides a variety of content, some are positive, and some are negative. In this case, EFL students must be smart in choosing content that does not have a negative impact on them (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022). According to Hidayati (2022), TikTok's negative impact includes watching content that contains language that children and teens should not hear, such as curses and other inappropriate stuff. Nevertheless, there is much positive content on TikTok. It offers up-to-date content, such as short English lesson videos. Most English lesson contents are about pronouncing words, comparing one word to another in context, common English mistakes, conversation challenges, and so on. Thus,

TikTok is chosen by the researcher because it has lately become a popular social media platform among people from all circles of society, particularly EFL students (Hastomo et al., 2022). Furthermore, EFL students can choose useful English lesson videos for them.

Since students can easily access English lesson videos on TikTok, watching TikTok can be a good habit for students. According to Alghameeti (2022), the students' habits of using TikTok for educational purposes can increase their motivation, independent learning practice, and confidence in learning a language. On the other hand, EFL students can learn pronunciation through their habit of watching TikTok. Therefore, TikTok has a relationship with students' pronunciation ability.

Regarding this research topic, there are several academic studies related to the use of TikTok and other online platforms for teaching pronunciation and improving students' pronunciation ability. The studies include both qualitative and quantitative research methods and involve participants from different educational settings. The most findings showed that using TikTok and other online platforms can have a positive impact on students' attitudes, vocabulary, self-confidence, and pronunciation ability. However, some challenges, such as limited time for material preparation and internet connectivity issues, were also identified. More details can be seen in the previous study section. Meanwhile, this research focuses on the correlation between EFL students' habits of watching English lesson videos on TikTok and their pronunciation ability at the Islamic senior high school in Indonesian context.

This research is conducted at an Islamic senior high school in Cianjur because the problem at that site is suitable for the research purpose. Some students have difficulties mastering English pronunciation, which makes them unable to master English quickly. Therefore, this research tries to analyze the Correlation between EFL Students' Habits of Watching English Lesson TikTok Videos and their Pronunciation Ability.

## **B. Research Question**

1. What is the students' habit of watching TikTok English lesson videos?
2. What is the students' English pronunciation ability?
3. What is the correlation between students' habits of watching TikTok English lesson videos and their pronunciation ability?

## **C. Research Purpose**

1. To determine the students' habit of watching TikTok English lesson videos.
2. To determine the students' English pronunciation ability.
3. To determine the correlation between students' habits of watching TikTok English lesson videos and their pronunciation ability.

## **D. Research Significance**

This research provides theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research makes a contribution to expanding comprehension and studies related to TikTok videos with pronunciation ability. Besides, this research reveals that watching English lesson TikTok videos influences EFL students' pronunciation ability. Practically, this research helps teachers increase their insights into using social media, especially TikTok, for teaching English. Besides, this research helps EFL students improve their pronunciation ability using English lesson TikTok videos. Because of the flexibility of TikTok, they can access it whenever and wherever. Therefore, TikTok becomes the learning medium for learning English, particularly pronunciation.

## **E. Research Scope**

This study limits research as follows:

1. EFL students' habits of watching English lesson videos on TikTok, not the other content and social media platform, and its correlation with their English pronunciation ability.
2. The participant is the English club students of an Islamic state senior high school in Cianjur.

## **F. Conceptual Framework**

Pronunciation refers to the way sounds are produced in a language, as well as the placement of word and sentence stress and the use of pitch and intonation to

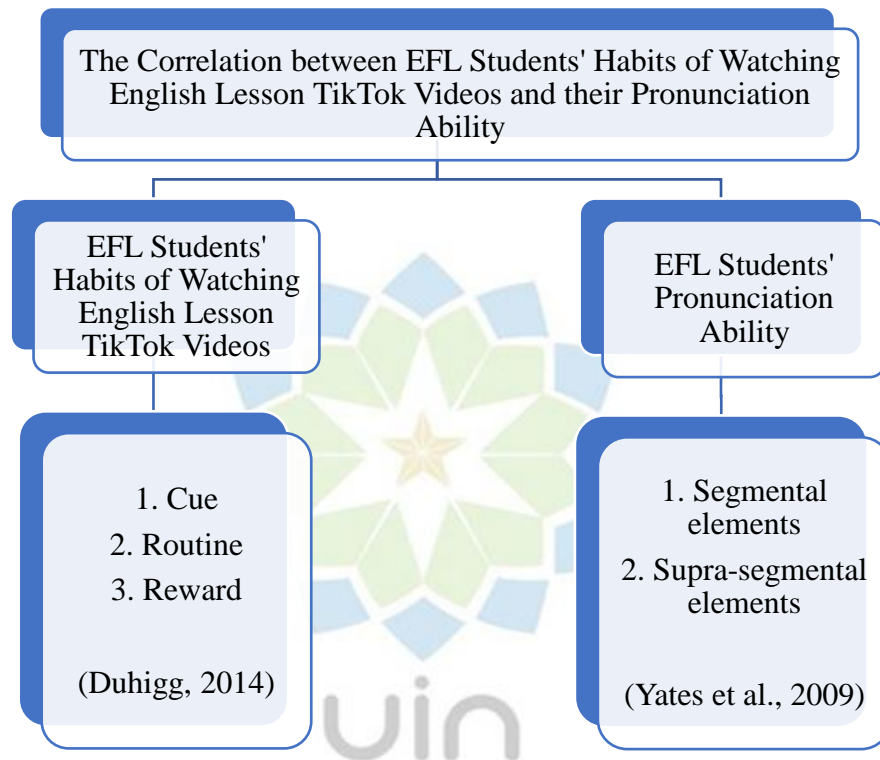
convey meaning and emotion (Harmer, 2007). Pratiwi et al. (2021) stated that when students begin learning to pronounce another language, they form new habits and overcome the challenges of their native tongue. In this case, students would notice two pronunciation elements when learning English, segmental and supra-segmental elements (Yates et al., 2009). Therefore, if EFL students can improve their pronunciation ability, they will become easy at mastering English.

Regarding this era of social media, many EFL students spend their time on TikTok. (Rahmawati & Anwar, 2022) stated that TikTok is a social media application that enables users to create, watch, and share short videos of up to three minutes on mobile devices. When EFL students spend their time watching TikTok, it becomes their new habit. According to Abdullah & Rahman (2017), habits are created as a result of repeated repetition, in which an action becomes automatic or habitual. According to Duhigg (2014), habit formation occurs in three steps. First is the cue, a trigger that calls the brain to enter automatic mode and choose which habit to adopt. Then, the routine can be physical, mental, or emotional. Also, the reward helps the brain determine whether this particular loop is worth remembering in the future. Furthermore, it becomes continuous as a "habit loop".

Instead of only for entertainment, Herlisya & Wiratno (2022) noted that many content creators also upload instructional, scientific, and other creative videos, including short English lesson videos. In this case, EFL students can use TikTok to learn English pronunciation whenever and wherever since TikTok has become a learning media (Herlisya & Wiratno, 2022). Furthermore, Alghameeti (2022) stated that the students' habits in utilizing TikTok for educational purposes could boost their motivation, facilitate independent learning practices, and improve their confidence in learning a language.

Acquiring knowledge through social media platforms, particularly TikTok, can be referred to as Mobile Learning (m-learning). Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler (2005) define m-learning as the utilization of mobile devices for educational purposes. This involves providing educational content and activities through mobile applications, websites, and other digital platforms accessed through mobile devices. Bidin & Ziden (2013) added that m-learning could either be formal or informal,

giving students the freedom to choose when and what to learn. Considering the flexibility of m-learning, TikTok allows students to select any pronunciation topics they want to enhance. Therefore, TikTok can help EFL students to enhance their pronunciation ability.



**Figure 1.1.** The conceptual framework of the study

### G. Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a statement in quantitative research in which researchers make predictions or speculations about the outcome of relationships between attributes or characteristics (Creswell, 2012). It means that the hypothesis determines whether there is a correlation between the two variables in this research. Following the explanation, the hypotheses of this research are:

$H_0$  : There is no correlation between EFL students' habits of watching English lesson TikTok videos and their pronunciation ability.

$H_a$  : There is a correlation between EFL students' habits of watching English lesson TikTok videos and their pronunciation ability.

## **H. Previous studies**

There are previous studies regarding this topic. First, the research directed by Dewi & Arifani (2021) attempted to investigate the use of LINE video call and the TikTok video for teaching pronunciation, seen from teacher and students' viewpoints. This qualitative study used an online platform to conduct interviews with a teacher and three Thai students. The results demonstrated that using LINE video calls to teach pronunciation with TikTok video improved attitudes among both teachers and students. Beside that, students have grown their vocabulary and they gain self-confidence in their ability to pronounce English words, and they are more interested in joining the class because the application won't bore them. On the other hand, the teacher has a problem with how little time to make the materials and get the students to focus on learning. However, during online learning, the students have difficulty connecting to the internet and have numerous assignments to complete. Lastly, the students are enthusiastic because TikTok and LINE video calls aid their English language learning, particularly pronunciation.

Second, the research conducted by Pratiwi et al. (2021) investigated how the TikTok app can serve as a platform to improve students' pronunciation ability. The study was conducted with eight participants, including five full-time and three non-formal English education students at the University of Suryakacana. Data collection included observation and questionnaire techniques, with qualitative analysis applied using Miles and Huberman's interaction model to capture, display, verify, and predict the data. The results indicated that the participants positively perceived TikTok as an aid to language learning, as it helped improve their literacy and pronunciation ability. In addition, they expressed particular interest in using TikTok to access and understand all content related to basic English skills.

Third, the research conducted by Muslimah (2022) aimed to determine the effectiveness of TikTok videos in reducing pronunciation errors among 9th-grade students at SMP Muhammadiyah 01 Sukajaya. This study adopted a quantitative technique with a pre-and post-test design for a single group, employing a pre-experimental strategy. This research had 30 students in total. The statistical data analysis of the t-test revealed that the student's average score on the pre-test was

41.11, while their average score on the post-test was 80.03. Moreover, at a significance level of 0.05,  $t_{cal}$  was 20.03, whereas  $t_{table}$  was 1.701, indicating that  $20.03 > 1.701$ . Hence, this research demonstrates that TikTok videos are efficient in minimizing pronunciation problems among students.

Fourth, the study conducted by Hu & Du (2022) used mixed-methods study and aimed to explore the effects of TikTok on language learning for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in China's higher education context. The initial qualitative study revealed contrasting perceptions of TikTok use in formal learning, focusing on its effects on global language proficiency, speaking proficiency, and affective learning. However, quantitative research showed that TikTok supplemented classroom-based teaching did not have the profound effects suggested by qualitative participants and previous literature. Despite these contradictions, the study is significant as it calls for a critical attitude towards MALL and TikTok-assisted EFL learning, encouraging researchers to re-examine these issues in different socio-educational contexts.

This present research is different from the previous studies above. The difference is that this research tries to reveal the correlation between EFL students' habits of watching English lesson videos on TikTok, not the other content and social media platforms, with their pronunciation ability. In addition, this research focuses on English club students of an Islamic state senior high school in the Indonesian context.