

Exploring the Use of TikTok as An Alternative Medium for Teaching English Grammar at Junior High School

Yuana Rahmaniah

2111102421054@umkt.ac.id

Khusnul Khotimah

kk645@umkt.ac.id

Dzul Rachman

dr650@umkt.ac.id

Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur

ABSTRACT

This study directly addresses the lack of engaging methods for teaching English grammar to junior high school students by exploring TikTok as an alternative medium for instruction. Employing a mixed methods approach, it combines a one-group pre-test and post-test experimental design with qualitative observations to assess both learning outcomes and student experiences. The participants were 25 eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 17 Samarinda. They created group-based TikTok videos to explain assigned grammar tenses after completing a grammar pre-test. The findings revealed a significant improvement in grammar mastery, as confirmed by statistical analysis, and students demonstrated increased motivation, creativity, and collaboration. These results suggest that TikTok, when used with clear objectives and instructional support, can be a powerful supplementary tool for grammar learning.

Keywords: Digital Media; Grammar Instruction; Tiktok

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English grammar in junior high school remains a major challenge, especially in the digital era where traditional methods are often perceived as monotonous, rigid, and disengaging. Students frequently lose interest when grammar is taught through rule memorization and isolated drills without contextual or interactive elements. The lack of engaging, student-centered, and technology-integrated grammar instruction continues to hinder both motivation and learning outcomes in many Indonesian classrooms. This shows an urgent need for more innovative, interactive, and media-integrated approaches to grammar instruction in Indonesian schools.

Its fast-paced and engaging content aligns well with the communication preferences of today's students, who are highly visual and digitally native learners (Kresnayoga Susanto, 2024). These characteristics position TikTok as a promising medium for supporting language learning, including the teaching of English grammar. Recent

research highlights TikTok's growing role as a medium for language learning, particularly among Generation Z. Its short-form, visually engaging videos and interactive features such as comments, duets, and hashtags align well with the preferences of digitally native learners, making it an appealing platform for informal and supplementary language education (Lee, 2023); (Tan et al., 2022); (Yasmin et al., 2024). Studies show that TikTok can effectively support the development of various language skills, including speaking, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, and even grammar, by providing authentic, context-rich content and opportunities for creative expression (Eliza & Amanda, 2024).

Learners report increased motivation, enjoyment, and comfort when using TikTok for language practice, and many find it helpful for autonomous and collaborative learning (Pérez-Sabater et al., 2023); (Yasmin et al., 2024). Educators have also begun to integrate TikTok into classroom activities, leveraging its features for digital assignments, active learning, and experiential tasks (Tan et al., 2022); (Suryatiningsih et al., 2025). However, challenges remain, such as the risk of distraction from non-educational content, variable quality of materials, and concerns about digital ethics and data privacy. Despite these limitations, the consensus is that TikTok holds significant promise as a supplementary tool for language learning, provided its use is guided by thoughtful pedagogical strategies and digital literacy education (Yasmin et al., 2024); (Eliza & Amanda, 2024).

Traditional methods of teaching grammar particularly in remote or online environments often result in low student motivation and engagement. As reported by Ubaedillah et al. (2021), students' interest in grammar tends to decline when it is delivered using conventional techniques without multimedia elements. Supporting this, Hadijah et al. (2023) emphasize the value of interactive strategies such as peer collaboration and sentence-completion tasks in enhancing grammar learning outcomes. More specifically, Suryati et al., (2024) examined the use of TikTok for grammar instruction and found that its audiovisual format helps improve student comprehension and encourages independent learning.

A growing body of research has demonstrated the potential of TikTok as a tool for language learning. Mohd Said & Khalil (2025) found a strong correlation between students' perceived ease of using TikTok and their positive attitudes toward learning grammar. Similarly, Collamar (2025) observed that learners who engaged with TikTok-based grammar videos performed better in grammar assessments than those who relied on traditional methods. Fitria (2023) also highlighted how TikTok's creative features such as music, filters, and scripted content foster active participation and exploration in grammar learning. Meanwhile, Mulyanah et al. (2024) reported that TikTok can reduce grammar-related anxiety while promoting greater learner autonomy. However, these studies primarily focused on general perceptions, vocabulary acquisition, or higher education settings. Most lacked empirical classroom-based experiments at the junior high school level in Indonesia, especially those measuring grammar proficiency gains through structured TikTok-based interventions.

On a global scale, studies from countries such as Malaysia, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia also support the effectiveness of TikTok in enhancing vocabulary acquisition, grammar mastery, fluency, and overall learner engagement (Eleyana Abdullah et al., 2023); (Salazar-Rosas et al., 2023); (Alghameeti, 2022). However, despite the growing number of international studies, there remains a notable lack of research on the use of TikTok for grammar instruction at the Indonesian junior high school level.

This study seeks to address that gap by examining how TikTok can be integrated into grammar learning among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 17 Samarinda. While earlier studies have primarily explored general perceptions of TikTok in language learning, this research applies a mixed methods approach, combining a one-group pre-test and post-test experimental design with qualitative classroom observation to explore both learning outcomes and student experiences. Accordingly, this study is guided by several research questions that aim to explore both the cognitive and affective impacts of using TikTok in grammar instruction. It investigates the students' learning experiences while engaging with TikTok as a medium for grammar learning, their perceptions of its effectiveness in improving their understanding of English grammar, and the extent to which the platform influences their motivation and autonomy in the learning process. This study is significant for several reasons. From a theoretical perspective, it contributes to ongoing discussions around the integration of digital media into English language teaching, particularly in grammar instruction. Practically, it offers valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers who are seeking innovative, engaging, and student-centered approaches that align with the learning preferences of Generation Z. Unlike previous studies, it combines quantitative learning outcome data with direct classroom-based observation in an Indonesian junior high school setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media and Language Learning

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed social media into more than just a platform for entertainment; it has become a powerful educational tool. In the context of language learning, social media platforms offer new spaces for interaction, creativity, and student engagement. Research has shown that platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok provide learners with authentic exposure to language and encourage more active participation in learning (Kresnayoga Susanto, 2024). The advancement of digital technology has redefined social media from a source of entertainment into a meaningful educational medium, particularly in language learning. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok offer learners authentic exposure to language, fostering interaction, creativity, and engagement that align with the preferences of Generation Z, who are highly visual and digitally fluent (Barrot, 2022; Muftah, 2024). Research demonstrates that these platforms enhance a range of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, vocabulary, and grammar, by providing immersive, real-world contexts and opportunities for both formal and informal learning (Dashti & Abdulsalam, 2025; Muftah, 2024).

Social media enables learners to access content quickly, learn through visuals and short-form media, and participate in collaborative activities, making language acquisition more natural and enjoyable. Studies also highlight the positive impact of social media on learner motivation, confidence, and autonomy, as students can interact with peers and native speakers, receive immediate feedback, and direct their own learning paths (Chovin Awat Abdullah, 2024; Siddig, 2020). However, the effectiveness of social media in language education depends on thoughtful integration and guidance from educators to ensure focused and productive learning experiences. While some skills, such as writing, may require additional support, research generally agrees that social media platforms significantly enrich language learning environments and help bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language use (Reinhardt, 2019; Siddig, 2020).

Challenges in Teaching English Grammar

Despite the increasing integration of digital tools in education, teaching English grammar remains a persistent challenge, as it is often viewed as rigid and disconnected from real-life communication. Traditional methods, which rely heavily on memorization and rule recitation, frequently fail to engage students or foster critical thinking and collaboration (Crovitz et al., 2022). Research indicates that incorporating digital tools such as educational games, digital flashcards, and intelligent tutoring systems can significantly enhance motivation and learning outcomes in grammar instruction (Shakhmalova & Zotova, 2023; Serfaty & Serrano, 2020). For instance, digital games like Quizlet and Kahoot! make grammar lessons more interactive and enjoyable, leading to higher student motivation and improved performance compared to conventional approaches. Digital flashcards, especially those using full-sentence practice, help students internalize grammar rules and apply them in context, with studies demonstrating significant gains in grammar retention and application (Serfaty & Serrano, 2020; Rejeki Murtiningsih et al., 2024). Intelligent tutoring systems also personalize grammar learning by adapting to individual student needs and providing targeted feedback, which improves both achievement and motivation (Dahbi, 2023). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these tools depends on access to technology, teacher readiness, and proper integration into the curriculum. Overall, the use of digital tools transforms grammar instruction from a passive, rule-heavy process into an engaging, interactive, and contextually relevant experience that supports long-term learning and retention (Rejeki Murtiningsih et al., 2024; Dahbi, 2023). Hadijah et al. (2023) argue that traditional approaches to grammar instruction fail to stimulate critical thinking or collaboration. They emphasize the importance of integrating multimedia, peer discussion, and contextualized practice elements that are often absent in conventional grammar lessons. Without these, students may become passive learners who rely on memorization rather than meaningful application.

TikTok as a Grammar Learning Tool

TikTok is increasingly recognized as an effective and engaging tool for English grammar instruction, particularly for Generation Z learners who are drawn to its short-video format, visual appeal, and interactive features (Mariappan, 2024; Suryati et al., 2024). Studies analyzing grammar-focused TikTok accounts and classroom implementations reveal that the

platform's audiovisual content and concise structure make grammar rules more accessible and easier to understand while also supporting flexible, self-paced, and creative learning experiences (Kresnayoga Susanto, 2024; Fitria, 2023). For example, students who regularly watch grammar-related TikTok videos report improvements in their ability to comprehend and apply grammar concepts, as well as in vocabulary acquisition (Laili, 2023; Revesencio et al., 2022). Experimental research further demonstrates that students exposed to TikTok-based grammar lessons show greater engagement and preference for this method over traditional instruction, citing novelty, relatability, and the opportunity for creative expression as key motivators.

TikTok's nano-learning approach, which delivers information in brief, targeted segments, aligns well with modern attention spans and allows for repeated, on-demand review of grammar points. Additionally, creating and sharing TikTok videos fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and peer feedback, enhancing the learning process. However, challenges such as inconsistent content quality and potential distractions from non-educational material remain. Despite these limitations, research widely supports the conclusion that TikTok, when thoughtfully integrated into educational practice, serves as a valuable supplementary tool for grammar instruction, making learning more interactive, motivating, and relevant to students' digital lives (Salazar-Rosas et al., 2023). Furthermore, Mohd Said and Khalil (2025) demonstrated a strong correlation between students' positive attitudes toward TikTok and their improved grammar performance. Through storytelling, captioning, and music, TikTok videos offer grammar explanations in ways that are simple, relatable, and memorable. This encourages students to engage more actively with the material and apply grammar rules in meaningful contexts.

Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes

TikTok's creative features such as filters, background music, and duets significantly enhance student motivation and participation in grammar learning by making lessons more interactive and enjoyable (Suryati et al., 2024; Fitria, 2023). These tools encourage students to experiment with language and express their understanding in creative ways, fostering greater autonomy and willingness to explore grammar concepts independently. Research shows that when students create their own TikTok videos, they pay closer attention to grammatical accuracy because the processes of scripting, recording, and editing require them to apply grammar rules in context (Salazar-Rosas et al., 2023). This hands-on approach leads to measurable improvements in grammatical accuracy compared to traditional lecture-based instruction. Sharing videos and receiving feedback from peers further motivates students to refine their language skills and engage more deeply with the material (Fitria, 2023). The platform's audiovisual and interactive elements also support flexible, self-paced learning, allowing students to revisit content and practice at their own pace. While challenges remain, such as distraction and inconsistent content quality, overall evidence suggests that TikTok's creative features transform grammar instruction into a more engaging, student-centered experience that supports both motivation and learning outcomes (Suryati et al., 2024). Importantly, Mulyanah et al. (2024) found that TikTok can reduce students' anxiety around grammar, a common barrier in traditional classrooms. By allowing students to rehearse,

record, and edit their responses, TikTok provides a low-pressure environment where learners can build confidence and autonomy.

Global Perspectives on TikTok in Education

International research also supports the use of TikTok in language education. Studies from Malaysia, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia confirm that TikTok improves grammar mastery, vocabulary acquisition, and oral fluency (Eleyana Abdullah et al., 2023; Salazar-Rosas et al., 2023; Alghameeti, 2022). These studies highlight TikTok's potential to increase student motivation and engagement, particularly when combined with instructional guidance. Similarly, research across these contexts demonstrates that TikTok's engaging audiovisual content and interactive features not only make grammar instruction more accessible but also significantly boost student motivation and participation (Ismail & Abdullah, 2023; Salazar-Rosas et al., 2023). When TikTok is integrated with teacher-led activities or structured assignments, students show greater gains in language skills than those learning through traditional methods alone (Ismail & Abdullah, 2023). The platform's short, creative videos encourage repeated practice and self-expression, helping learners internalize grammar rules and expand vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Furthermore, opportunities for peer interaction and feedback through TikTok's social features enhance oral fluency and confidence in language use. Overall, these international findings underscore TikTok's value as a supplementary educational tool, especially when combined with pedagogical guidance to maximize engagement and learning outcomes (Alghameeti, 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a mixed-methods design to obtain a comprehensive understanding of both measurable learning outcomes and students' classroom experiences using TikTok in grammar instruction. A mixed-methods approach was chosen because it allows the integration of quantitative data (test scores) and qualitative insights (student experiences), thereby providing a more holistic perspective. The quantitative element used a one-group pre-test and post-test experimental design to evaluate students' grammar mastery before and after the TikTok-based intervention. According to (Prof. Dr. Sugiyono, 2016) this type of design is ideal for observing the effects of a treatment in an educational setting. The sample consisted of 25 eighth-grade students from class 8E at SMP Negeri 17 Samarinda. A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who had sufficient exposure to English grammar and were available throughout the research period. The students were divided into five collaborative groups, with each group assigned a specific grammar tense to present in a TikTok video.

Instrument and Procedure

The instruments included a 25-item multiple-choice grammar pre-test, a post-test scoring rubric, and observation sheets for qualitative data collection. Content

validity was ensured through expert judgment by two English Education lecturers, while construct validity focused on representing five core grammar tenses taught at the junior high school level. The reliability of the pre-test was confirmed through a pilot test, with Cronbach's Alpha result of 0.83 indicating high internal consistency. Two trained raters were involved in scoring the post-test to minimize bias. The research procedures followed these sequential steps written in paragraph form. First, the researcher prepared the necessary instruments and coordinated with the school and the English teacher. Then, the pre-test was administered to assess students' baseline grammar proficiency. After the pre-test, the students were divided into five collaborative groups, each assigned one grammar tense: Simple Present, Simple Past, Present Continuous, Present Perfect, and Simple Future. Each group then planned and developed a script for their TikTok video project. Following the planning phase, students recorded and edited their TikTok videos collaboratively. Once completed, the videos were presented in class and evaluated using a rubric that assessed grammar accuracy, clarity, creativity, and teamwork. During the entire process, classroom observations were conducted to document student engagement, collaboration, and the overall learning atmosphere. Finally, students were invited to share their reflections on the learning experience through informal written notes or short discussions.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis focused on comparing pre-test and post-test scores using descriptive statistics such as mean, range, and percentage. To determine whether the improvement in grammar proficiency was statistically significant, a paired sample t-test was conducted. This allowed the researcher to assess the impact of the TikTok intervention in a measurable way. Qualitative data gathered from observations and student reflections were analyzed using thematic analysis following the framework outlined by (Nowell et al., 2017). Data were manually coded to identify recurring patterns in student engagement, creativity, motivation, and attitudes toward grammar learning through TikTok. The integration of both data sets numerical and descriptive provided a more complete understanding of how students responded cognitively and emotionally to TikTok as a grammar learning tool.

To ensure the quality of the instruments and data, this study took steps to establish both validity and reliability. Content validity of the pre-test and the post-test rubric was confirmed through expert review by two English Education lecturers. They ensured that the test items and rubric criteria aligned with national curriculum standards and grammar learning objectives. Construct validity was achieved by designing test items that accurately represented five major tenses typically taught at the junior high school level. The questions were carefully structured to cover different grammatical forms and real-life applications. Reliability of the pre-test instrument was examined through a small pilot test and analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a score of 0.83, indicating high internal consistency. The post-test scoring rubric's reliability was strengthened by involving two independent

raters who were trained to use the rubric consistently. Their scores were then compared and discussed to ensure fairness and reduce rater bias. Additionally, the use of multiple data sources test scores, observations, and student reflections supported data triangulation, which further enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the study findings.

RESULTS

This study involved 25 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 17 Samarinda who participated in a grammar learning project using TikTok videos. To evaluate the effectiveness of this instructional approach, students completed a pre-test and a post-test, and the results were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The pre-test results revealed varied levels of grammar proficiency among students, with approximately 44% scoring below the minimum mastery criterion. The wide distribution of scores reflected inconsistencies in prior grammatical knowledge and highlighted the need for more engaging and accessible grammar instruction. Following the TikTok-based intervention, all students demonstrated measurable improvement. The average post-test score increased to 77.92, and every participant achieved the minimum passing grade. The reduced score variation suggested more consistent performance across the class and indicated that the approach supported a more equitable learning experience.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Grammar Test Scores

Test Type	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Students Meeting Mastery (%)
Pre-test	45	78	63.20	8.56	56%
Post-test	68	90	77.92	5.24	100%

As shown in Table 1, the mean score increased notably from 63.20 to 77.92 after the TikTok-based intervention, while the standard deviation decreased from 8.56 to 5.24. This pattern indicates higher and more consistent achievement among students. Students demonstrated noticeable improvement in recognizing and applying English tenses, constructing grammatically accurate sentences, and using verbs appropriately. Their TikTok video projects illustrated a clearer understanding of grammar rules, while the collaborative process enhanced communication skills and peer interaction.

The findings of this study reveal that integrating TikTok into grammar instruction significantly enhanced student learning outcomes. The increase in average scores from pre-test to post-test, along with the fact that all students achieved the minimum mastery level, highlights the effectiveness of the intervention. These results align with the findings of Mohd Said & Khalil (2025), who reported improved attitudes and academic achievement among students learning grammar through TikTok. Similarly, Collamar (2025) demonstrated that incorporating social media platforms into grammar instruction can result in meaningful academic progress, particularly when supported by collaborative learning.

The narrowing of the score range and the consistent performance among students suggest not only individual academic improvement but also greater equity in learning outcomes. This observation supports the conclusions of Suryati et al. (2024), who found that audiovisual platforms like TikTok help reduce learning disparities by accommodating various learning styles. In addition, this study echoes the work of Mulyanah et al. (2024), who highlighted TikTok's role in reducing grammar-related anxiety and promoting learner autonomy.

Beyond measurable academic gains, the TikTok-based project fostered student engagement, motivation, and collaboration. Classroom observations and student reflections showed that learners felt more confident, enthusiastic, and invested in their learning experiences. These affective outcomes are consistent with Pérez-Sabater et al. (2023), who observed heightened emotional engagement in language learning when students used creative digital tools. This supports Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and contextual learning. The project also contributed to the development of 21st-century competencies, including digital literacy, creativity, teamwork, and effective communication. Yasmin et al. (2024) noted, digital integration in language education can foster essential life and career skills alongside academic growth. The shift from passive learning to active content creation enabled students to take greater ownership of their learning, encouraging autonomy and a deeper connection to the material.

These findings have important implications for teaching practice. Educators are encouraged to explore the potential of digital platforms like TikTok not as distractions, but as meaningful extensions of the classroom. When implemented with clear instructional goals, such tools can help bridge the gap between academic content and students' everyday experiences, making learning more engaging and relevant. This supports the perspective of Tan et al. (2022), who emphasized that thoughtfully guided digital instruction can facilitate multimodal learning and make abstract grammar concepts more accessible. Despite these strengths, this study has certain limitations. The research was conducted with a relatively small sample from a single class, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, while the mixed-methods design provided valuable insights, future studies should consider longitudinal approaches to assess the sustained impact of similar interventions. Further research might also compare the use of different digital platforms or investigate TikTok's effectiveness in supporting other areas of language learning. This study adds to the growing evidence that digital platforms, when used strategically and creatively, can enrich grammar instruction. It demonstrates that TikTok, supported by sound pedagogy, can promote not only academic achievement but also emotional engagement and essential real-world skills.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that TikTok can serve as an effective and engaging platform for enhancing junior high school students' mastery of English grammar. By encouraging students to create, explain, and share content, the learning process shifted from passive rule memorization to active, meaningful participation. This digital approach fostered greater collaboration, creativity, and confidence among learners. The results underscore the potential of incorporating widely used digital tools like TikTok into classroom instruction to make learning more student-centered and relevant to their daily lives. It is recommended that teachers consider integrating similar platforms thoughtfully to enrich grammar instruction. Future research could explore the effectiveness of such tools across various educational levels, subjects, and contexts, and assess the sustainability of learning outcomes over time.

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