
Techniques Used in the Content of Tiktok Videos as English Learning Media

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Abstract:

Social media have reached a pivotal role in human's daily lives; it can be a source of information and even source of learning for educational field. This study explores the techniques of the content creator performed on social media which provides engaging language learning materials to the social media users. This study uses descriptive qualitative method. The source of the data is the videos on social media platform TikTok as a short-form video sharing media. There are two groups in this study; they are high followers as many as 4 accounts and low followers as many as 9 accounts. There are 20 videos from each group. Each video is identified based on the theory of language teaching techniques. Then, the techniques used by high and low followers are identified and described. In this study, it is found that the creators with high followers tend to use communicative language teaching method, specifically information gap and feedback type. Meanwhile, the creators with low followers base their content on direct teaching method in which they tend to explain and give lectures to their audience. Hence, this finding is expected to be useful for English teachers particularly on how to adapt the techniques to teach English in a real-world language usage and idiomatic expressions that are often absent in traditional textbooks.

Key words: language teaching; method; social media; technique

Introduction

The presence of technology can be viewed in two perspectives; it can be as a teaching resource and a tool for enhancing learning experiences (Freeman & Anderson, 2011). As teaching resources, technology has been helping teachers to find authentic learning materials such as reading texts, recording, and data, to modify them, and to adjust its usage in their classroom. In addition to being resources, technology can also enhance learning experiences, such as learning atmosphere they experience as it is designed and attached to it. Besides, it also enables students to practice, test their level of knowledge, and remedy based on their ability. The sophistication of technology in language teaching is not solely the key to successful learning. It is just a media with which teaching and learning are facilitated. How learning is prepared is ultimately designed by teachers. This is in line with Kern (2006) who mentioned that teachers seek to provide authentic language materials through technology which is aimed at empowering students' skill using the language, and developing students' language awareness.

During COVID-19, remote learning was highly applied through online learning platform such as: Google Classroom, Zoom meetings, and so on. Some research had also been conducted regarding to this phenomenon. Redjeki & Hapsari (2022) found that EFL students had high self-regulated learning strategies in terms of environment structuring. Environment structuring refers to the decision of choosing ideal place to study; to choose a place that best help learners to concentrate. However, in their study it was found that

students used less self-regulated strategies in task strategies and time management domains. However, the reasons underlying these findings were unstated. In addition to find students' self-regulation on learning English, another research was also conducted related to learning English during COVID-19 pandemic. Hamidah, Sukya, and Yanuarmawan (2021) developed an e-dictionary as an innovative media in English learning during covid-19 pandemic. They asserted that the e-dictionary was a great help for the students who must learn everything online. From these previous studies, it could be concluded that many studies had been conducted in order to understand the phenomena of online learning. This phenomena may also restructure societies' mind of what is meant by learning. In the past before COVID-19 pandemic, most people think that learning can only be situated in a classroom, but the pandemic moves the mode a little. It took place remotely.

Two years after the pandemic, social media has been massively used. At first, these platforms were created to connect people from all over the world; it increased people's recognizing and understanding others' culture. As the time goes by, the content of the social media evolves in which the users are called as content creator. This term leads to a wider function; it is not only used to connect people or to make them know each other but also as a media for sharing information and knowledge. At this point, sharing knowledge is identical with teaching. In social media, video and information sharing are massively spread. This phenomenon is still questionable regarding to whether the educational posts such as language-learning content is categorized as a part of teaching or not. According to Dewey in (Rajagopalan, 2019) teaching is tripolar process; it involves the teacher, the taught, and the social environment. Teachers are the person who set learning objectives, plan learning material and activities as well as the evaluation. During the teaching and learning activities, there are students with their unique characteristics in a classroom. Teachers' task is also to ensure that all of the students understand and perform well as set by the objectives. These are all about teachers' behavior occur in a social environment, that is classroom or outside the class. By referring to this principle, all knowledge shared on social media are categorized as teaching. There are some researches related to teaching. Safitri, Yuliyani, Hamid, & Suriaman (2022) studied students' perspective on using social media for learning English. The students acknowledged that social media like Youtube and Instagram as a video-sharing platforms has helped them to improve their listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation. This finding implies that social media facilitates independent learning in which students can direct their own learning needs and pace. On teachers' perspective, a study was conducted by Ghimire (2022). He concluded that teachers would be benefit from social media; they will be able to take materials and videos as their teaching media. On the other hand, it is also mentioned that teachers faces some challenges when they integrate social media in the classroom; their students tend to be easily distracted by irrelevant contents, and they tend to find other unrelated materials to the learning objectives. In addition to this research, a similar study had also been conducted by Xiuwen & Razali (2021). They found that English language learners held positive attitude towards TikTok as social media used for English learning. This attitude was based on the easiness of students to find materials or contents made by native speakers. Besides, the students were also facilitated to create their own English practice videos.

All of the previous research concern about social media in language learning, but it did not tell readers the aspects that made students attracted or even engaged in learning English through social media. However, it is common for teachers and scholars to be familiar with these terms: approach, method, and techniques. The technique of teaching English can variably be used by teachers as they consider their students' way of learning and mastery level even within one language teaching method. The other things that need to be aware of is that teachers can use certain techniques in which the practices enable students to interact with them. In fact, with this sophisticated technology around, it is hard to deny the existence of social media as

other media of language learning. For this reason, seeking the techniques used by teachers need to be research as the previous studies had not mentioned the technique that made it so appealing to today's English learners.

Review of Literature

Techniques in Language Teaching

There are three groups of theoretical frameworks of teaching which is used to understand how teacher carries out their teaching activities. Those theoretical frameworks are grouped into 3, they are: formal, descriptive, and normative theories of teaching (Mangal, 2019). First, formal theories of teaching are based on the principles of thought and science of knowledge. Thus, it is mostly about the teachers' belief whether or not the knowledge or potentialities are inherent in children. This belief leads to the teachers' decision whether they view themselves as the most-credible source of knowledge or they view themselves as only a facilitator who help students to find and develop their inherited talent. Second, descriptive theories of teaching viewed that teachers should plan the proper learning activities in order to achieve desired learning objectives.

The last, normative teaching theory affirms that the purpose of teaching is to change students' behavior. To achieve this goal, teachers' verbal and non-verbal behavior greatly affects the success of students' learning. For this reason, teachers are expected to design their teaching activities by considering psychological principles in relation to individual differences, intelligence, aptitude, and achievement. All of these theoretical frameworks are laying on teachers' mind which contributes to several language teaching methods, such as: grammar-translation method, direct method, audio-lingual, silent way, desuggestopedia, total physical response, communicative language teaching, content-based instruction, task-based language teaching, and community language learning. The word "method" itself is still a general form of how language teaching looks like in the classroom. However, the way one single method is implemented in the classroom may be variably used or modified by the teachers depending on their beliefs. This is called as teaching technique. As an example, a teacher who teaches English in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) may teach students by using these following techniques: picture strip story, role-play, scrambled sentences, or language games.

E-learning

Arshavskiy (2017) states that e-learning is a form of learning which utilizes internet, intranet, or CD-ROM. The e-learning itself can be synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous is conducted in real-time with live instructor. The instructor will explain the course materials and assign students to do certain task and ask students to participate directly. Meanwhile, asynchronous e-learning refers to a non-face-to-face interaction between instructors and students. In asynchronous e-learning, there is a platform or website that contains learning modules and tasks to be completed. E-learning itself has some forms, and one of them is social learning. Social learning is a form of e-learning which refers to learning using social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Blogs and Wikis. In this study, TikTok as social media is the focus of this research as English learning media in asynchronous learning.

Research Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design which aimed at exploring the techniques that content creators (certified teachers) used in their English learning account on Tiktok. All Tiktok accounts that refer to English language learning were collected as many as 13 accounts. Those accounts were divided

into high followers and low followers. This division was derived from the thoughts that high followers meant high engagement. The engagement revealed that there was something special with the account.

The sources of data with high-followers accounts are: @carolinakowanz (4.9M), @englishbygiovana (3.8M), @englishteacherclaire (2.4M), @sasha_mayorik (1M). Meanwhile, the low followers' accounts are: @bris_english (23.1k), @englishcentral (492.9k), @bbclearningenglish (365.8k), @valeriemilvus (512.1k), @king.english.world (664.7k), @englishingeneral (738.3k), @mr.british.teacher (597.6k), @learnenglishwithspeak (515.1k), @learnenglishwithcammille (208.9k). By observing all of these accounts, their teachers' (content creators) techniques were identified, and analyzed.

Through Tiktok as the social media, the researchers tried to type a keyword "English" in the search bar. Thus, all accounts related to English learning were presented. There were about 100 videos displayed on the screen. Those videos were checked one by one to ensure that it derived from English learning account; the videos that were not derived from English learning account were abandoned since the credibility of the creators might be questioned.

The data were analyzed by using (Miles, 2014) technique of data analysis, they were: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing.

First, data condensation refers to the process of identifying, and transforming the data in a form of written-up notes or documents. It also involves coding, and generating categories to the data. Thus, in this step, the researchers selecting English learning videos that appear on the screen after searching it through the search column. Each video was ensured that they were derived from content creators who were English teachers. Hence, it was found that there were as many as 13 accounts. Within the 13 accounts, the videos were observed in order to find the Medias and techniques that they used while teaching English on their contents. The researchers noted the Medias and transcribed the content creators' utterances.

Second, data display. It refers to an organized compressed information. In this step, the researchers noted the topic, methods and techniques used by the content creators. Each of these aspects were displayed in a form of table which facilitated the researcher to draw conclusion. However, there were some differences found between the accounts with high and low followers. The number of followers on social media were assumed as the indicators of how fruitful the contents were to the users. Thus, the display between high and low followers account was separated.

Third, drawing conclusion. In this step, the researchers wrote a conclusion based on the interpretation of the data.

Result

a) Technique used by high-followers' teachers (content creators)

High-followers accounts were those with millions of followers. Based on the analysis, the high-followers' teachers (content creators) mainly used Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method. They aimed at enabling their audience or language learners to communicate by knowing when, and how to say to whom. For high-followers' teachers, the technique that they mainly used was role play. But the design of the role play can be seen differently as in section 1 and 2. In section 1, it was mainly about vocabulary, while in section 2, it focused on the use of appropriate language expression. This technique can be understood by compiling two lists: observable actions (observations) and the underlying principles.

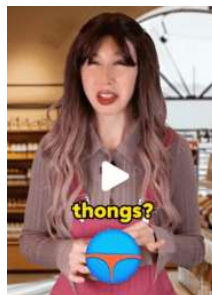
Table 1. Principles of CLT as the method and Role Play as Its Technique used by the high-followers' Teachers (content creators)

Observations	Principles of CLT
Section 1 Role Play	
Speaker B makes an error in pronouncing a word. She says <i>thongs</i> instead of <i>tongs</i> to refer to a kind of utensils. (data 1)	Errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills.
Speaker A gives a correction by pronouncing the right word, without telling Speaker B that she is wrong. (data 2a and 2b)	Learning to use language forms appropriately is an important part of communicative competence.
Speaker B makes an error in word choices by saying <i>soup spoon</i> instead of <i>ladle</i> (data 3)	Students should be given opportunities to work on language as it is used in authentic communication. They are taught for how to improve their comprehension.
Speaker A gives a correction by pronouncing the right word "ladle", without telling Speaker B that she is wrong. (data 4)	The teacher acts as a facilitator in setting up communicative activities and as an advisor during the activity.
Section 2 Role play	
Speaker A who acts as an immigration officer initiates a conversation by asking the data of the foreigner / speaker B (data 5)	
Speaker B gives the information needed. But there was not any wrong word choices/ vocabulary or grammar.	Language is for communicating and for 'doing'
Speaker A calls the next foreigner and ask her to show her passport.	Students are actively in negotiating meaning
Speaker B understands the instruction and show it to speaker A.	
Speaker A, using her gesture, asks her to keep her passport; it does not need checking at all since it is a Germany passport. Speaker A welcomes her coming to USA. (data 6a and 6b)	The use of non-verbal behavior receives greater attention in CLT.

Data 1



Data 2a



Data 2b



Data 3



Data 4



Data 5



The transcription for data 1 until data 4 can be seen below:

A: I'm looking for *thongs*

B: *thongs?*

A: Yes. For the kitchen. To...

B: You need *tongs*

A: Right. I also need a big big *soup spoon*

B: A *ladle*

A: Yes. Do you have *water cookers*?

B: A *kettle*?

A: Yes. And this thing to make a pizza....eem..

B: *Rolling pin*

A: Yes. Perfect.

The transcription for data 5 until data 6b can be seen below:

B: Passport please! What's this? Argentina. *What's the purpose of your trip?*

A: I'm going to a concert.

B: Which concert?

A: Taylor Swift

B: *Can I see your ticket? How long are you staying in the US?*

A: 4 days.

B: *May I see the booking please?*

A: Here's the *booking*

B: *What do you do for a living?*

A: I'm a social media person.

B: A social media person? Okay. Welcome to the US. Next, please

C: Here it is

B: A German passport?

C: Yes.

B: You don't have to show it to me. Welcome to the US

Data 6a



Data 6b



In teaching English, method exists in teachers' mind. With the method, teachers can use various techniques to realize a method.

In this data, it is seen that the teachers (content creators) used Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method. One of the principles of communicative language teaching method is the existence of context. In data 1 until data 2b, the context was taken place in a supermarket in which a buyer wanted to look for a certain kind of kitchen utensil. In data 1 until 2b, the conversation took place it; one acted as a saleswoman and one acted as a buyer. This is a principle of communicative language teaching as a method since the aim is to enable learners to use English communicatively. With this method, the teachers (content creators) used role play as its technique. The saleswoman tried to understand the difficulty that the buyers felt; that was to say the right word related to kitchen utensils. Along with this technique, the teacher (content creator), in this case was acted by a saleswoman, applied a principle of communicative language teaching, that was teacher as a counselor. It means that teachers need to be a skillful understand as the students (a buyer) struggle with her negative feelings. It was done by directly give the correct answer "thongs" and "ladle" instead of telling her interlocutors that she was wrong.

In addition to context provided in the conversation between a saleswoman and a buyer, the content creators also created videos related to culture. The culture itself has attached to language actually. In communicative language teaching, culture is embedded in language learning. Thus, learning the language is also a means for increasing cultural awareness. It was also shown in data 5 until data 6b. From data 5 until 6b, learners would realize that the holders of Germany passport have a privilege to enter USA without a visa. This simple scene would make audience/ students curious about how a passport of a country could get such privilege and what underlain it.

b) Technique used by low-followers' teachers (content creators)

The low-followers' teachers (content creators) mainly used Direct Teaching Method. They aimed at enabling their audience or language learners to convey meaning directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids without using their native language as help. For low-followers' teachers, the technique that they mainly used was fill-in-the blanks exercise to practice vocabulary (section 1), and self-correct technique to teach grammar (section 2)

This technique can be understood by compiling two lists: observable actions (observations) and the underlying principles.

Table 2. Principle of Direct Teaching Method and Fill-in-the Blank as Its Technique used by Low-followers' Teachers (Content Creator)

Observation	Principles of Direct Teaching
Section 1: vocabulary (fill-in-the blanks)	
The teacher presents a question in a form of sentence. Audiences are expected to answer the question by filling out the blank related to vocabulary question. (data 7a and 7b)	Teachers demonstrates its meaning through the use of realia, pictures; he never translates it into the students' native language. Students practice vocabulary by using new words in complete sentences.
Section 2: grammar (self-correct)	

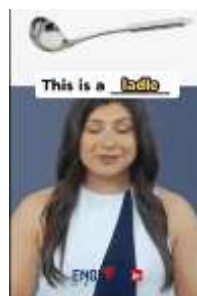
The teacher (content creator) presents two sentences and expect the audience to notice the errors. (data 8a and 8b)

Grammar is taught inductively. The teacher elicits the difference in terms of the form and possibly the meaning from the students. Finally, the teacher explains the rules of both tenses and provides more examples.

Data 7a



Data 7b



The transcription for data 7a and 7b were not transcribed as they were a constant video move. All of the videos found were just a fill-in-the-blank questions. The content creators used pictures and asked users (in this case probably students) to fill in the blanks with correct words.

Data 8a



Data 8b



The transcription for data 8a until data 8b can be seen below:

Data 8a and 8b

A: On the BBC Learning English Youtube community page, we asked you this question: What do you think you will have achieved by 20230? Look at this sentence. Can you spot the error? You may use 'study' as a verb. I study with BBC Learning English every day. We can use the noun 'study', when we talk about a room in which we study. Welcome to my study! Or when talking about a research paper. Did you read the new study on climate change? When we talk about a course or program of study, we use the plural of the noun 'studies'. By 2030, I will have completed my studies.

Based on data 7a and 7b, the teacher (content creator) used direct method in language teaching. It was said as direct method because it applied one basic principle, that was no translation allowed and meaning is to be conveyed directly in the target language through the use of visual aids. In data 7a and 7b, there were

pictures shown to the audience, then the teacher expected the students or audience to know the correct vocabulary. The way the teacher (content creator) designed the content was called as technique. In data 7a and 7b, the technique used was fill-in-the blanks. The same technique was also given to data 8a and 8b. However, in data 8a and 8b, it was about grammar. In direct method, vocabulary is emphasized over grammar. Thus, grammar is taught inductively; there is no explicit rule given to practice grammar. As in data 8a and 8b, the teacher (content creator) provided some sentences, then he or she expected the students (audience) to identify the errors, and fix the sentence into a grammatically correct.

Discussion

Method and techniques are two inseparable things in the field of teaching, especially language teaching. What language means for teachers and how to transfer the knowledge and skills to students are all bound into one term, that is method. Knowledge of method helps teachers to expand techniques that they can use to respond to the classroom situations. This concept used to be seen in a teaching learning process that occur in the classroom.

In this digital era, learning also occurs in the content of social media as knowledge transfer also exists on the platform directed to its users. Although it was found that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the common method used by high-followers account on TikTok, the practice of CLT itself was not precisely the same as to what had commonly been applied in a face-to-face learning or in the classroom. Due to the limitation of video duration and participants involved, those creators tended to create them in a short presentation. Thus, teachers assigning students to act as certain role was not seen. Meanwhile, for the low followers' account on Tiktok, they tended to use Direct Teaching method. This method was probably categorized as a teacher-centered method. In the classroom, it could probably seen that teachers were the one who demonstrated the knowledge to students by using visuals or realia rather than students using the language communicatively. As it was applied in social media, the content creator provided some pictures too and asked their followers to answer the blank; it used the fill-in-the blank technique. The low-followers account mostly focused on vocabulary rather than using the vocabulary in context. In terms of grammar, the low-followers account also taught grammar by asking their followers to fix the sentences. The Direct Method for teaching vocabulary and grammar might be closely similar; it was only a matter of duration that makes the difference between learning in a classroom and through social media.

Regarding to this finding, there have been some studies conducted to understand e-learning or online learning occurs. Patty and Bilung (2023) found that there was some pedagogical challenges in online learning such as lack of interaction between teacher and students posed by internet connectivity and lack of students' engagement due to unfocused attention between class and other activities featured in the online platform itself. The uncentered attention of students nowadays has been oen of the major issue that teachers' face since they also have a high level use of celular technology (Kukulska-hulme, 2016). Due to this trend, students' focus are often distracted and it emerges a phenomena that students are easy to be inattentive; it can be due to the duration of learning or invariability of learning material. Indriani and Widiastuti (2021) found that students tended to have positive attitude towards online learning media like Moodle since they could control learning progress and manage time in learning. Their finding proved that students' attention span in this era tended to be short; they preferred to control their own pace in learning and they would not be interested in learning if they could not find the meaningfulness of certain learning material given to them. The problem with meaningfulness of learning material was also proven another researcher. Riki, Regina & Wardah (2024) found that Cake application could improve students' speaking skill since it provided various learning material and it facilitated students with native voice recording featured in it. Through this facilitaties, stduents could practice appropriate expression and correct pronunciation in the form of conversation. From these findings, it could be found that some previous studied

mentioned were in line with the idea underlain in this research. The high and low followers in this study which was used as an indicator of students' attitude was also a sign of how engaged students were in learning English through social media. Some previous studies mentioned were focused on learning applications, but this study also revealed another thing about learning in asynchronous form that was through social media. Through social media, students could get benefit from the information that content creators provided such as how to use certain words in certain contexts, how to use certain expressions in which most of the lessons were adjusted to everyday communication. Although there was no interaction between teachers and students in knowledge transferring in social media, students still have a choice to decide which accounts would meet their needs; they have chance to explore language with their own learning pace. This study revealed that in a fast changing world, students can learn English either from teachers in the classroom or from the social media as most of them are really into social media. In addition, this study also enlightened researchers' insight especially in language teaching field that teaching techniques do not only variably exist in the classroom but also in different media that is social media content. However, the researchers still look forward to exploring many more aspects of why the learning content of social media are so attractive for students' nowadays, whether it is about the features that the platform offers or other things that may be unrevealed yet.

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis above, it was found that there were some differences found between high-followers and low-followers accounts for English learning on TikTok, there were: (a) the method and (b) the techniques. In terms of teaching method, high followers used communicative language teaching method. Meanwhile, the low-followers creators used direct method. In terms of teaching technique, high-followers used role play. Meanwhile, the techniques used by low-followers was fill-in-the blanks and self-correct.

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