

Investigating the Impact of Using TikTok on Listening Comprehension Acquisition for Saudi EFL College Students

Mohammad ALOLAYAN¹

¹ Department of English Language and Literature, College of Languages and Humanities, Qassim University, Unaizah, Saudi Arabia

Received: 06/ 09 / 2024

Accepted: 27 / 11 / 2024

Published: 15 / 01/ 2025

Abstract

The present study explores the impact of TikTok on listening comprehension skills among first-year English language students at the College of Science and Arts in Unaizah. With the rise of social media as a learning tool, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, TikTok has emerged as a platform for informal language acquisition. The research employs a descriptive survey methodology, comparing two groups of students: one with high engagement (8-10 hours per week) in educational TikTok content and another with minimal or no engagement. The primary research questions investigate the essential listening comprehension skills that students should master and whether significant differences exist between the two groups in acquiring these skills, specifically in skimming, scanning, and critical listening. The findings provide practical insights for educators on integrating modern technology into language instruction. Ultimately, this investigation seeks to fill a gap in existing research regarding TikTok's influence on EFL listening comprehension, offering valuable implications for both theoretical understanding and practical application in language education.

Keywords: Listening comprehension, Saudi Arabia, social media, TikTok, video sharing platforms

ملخص

مع ظهور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة للتعليم، لا سيما خلال جائحة كوفيد-19، برز تطبيق تيك توك كمنصة لاكتساب اللغة بشكل غير رسمي. تستكشف هذه الدراسة تأثير استخدام تطبيق تيك توك على مهارات الفهم والاستيعاب السمعي لدى طلاب السنة الأولى في تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية العلوم والآداب في عنزة، حيث يوظف البحث منهجية المسح الوصفي بمقارنة مجموعتين من الطلاب: مجموعة ذات مشاركة عالية (8-10 ساعات أسبوعياً) في محتوى تيك توك التعليمي، وأخرى ذات مشاركة ضئيلة أو معدومة. وتبحث أسئلة البحث الأساسية في مهارات فهم الاستماع الأساسية التي يجب على الطلاب إتقانها وما إذا كانت هناك اختلافات كبيرة بين المجموعتين في اكتساب هذه المهارات، وتحديدًا في القشط والمسح الضوئي والاستماع النقدي. وتقدم النتائج رؤى عملية للمعلمين حول دمج التكنولوجيا الحديثة في تعليم اللغة. وفي نهاية المطاف، يسعى هذا التحقيق إلى سد فجوة في البحوث الحالية فيما يتعلق بتأثير تيك توك على فهم الاستماع في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مما يوفر أثرًا قيمة للفهم النظري والتطبيق العملي في تعليم اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارة الاستماع، تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، تيك توك، منصات مشاركة الفيديوهات

Introduction

The English language holds significance in the twenty-first century as a lingua franca used in different practical and scientific fields on a global scale. As a result, scholars in various academic fields, such as applied linguistics and English instruction, have devoted a substantial amount of attention to the study of the factors influencing the acquisition of EFL arts.

Listening comprehension skills are among the key elements of EFL acquisition. These skills form a major foundation for the English-language-based communicative competence of individuals. Listening comprehension skills empower a recipient to understand what he or she is listening to, thus being able to respond effectively based on figuring out others' viewpoints and thoughts, the context, and conveying decidedly about them.

There are two ways to the acquisition of a foreign language i.e., guided and unguided acquisition. The term "guided acquisition" as opposed to "natural or unguided acquisition" refers to learning that is susceptible to logical and deliberate guidance or instruction. However, the term "natural or unguided acquisition" is used to describe picking up a foreign language acquisition through regular conversation without the use of organized instruction (Aljumah, 2020).

Today, social media can serve as a medium for informal learning of a foreign language. This is why undergraduate students can use it for language acquisition purposes (Hamat, & Haslinda, 2019). During the outspread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the compulsory shift to online learning has resulted in significant growth in the use of mobile applications in EFL acquisition, mostly independently by many students. One of these applications is TikTok. (Zaitun et al., 2021).

The TikTok platform has several features when it comes to EFL acquisition. The short videos offered by this platform are delivered through an open-source user-friendly application that empowers teachers in implementing the necessary learning activities. TikTok also provides an environment that is engaging, direct, and interesting; thus stimulating learners to learn. Moreover, this platform is efficient in terms of time and energy (Lin et al., 2022). In a descriptive survey study conducted by Sembiring and Katemba (2023) on a sample of high school students in Indonesia, a significant finding reached by the study was that the participating students articulated that the time spent viewing videos via YouTube had a positive impact on enhancing their English listening skills.

In light of the foregoing, listening comprehension skills are crucial for anyone interested in using English on a sustained basis as a leading global means of communication across all fields of practice. The proliferation of social networks has led to the emergence of video-sharing services across several platforms, such as YouTube and TikTok, which have turned into platforms for user-generated content. Through these platforms, English language learners have access to an unlimited number of videos of native English speakers. The main features of these video clips are that they are short, well-designed, well-designed and directed. They can also be accompanied by subtitles, which facilitate the ability of the recipient to understand the content of the video and interact with it efficiently.

Several researchers have been interested in investigating YouTube. On the other hand, there is a dearth of research available to date on TikTok as a platform that emerged recently in 2016. Moreover, the research on the potential impact of the TikTok platform on undergraduate students' spontaneous acquisition of listening comprehension skills still has a long way to go, a gap the present study tried to fill by trying to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the listening comprehension skills first-year students at the College of Science and Arts in Unaizah should master?
2. What are the differences between the students with high levels and those with low levels of watching educational videos on the "TikTok" platform in acquiring listening comprehension skills as a total score and as sub-dimensions (skimming, scanning, and critical listening skills)?

The results of this study have important implications for examining the effect of watching videos via the "TikTok" platform on acquiring listening comprehension skills. Theoretically, this study adds to the literature on the impact of watching videos on the TikTok platform on the acquisition of listening comprehension skills, given the scant research available to date that has investigated the effects of this particular platform. In practical terms, this study highlights the significance of focusing on the unprompted, automatic acquisition of listening comprehension skills through the use of new technological tools, as well as the importance of training students on independent and lifelong learning of language skills in an informal context via short authentic videos.

Literature Review

In general, English language learning is a challenging errand that entails long stretches of study and nonstop effort from a learner to support and sustain the information he or she gains (Cahyono & Perdhani, 2023). This is especially true in the case of acquiring listening skills. Listening can be perceived as a complex cognitive process that allows people to understand spoken language. For EFL students to be capable of listening, they should be capable of decoding, understanding, and interpreting the inputs (Sandmark, 2019). As a receptive skill, listening refers to a communicative competence through which a student becomes able to comprehend, interpret, and assess the inputs he or she may hear. Nevertheless, poor listening represents a major obstacle encountered by many students in learning a foreign language (Silaban & Purba, 2021).

Listening comprehension serves as a significant language skill in foreign language learning that is typically perceived as among the most challenging skills a student may learn. (Yaacob et al., 2021). Listening comprehension is defined as one's ability to comprehend spoken language at the discourse level – including conversations, stories (i.e., narratives), and informational oral texts – that involves the processes of extracting and constructing meaning (Kim & Pilcher, 2016, p. 161).

By reviewing several classifications of listening comprehension skills in the context of EFL acquisition (Abu El-Magd, 2015; Ahmed, 2021; Ahmad, 2016; Bedaiwy, 2022; Diab, 2023; Dirjal, Ghapanchi & Ghonsooly, 2020; Jassim, 2021; Medoukali, 2015; Sandmark, 2019; Saputri, 2018; Talaván & Rodríguez-Arancón, 2014), these skills can be categorized into three main categories as follows:

- Skimming skills: identifying the main idea in the text, recognizing the language function (apologizing, complaining, suggesting, requesting, advice), listening for general information, and determining the salient points.
- Scanning skills: deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words within a context, understanding the details from specific information in the text; extracting unstated information from the listening text, and selecting the most important words in the message (names, verbs, keywords among others).

- Critical listening skills: detecting the attitude and/or intention of the speaker toward subject matter, distinguishing between facts and opinions, predicting what speakers are going to talk about based on the student's previous knowledge, and extracting the information from the situation that is being presented at the moment with non-verbal codes such as gaze, facial and body movements.

TikTok as a Social Media for Acquiring EFL Skills

There is a wide agreement among researchers and practitioners that venturing out to a country where a foreign language is spoken and getting immersed in authentic real-life situations that require interaction and communication via this target language may be the most ideal way to get acquainted with a foreign language. This option, however, has long been impossible for the majority of students, but the advancements in technology in the last few years made the impossible possible. Students now can take advantage of technology as a source for EFL acquisition (Sorensen, 2013).

In recent years, the Web has seen some major changes that made it evolve into a global "read-write" channel that is intuitive and participatory; with users not mere recipients of the content provided but also creators of that content. The development of a collection of online tools known as social media has paved the way for this new notion of the Web as a platform for collaboration. The content offered by social media platforms can help enhance the listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills of their users (Faizi et al., 2014).

In terms of social media platforms favored by students, Mudra et al. (2022) state that students prefer WhatsApp, Twitter, podcasts, Facebook, blogs and Instagram. TikTok is one of the most well-known social networking platforms that encourages young people to post videos that are between three and sixty seconds long. Given the innate potential and features of this platform, users are invited to record videos of themselves, having fun while listening to music or imitating spoken word clips, in addition to enabling them to edit the content with various effects (Adnan et al., 2021).

Video-sharing platforms have the potential to transfer students' learning and the acquisition of a foreign language into an enjoyable process because authentic videos help students experience and understand different cultures that are shown to them in class (Baniabdelrahman, 2022). Given students' ability to extract meaning and make sense of what they see and listen to because of the comprehensible input that the setting of the video provides, video resources help them become better listeners (Alqahtani, 2014).

TikTok can be defined as a web-based entertainment platform that served, in recent years, as an enormous leap in recognition in light of its progressive accentuation on delivering short videos across different topics (Cahyono & Perdhani, 2023, p. 59). TikTok has become a widespread social media platform mostly used by undergraduate students, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of the interesting English videos presented via the application that grab the attention of this population (Xiuwen & Razali, 2021). Considering that the TikTok application can be downloaded on any Android device for free, it can be used by students to learn anywhere and anytime. Added to that, the application has a positive attitude that encourages users to continue using it (Lin et al., 2022).

As an open ubiquitous platform that has a large user base, a set of comprehensive features and a wide variety of content; TikTok may be an appropriate medium for learning a foreign language (Syamsiani & Munfangati, 2023). This can be attributed to the fact that this platform attracts undergraduate students who are in the phase of adulthood in light of the entertainment

the platform has as well as the ability it provides to these teenagers to innovate their own videos (Mekler, 2021).

Despite its many advances, a study conducted by Lin et al. (2022) demonstrated the shortcomings of this platform. The researcher found that learners were faced with many challenges when they used TikTok as a learning medium for a spoken language, including the distractions caused by other videos offered that made students unable to focus and the unavailability of social interaction (Lin et al., 2022).

The Role of Social Media in Listening Comprehension Skills Acquisition

Literature indicates that social media networks can contribute to second and/or foreign-language acquisition. For instance, Sorensen (2013) developed a curriculum that incorporates a social networking environment so that students could take advantage of authentic language samples and language practice in a controlled setting. Analyzing data collected by pre and post-surveys from a sample of 173 students at ESL Silver Center in Provo in this design-based research approach revealed that students' ages were the most significant predictor of their attitudes toward technology, but when other factors were taken into account, the amount of technology use by students emerged as a more significant predictor. Additionally, it was found that students' responses to a technology-based curriculum were influenced by their attitudes toward technology as a whole. However, a curriculum's presentation may be a more important determinant of student response than any other aspect.

Video-sharing platforms are perceived as one of the most prominent social media tools in enhancing language acquisition in general and listening skills in particular, a finding that was demonstrated by several studies. Chien et al. (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study on a sample of 38 Taiwanese students who were exposed to a multimedia learning environment based on YouTube for five weeks. These students had high intermediate levels of English proficiency. Data was collected by tests and a questionnaire that was administered before and immediately after the intervention. The results demonstrated the students' improved listening comprehension as a result of using YouTube.

Similarly, in a mixed-method research study by Al Harbi (2019), an open-ended questionnaire and a test were used to collect data from a sample of 50 randomly selected Saudi EFL students. The quantitative part of the study involved using YouTube and Snapchat. The study's conclusions demonstrated that Saudi EFL learners' listening skills had been improved by using social media, particularly Snapchat and YouTube. In a similar vein, Saputri (2018) carried out a correlative study on 23 middle school students in Malang. A questionnaire and a listening skills test were used as data sources. The author found a statistically significant positive correlation between students' watching of YouTube videos and the improvement of their listening skills.

With the growing prevalence of using TikTok as a platform for video sharing, many questions are now being asked about its embedded potential in enhancing language acquisition, with a particular focus devoted to listening skills. In terms of the use of the TikTok platform to develop general language skills, Syamsiani and Munfangati (2023) conducted a descriptive qualitative study on a sample of 3 undergraduate students majoring in TEFL at Ahmad Dahlan University. Analyzing data collected through interviewing the participants showed mixed results in students' perceptions regarding the use of TikTok videos for learning English, along with various challenges encountered by these students in using TikTok videos for English language

learning.

In another study, Xiuwen and Razali (2021) investigated the use of TikTok and other social media platforms by Chinese international undergraduate students to learn English. Notwithstanding the wealth of research that documents the effectiveness of these platforms in enhancing language skills, the researcher found that the paucity of quality research on using these platforms does not allow for definitive claims regarding their potential impact on Chinese students' language proficiency. A significant finding concluded by the researcher was that using TikTok would foster students' communication competence and interest in speaking English.

Furthermore, several studies paid further attention to the role of the TikTok platform in the acquisition of listening and listening comprehension skills. For example, Azevedo (2022) focused in his mixed-methods research study on the effect of TikTok on improving the ESL listening comprehension skills of 18 sixth graders in Brazil. A listening comprehension test that was administered before and after a course lasted for three weeks and an open-ended questionnaire to examine students' experiences were used to collect data. Among the significant results was that using TikTok promoted students' listening comprehension skills.

Likewise, Michos (2022) developed a Mobile Assisted Language Learning intervention based on TikTok. Data for this mixed-methods research study was collected using a listening test, a speaking test, and two open-ended questionnaires that were pre- and post-administered to 27 B2-level Greek teenagers studying English as a foreign language. The study results revealed the positive impact of watching short videos via TikTok on the participants' speaking and listening skills as well as their attitudes toward learning listening.

In the same context, Rahmawati et al. (2022) carried out a quasi-experimental study based on a pre-test and post-test control group design. Data was collected from a sampling consisting of 19 grade one students at a primary school in Kediri District by a multiple choice listening test. The researcher found that the use of TikTok short videos results in enhancing the students' listening skills.

Added to the above, scholars have devoted attention to the incidental learning that may take place as a result of watching short videos via the TikTok platform. For instance, in his quantitative correlative study on the effect of watching TikTok videos, a listening test and a questionnaire measuring students' viewing activity on English TikTok videos were used to collect data. Analyzing the data collected from 30 students majoring in EFL at Bandung University indicated that, despite the lack of a statistically significant correlation between students' interest in watching English Tiktok videos and their listening abilities, Tiktok viewing can still be a useful teaching tool for getting students interested in the listening learning process.

Finally, in their quasi-experimental study, Karimah et al. (2022) employed a control group pre-test and post-test design on a sample of young students consisting of 14 B-3 students at a primary school in Yogyakarta. Observations and listening tests were used to collect data. The study concluded that the incidental unplanned viewing of TikTok short videos contributed to promoting the students' language skills, especially in terms of their communicative competence and their ability to listen to EFL.

Methods and Materials

Participants

The population of this study included all first-year students at the College of Science and Arts in Unaizah, Saudi Arabia, majoring in the English Language Department in the academic year 2022-2023. A simple random sampling method was used to select students based on their

levels of use of the TikTok platform for educational, informative, and edutainment purposes. A total of 64 students were selected and divided into two groups; one of them included 34 students with high levels of watching TikTok video clips (8–10 hours a week), while the other group consisted of 30 students who used the platform minimally or did not use it at all.

Research Instruments

In this study, Ex-post facto research based on causal-comparative methodology was conducted to investigate the effect of the average time spent watching videos via the TikTok platform on listening comprehension skills acquisition without any intervention by the researcher. A comparison is made between two groups of students with high levels of watching TikTok video clips for educational, informative, and edutainment purposes and another group with low levels of watching.

Data was collected by a listening comprehension skills test. The following procedures were followed in developing the test.

1. Setting the purpose of the test: this test was developed to measure the levels of listening comprehension skills acquisition (specifically, skimming, scanning, and critical listening skills).
2. Developing an inventory (checklist) of the most important listening comprehension skills that first-year students should acquire: this was completed by reviewing the content of the courses introduced to students, along with reviewing some studies and research that focused on the undergraduate level (Jassim, 2021; Dirjal et al., 2020; Sandsmark, 2019; Saputri, 2018; Medoukali, 2015). Based on this review, three main dimensions were defined, namely skimming, scanning, and critical listening skills. Each of these dimensions included four sub-skills. The inventory was presented to a set of jury members specialized in linguistics, curriculum and instruction of English at Saudi universities. By completing this step, the first question was answered.
3. Creating test items: the test items were created considering that the test would include two items for each sub-skill (with a total of 24 items measuring 12 skills distributed under three dimensions). All the items were multiple-choice questions.
4. Face validity of the test: the face validity of the test was verified after presenting the initial draft to a set of specialized experts in linguistics, curriculum and instruction of English at Saudi universities to evaluate the quality of items in terms of the following: The items of the test measured the defined skills, the appropriateness of the test items to the level of the students, the accuracy of the statement, and the distinction of the response alternatives, in addition to reviewing the correction key. The experts approved the validity of all test items.
5. Reliability of the test: To calculate the reliability of the test, Cronbach's Alpha (α) equation with an omitted item to ensure the reliability of the test. The results are presented in Tables Two and Three.

Table 1. *The resulting values of the test reliability coefficients and the corrected correlation coefficients with an omitted item (n = 48)*

Skimming skills			Scanning skills			Critical listening skills		
N	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	N	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1	0.522	0.741	1	0.845	0.858	1	0.735	0.920
2	0.550	0.736	2	0.837	0.861	2	0.720	0.921
3	0.517	0.742	3	0.685	0.876	3	0.901	0.906
4	0.466	0.751	4	0.819	0.861	4	0.862	0.910
5	0.546	0.736	5	0.788	0.865	5	0.804	0.914
6	0.430	0.757	6	0.410	0.902	6	0.782	0.916
7	0.361	0.768	7	0.311	0.906	7	0.512	0.937
8	0.405	0.760	8	0.667	0.877	8	0.740	0.920

Results presented in Table One reveal that all items were accepted without omitting any item because of their lack of impact on the calculation of the reliability value. This indicates that the instrument enjoys a high degree of reliability and can thus be administered in the field study. Furthermore, the results presented in Table 3 show the total value of the Cronbach's Alpha (α) reliability coefficient of the test.

Table 2. *Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the test (N=48)*

N	Dimensions	Statements	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Skimming skills	8	0.774
2	Scanning skills	8	0.891
3	Critical listening skills	8	0.928
Total Reliability		24	0.933

Results show that the total value of the reliability coefficient amounted to 0.933, and the values of the reliability coefficients of the sub-dimensions ranged between 0.774 and 0.928, which are high values indicating that the test enjoys a high degree of reliability that justifies its administration in the field study (see Table Two).

1. Analyzing the difficulty, easiness, and discrimination indices of the test:

The statistical analysis of the test items for the sample included calculating the difficulty coefficient and the power of discrimination for each item of the test. After correcting the test, the scores obtained from the sample were arranged in descending order from the highest score to the lowest score. The completed answer sheets amounted to 48. This was followed by analyzing the responses of both the upper and lower groups according to the following procedures: half of the answer sheets with the highest scores (representing the upper group), and half of those with the lowest scores (representing the lower group) were chosen. Each group consisted of 24 male and

female students. The difficulty and discrimination indices of the test (Table Three) were calculated according to the following equation (Allam, 2000, p. 269):

Table 3. Equation to calculate the difficulty and discrimination indices of the test calculated

$$\frac{\text{Number of students who answered incorrectly}}{\text{The number of students who tried to Answer}} \quad \text{Difficult index}$$

$$\frac{\text{number of correct responses in the upper group} - \text{the number of correct responses in the lower group}}{\text{number of answers from one of the two groups' students}} \quad \text{Discrimination index}$$

Easiness index -1 = the difficulty index : (Fouad El-Sayed, 2005, 626).

Results presented in Table Four show the values of the difficulty, easiness, and discrimination indices of the test items.

Table 4. Results of the difficulty, easiness, and discrimination indices of the test items (n = 48)

Dimensions	N	Easiness index	Difficulty Index	Discrimination index
Skimming skills	1	0.67	0.33	0.48
	2	0.61	0.39	0.43
	3	0.52	0.48	0.43
	4	0.50	0.50	0.48
	5	0.43	0.57	0.52
	6	0.63	0.37	0.57
	7	0.65	0.35	0.52
	8	0.43	0.57	0.52
Scanning skills	1	0.67	0.33	0.57
	2	0.67	0.33	0.48
	3	0.52	0.48	0.43
	4	0.43	0.57	0.52
	5	0.67	0.33	0.48
	6	0.48	0.52	0.52

Dimensions	N	Easiness index	Difficulty Index	Discrimination index
Critical listening skills	7	0.63	0.37	0.57
	8	0.61	0.39	0.43
	1	0.48	0.52	0.52
	2	0.43	0.57	0.52
	3	0.63	0.37	0.57
	4	0.65	0.35	0.52
	5	0.52	0.48	0.43
	6	0.43	0.57	0.52
	7	0.52	0.48	0.43
	8	0.63	0.37	0.57

Results presented in Table Four show that:

- The difficulty indices of the test items ranged between 0.33 and 0.57. All test items were consequently accepted as enjoying reasonable levels of difficulty, as stated by measurement and assessment specialists (Al-Kubaisi, 2007).
- The discrimination indices of the test items ranged between 0.43 and 0.57, and thus all test items were consequently accepted as enjoying reasonable levels of discrimination, as stated by measurement and assessment specialists (Odeh, 2005, p. 293).

2. Determining the time to answer the test

The appropriate time to answer the test was determined by two methods, the first one is shown in Table Five.

Table 5. *Calculating the time to answer the test (N=48)*

experimental time		Sum	Average experimental time (the appropriate time)
The answer time of the fastest student	The answer time of the slowest student		
30 minutes	90 minutes	120 minutes	60 minutes

Results presented in Table Five point out the sum of the experimental times for completing the test by the slowest and fastest students. Based on these figures, it was found that the appropriate time to complete the test was 60 minutes. Moreover, the time needed to answer the test was determined by summing the time spent by all students in the pilot sample to complete the test. This was followed by calculating the average response time by dividing the total response times for all students by the total number of students. The resulting average time for administering the test was 60 minutes.

Developing the final version of the test: in light of the above procedures, the final version of the test consisted of 24 multiple-choice questions, equally distributed in the form of two items

for each of the three main skills (skimming, scanning, and critical listening skills). The score a student could obtain on this test ranged between zero and 24.

Research Procedures

To answer the research questions, the following procedures were followed:

- Defining the research problem and developing a scheme to answer the research questions.
- Reviewing the literature on listening comprehension skills acquisition as well as the potential effect of TikTok.
- Developing a checklist of listening comprehension skills, along with the test required to measure these skills, and verifying its validity.
- Obtaining official approvals for conducting the empirical study.
- Selecting a pilot sample of the non-participating students to verify the psychometric characteristics of the listening comprehension skills test.
- Choosing the main sample of students at the College of Science and Arts in Unaizah.
- Administering the listening comprehension skills test to the two groups of the study.
- Using the statistical methods: the "t" test to examine the significance of differences between the means of two independent samples of unequal numbers.
- Drawing results, discussion and, interpretation.

Results

Research Question 2 sought to determine if there are statistically significant differences between the students with high levels and those with low levels of watching educational videos on the "TikTok" platform in acquiring listening comprehension skills as a total score and as sub-dimensions?" To answer this question, the study tested the following hypothesis: "There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of students with high levels and those with low levels of watching educational, informative, and edutainment videos in English at the "TikTok" platform in acquiring listening comprehension skills as a total score and as sub-dimensions of skimming, scanning, and critical listening skills." To test this hypothesis, means, standard deviations, and the value of the Independent Samples T. Test were calculated to detect the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the students with high levels of watching educational, informative, and edutainment videos in English and the other group of students with low levels in the listening comprehension skills test (see Table Six).

Table 6. *The results of T*

Dimensions	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	T	Sig.	Statistical significance
Skimming skills	Group1	34	5.44	0.786	62	13.470	0.00	Significant at (0.01)
	Group2	30	2.97	0.669				
Scanning skills	Group1	34	5.29	0.906	62	11.072	0.00	Significant at (0.01)
	Group2	30	2.93	0.785				
Critical listening skills	Group1	34	2.35	0.812	62	1.005	0.319	

Dimensions	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	T	Sig.	Statistical significance
	Group2	30	2.17	0.648				non-significant
Total	Group1	34	13.09	2.165	62	9.932	0.00	Significant at (0.01)
	Group2	30	8.07	1.837				

Results presented in Table Six reveal that the total value of the T-Test amounted to 9.932, while the values of the T. Test for the first and second dimensions amounted to 13.470 and 11.072, respectively, which indicates statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.01) between the mean scores of students with high levels and those with low levels of watching educational videos in English on the "TikTok" platform in the acquisition of listening comprehension skills as a total score and as sub-dimensions of skimming and scanning skills in favor of students with high levels of watching. On the other hand, the value of the T. Test amounted to 1.005 for both the third dimension and the critical listening skills, which is an insignificant value. The hypothesis was therefore refuted. Thus, Research Question 2 "Are there statistically significant differences between the students with high levels and those with low levels of watching educational videos on the "TikTok" platform in acquiring listening comprehension skills as a total score and as sub-dimensions?" has been answered.

In light of the aforementioned, it is concluded that there is a significant effect of the high level of watching educational, informative, and edutainment videos in English on the "TikTok" platform on the acquisition of skimming and scanning skills. However, no effect was observed in terms of acquiring critical listening skills. These results extend the generalizability of those reached by some previous related studies (e.g., Azevedo, 2022; Michos, 2022; Rahmawati et al., 2022).

The results related to the effect of the TikTok platform on both skimming and scanning skills can be explained by the premise that watching videos delivered by this platform for educational, informative, and edutainment purposes may help students access authentic content for native English-speaking people in a real-world context. Added to that, students could take advantage of the video delaying feature and watch it repeatedly, as well as make use of the subtitles to understand the content. These findings can also be explained given the nature of these video clips, which are short, focused, and relevant to student's interests and preferences, thus contributing to increasing attention and helping them acquire the main skills of listening comprehension. The results notwithstanding, it was concluded that there was no significant effect on acquiring critical listening skills. This finding can be explained by the fact that this type of skill requires an advanced level of language proficiency and ongoing training. Students, therefore, may need more time to enhance these skills.

Conclusion

The results reached in this study supported the contention that social media hosting video-sharing platforms (TikTok in this case) have the potential to help undergraduate EFL students acquire some listening comprehension skills. The justification for such a conclusion is that video-sharing platforms open up unique opportunities as a medium for language acquisition through

delivering videos of native English speakers in a real-world context, along with several other advantages.

The present study represented a first step in the empirical validation of the educational effect of this new technology. The study was limited to drawing comparisons between TikTok users who routinely watched English videos for educational, informative, or educational purposes and those who barely used the platform or did not use it at all. Further research may extend to investigating the different factors influencing the use of TikTok to listen comprehension skills acquisition. The study also invites attention to conducting research comparing the impact of the TikTok platform and YouTube, as well as the differences in listening comprehension skills acquisition as a result of various social media tools. In light of the results reached, it is recommended to continue to support EFL learners to pursue lifelong learning of English using social media, particularly video-sharing platforms such as TikTok.

Declaration of AI Refined

This document has benefited from the application of AI-driven tools, including Grammarly to refine its linguistic aspects. These tools were utilized to correct grammar and spelling and improve the overall writing style. It is acknowledged that the use of these technologies may introduce certain AI-generated linguistic patterns. However, the core intellectual content, data interpretation, and conclusions presented remain the sole work of the authors.

Statement of Absence of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the research, findings, or recommendations presented in this paper. All conclusions drawn are independent and unbiased.

References

- Abu El-Magd, M. A. (2015). A Task-based personal learning environment for developing the English majors listening comprehension skills. *Studies in curricula and teaching methods*, (207), 2-40. <https://doi.org/10.21608/mjat.2015.103465>
- Adnan, N. I., Ramli, S., & Ismail, I. N. (2021). Investigating the usefulness of TikTok as an educational tool. *International Journal of Practices in Teaching and Learning (IJPTL)*, 1(2), 1-5.
- Ahmad, S. Z. (2016). The flipped classroom model to develop Egyptian EFL students' listening comprehension. *English Language Teaching*, 9(9), 166-178. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n9p166>
- Ahmed, M. A. (2021). Challenges of listening comprehension encountered by EFL university students. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 329.
- Aljumah, F. H. (2020). Second language acquisition: A framework and historical background on its research. *English language teaching*, 13(8), 200-207. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n8p200>
- Alqahtani, E. T. (2014). Effectiveness of using YouTube on enhancing EFL students' listening comprehension skills. Saudi Arabia.
- Al-Ghazu, A., & Baniabdelrahman, A. (2022). The effect of an instructional program based on YouTube on Jordanian EFL students' listening. *Middle Eastern Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 39-49. <https://doi.org/10.47631/mejress.v3i1.440>

- Bedaiwy, A. A. (2022). Using the interactive approach to develop college students' EFL critical listening skills. *Journal of the College of Education in Educational Sciences*, 46(2), 13-51. <https://doi.org/10.21608/jfees.2022.241753>
- Cahyono, A. O. M., & Perdhani, W. C. (2023). Using TikTok in EFL class: Students' perceptions. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, 7(1), 59-77. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.7.1.59-77>
- Diab, A. A. (2023). *Using The ubiquitous learning tools for developing EFL prospective teachers' listening comprehension and digital literacy skills*. Retrieved from: https://jfeb.journals.ekb.eg/article_298998_2194294622440009a8ff5b51cf66d4fa.pdf
- Dirjal, A. H., Ghapanchi, Z., & Ghonsooly, B. (2020). Role of a social media application in promoting motivation and listening skill of Iraqi EFL learners: a Skype-based study. *Asian Social Science*, 16(8), 20-32. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v16n8p20>
- Faizi, R., Afia, A. E., & Chiheb, R. (2014). Social media: An optimal virtual environment for learning foreign languages. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (Online)*, 9(5), 64-66. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v9i5.3911>
- Hamat, A., & Abu Hassan, H. (2019). Use of social media for informal language learning by Malaysian University students. *3L The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 25(4), 68-83. <https://doi.org/10.17576/3l-2019-2504-05>
- Jassim, L. L. (2021). The Effect of YouTube comments on Iraqi EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Journal of Education College Waist University*, 2(44), 635-656.
- Karimah, L. S., Deporos, S. R. C., Kustiawan, U., & Maningtyas, D. T. (2022). Does TikTok effective in stimulating language development for children aged 5-6? Golden Age: *Scientific Journal of Early Childhood Development*, 7(1), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jga.2022.71-02>
- Kim, Y. G., & Pilcher, H. (2016). What is listening comprehension and what does it take to improve listening comprehension? *Literacy Studies*, 159-173. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31235-4_10
- Lin, C. S., Irawan, R., & Permana, S. A. (2022). Problems faced by the EFL students in implementing TikTok as a speaking learning medium. *Proceedings of the 1st UPY International Conference on Education and Social Science (UPINCESS 2022)*, 287-295. https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-39-8_28
- Medoukali, F. (2015). *Developing EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension through YouTube Videos A Case Study of Second Year Students at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra*. University of Biskra.
- Mekler, A. (2021). The Effects of TikTok use on college student learning. *Undergraduate Review*, 16(1), 145-153. https://vc.bridgew.edu/undergrad_rev/vol16/iss1/19
- Mudra, H. et al. (2022). EFL learners' pedagogical views on the online social networks in EFL classrooms. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 13(1), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1301.13>
- Sandsmark, M. (2019). *YouTube in the EFL Classroom and Listening Comprehension—A Corpus-Based Study*. Master's thesis, The University of Bergen.
- Saputri, P. K. N. (2018). *The correlation between watching English vlogs on YouTube and student listening ability in the English language education department of the university Muhammadiyah Malang*, (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation). Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang.

- Sembiring, H. T. R., & Katemba, C. V. (2023). The use of YouTube English educational videos in improving listening comprehension. *Journey: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*, 6(1), 161-170. <https://doi.org/10.33503/journey.v6i1.2681>
- Silaban, M. C. A., & Purba, R. (2021). Improving student's listening skills using Tiktok at SMP Swasta Amalyatul Huda Medan. *Scientific Journal of the Educational Profession*, 6(4), 650-656.
- Sorensen, M. (2013). *Student attitudes toward social media technology as an enhancement to language acquisition* (Order No. 28112698). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (2551242347).
- Syamsiani, M., & Munfangati, R. (2023). Students' perception toward the use of TikTok videos for learning English. *International Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(1), 324-329. <https://doi.org/10.32528/issn.v2i1.150>
- Talaván, N. & Rodríguez-Arancón, P. (2014a). The use of interlingual subtitling to improve listening comprehension skills in advanced EFL students. In B. Garzelli & M. Baldo (Eds.), *Subtitling and Intercultural Communication. European Languages and beyond* (pp. 273–288). Pisa: InterLinguistica ETS
- Widyaningrum, R. (2022). TikTok as Indonesian language learning media at SMK Ma'arif NU 1 Cilogok. *International Conference of Humanities and Social Science (ICHSS)* (Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 671-675).
- Xiuwen, Z., & Razali, A. B. (2021). An overview of the utilization of TikTok to improve oral English communication competence among EFL undergraduate students. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 9(7), 1439-1451. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2021.090710>
- Yaacob, A., Amir, A. S. A., Asraf, R. M., Yaakob, M. F. M., & Zain, F. M. (2021). Impact of YouTube and video podcasts on listening comprehension among young learners. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies*, 15(20), 4-19. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v15i20.23701>
- Zaitun, Z., Hadi, M. S., & Indriani, E. D. (2021). TikTok as a medium to enhance the speaking skills of EFL students. *Jurnal Studi Guru Dan Pembelajaran*, 4(1), 89-94.

Appendices

Appendix (A)

Listening comprehension skills list

Skimming skills

1. identifying the main idea in the text
2. Recognizing the language function (apologizing, complaining, suggesting, requesting, advice...)
3. Listening for general information
4. Determining the salient points

Scanning skills

1. Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words within a context.

2. Understanding the details from specific information in the text.
3. Extracting unstated information from the listening text.
4. Selection: select the most important words in the message (names, verbs, keywords among others).

Critical listening skills

1. detecting the attitude and/or intention of the speaker toward the subject matter
2. Distinguishing between facts and opinions.
3. Predicting what speakers are going to talk about based on the students' previous knowledge
4. extracting the information from the situation that is being presented at the moment with non-verbal codes such as gaze, facial and body movements.

Appendix (B)

Listening comprehension skills test

Dear student,

This test aims to measure the potential impact of watching short videos on the TikTok application on enhancing your listening comprehension skills. You need to watch the attached video carefully before trying to answer. The test includes 24 items and should be answered in 60 minutes.

Watch the video attached in the following link and answer all the questions:

Choose the correct answer from a, b, c, or d:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@beckysouthworth/video/7140199376911191301?q=documentary%20english&t=1689091299955>

1. Styal refers to a/an
 - a. palace,
 - b. prison,
 - c. hotel,
 - d. housing estate
2. why is Styal a unique place?
 - a. Because it looks like a village, but it is not.
 - b. Because it is a village.
 - c. Because it is in Wilmslow
 - d. Because it is in Cheshire.
3. The language used in the video is:
 - a. complaining,
 - b. suggesting,
 - c. Requesting,
 - d. documentary
4. "There are a lot of murderers, child killers, and paedophiles." The underlined word refers to:
 - a. Child lovers,
 - b. child parents,
 - c. child abusers,
 - d. child killers

5. Personnel who work at Styal are:
 - a. prisoners,
 - b. imprisoned,
 - c. teachers,
 - d. farmers
6. The speakers are:
 - a. Sociologists.
 - b. Physicians
 - c. Teachers
 - d. Farmers
7. Styal is a/an Place to be in.
 - a. amazing,
 - b. beautiful,
 - c. dangerous,
 - d. interesting.
8. The speakers are talking about:
 - a. nefarious crimes,
 - b. nursing home,
 - c. a beautiful place,
 - d. a village.
9. Incarcerated means
 - a. imprisoned,
 - b. tourist,
 - c. ill,
 - d. Happy
10. "One person I was on the wing with killed her child." "on the wing" here means:
 - a. lives beside,
 - b. flies with,
 - c. run with,
 - d. eat with
11. Who are the main residents of Styal?
 - a. convicted males,
 - b. convicted females,
 - c. aged women,
 - d. aged men
12. The mentioned facility is located in:
 - a. Manchester
 - b. New England
 - c. Cheshire
 - d. Paris
13. "The houses are large, detached, Victorian". Do you want to live in a place like Styal?
 - a. Yes, sure,
 - b. May be,

- c. Absolutely no.
 - d. I don't know
14. The main idea of the video is about:
- a. the paradox between the place and its residents.
 - b. the beauty of the countryside in Cheshire
 - c. a good place to retire in
 - d. life in England
15. Select the most important word(s) in the video that would correctly describe Styal:
- a. A notorious place
 - b. A village
 - c. House units
 - d. The mother of all prisons
16. A notorious place is a:
- a. A disreputable place
 - b. A well-known place
 - c. An exciting place
 - d. An amazing place
17. The speakers feel about Styal:
- a. shocked,
 - b. happy,
 - c. neutral,
 - d. interested
18. The speakers think that Styal is unique because:
- a. it has cellular accommodations
 - b. it has a lot of open accommodations
 - c. it has unique criminals
 - d. all the above
19. "If you visit Styal, it is something of a shock." This is a/an..... statement:
- a. Opinion,
 - b. fact,
 - c. description,
 - d. critique.
20. "It looks like a housing estate, except it got big metal fence." This is a/an..... statement:
- a. Opinion,
 - b. fact,
 - c. argument,
 - d. critique
21. "Styal is a place in which some monsters live". The word "Monsters" makes refers to
- a. mythic animals,
 - b. bad fathers,
 - c. Incarcerated women,
 - d. children
22. The video recommends to:
- a. Visit Styal,

- b. work at Styal,
 - c. live in England,
 - d. stay away from Styal
23. The facial expressions of the speakers inspire:
- a. respect,
 - b. love,
 - c. happiness,
 - d. shock
24. "six months in, I started taking heroine." The non-verbal codes of the speakers show:
- a. respect,
 - b. happiness,
 - c. shock,
 - d. regret.

Cite as

Alolayan, M. (2025). Investigating the Impact of Using TikTok on Listening Comprehension Acquisition for Saudi EFL College Students. *Atras Journal*, 6 (1), 231-249