

# Two Sided of TikTok: Considering Both Positive and Negative Sides of Social Media for Language Learning

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***Abstract,** the presence of technology and the development of the world of social media have two inseparable sides, including positive and negative sides. One of the media favored by children and adolescents is TikTok. The purpose of this study is to discuss the two positive and negative sides of TikTok with specifications on language learning, both Indonesian as the mother language and English as a foreign language. The method used is a qualitative method with two types of data sources, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data is based on the author's observations on the application, as well as secondary data from various written references, especially scientific articles published in journals. The results show that TikTok has positive sides, for example increasing and fostering children's creativity, increasing the vocabulary of children and adolescents in both Indonesian and English, and so on. However, on the other hand, there is quite a lot of content posted on TikTok that features swear words. This needs to be a concern for parents to pay attention to the content opened by children.*

***Keywords:** TikTok, children, language learning, Social Media, Positive and Negative Sides*

## Introduction

Based on the TikTok report, TikTok active users until July 2020 have reached 689.17 million users. This is an extraordinary achievement from an application that is still 4 years old. Bytedance launched TikTok in 2016.<sup>2</sup> From the presentation, it is known that the number of monthly active users (MAU) for TikTok was recorded at 732 million in October 2020. TikTok also revealed the number of their MAUs in the United States, reaching 100 million of the total. This figure is quite large, especially when TikTok itself has faced a number of "attacks" from the US government under Donald Trump's leadership. From the end of July 2020 to October 2020, TikTok managed to add approximately 14.3 million monthly active users worldwide every month.

If this growth rate continues over the next 13 months, TikTok is predicted to have more than one billion monthly active users globally by May 2022. Still in the same report, 47 percent of users said that they were tempted to buy something after watching content on TikTok. Meanwhile, 67 percent of users said that TikTok inspired them to buy items that were not previously planned. According to the report, 42 percent of TikTok users come from young people (Generation Z) with an age range of 18-24 years. The results of this research also say that the average user spends 89 minutes a day accessing the TikTok application.

Compiled by KompasTekno from Phone Arena, 80 percent of users said that TikTok was the most entertaining platform. The TikTok phenomenon is not only popular in its home country of China, but also throughout the world including in Indonesia. As reported by Statista, as of February 2021, TikTok daily active users globally are estimated to reach 35.28 million users, both iOS and Android. TikTok social media also became one of the most popular

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<sup>2</sup> Aristya Rahadian, "Jangan Kaget ini Jumlah Pengguna Aktif Tiktok di Dunia" accessed from <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/tech/20200825181232-40-181938/jangan-kaget-ini-jumlah-pengguna-aktif-tiktok-di-dunia> dated 24 April 2021.

applications during 2020. Based on Apptopia data, TikTok was the most downloaded application in 2020. The total reached 850 million downloads. In addition, TikTok is also in first place in the Apptopia version of the “Highest Grossing App” category, beating Tinder, YouTube, Disney Plus, and so on. In the period April-December 2020, TikTok recorded revenues of up to 965.5 million US dollars (around Rp. 9 trillion) from the Google Play Store (Android) and the App Store (iOS), according to a Business of Apps report. TikTok itself is a short video-based social media application owned by Chinese technology company ByteDance. On TikTok, users can create, edit, and share short video clips complete with filters and accompanied by music to support them.<sup>3</sup>

With the large number of users, especially among youth, even children will have quite a variety of effects. The use of the TikTok application is in line with the high duration of internet use in Indonesia, especially among youth and children. In addition, it has become a common phenomenon today that children at an early age are given smartphones by their parents. So that children with kindergarten or elementary school age have a good understanding of how to install and then access the content in it. This phenomenon on the one hand can help the development of children, especially in absorbing knowledge, adding vocabulary, skills, and so on. However, on the other hand, content that is not well filtered that is quite a lot circulating on the TikTok application can be a boomerang for the development of the child itself. For example, when viewed from the aspect of language development, children will be able to absorb a lot of vocabulary, however, many swear vocabularies are also found scattered in the application, and in the end they are practiced in the child's life.

To improve the quality of education, the role of professional teachers is very much needed to educate the nation's life. Government Regulation Number 17 of 2010 articles 48 and 59 which indicate the development of an education information system based on technology and information. With a good education system, it will be able to increase Indonesia's competitiveness through the creation of good human resources.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, an effective and innovative learning process is needed so that students do not get bored with the material presented or the assignment given. This is in line with the learning process that is currently being carried out online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In this short article, the author focuses on the massive phenomenon of Tiktok use among children and youth. This is like an opportunity to be used as a learning medium. However, it should be noted that the existence of Tiktok brings positive and negative sides. The positive side referred to is related to the effectiveness and creativity in the learning process to improve or foster language skills in children and adolescents, both Indonesian and foreign languages since language could be learned from recreational ways, for example by reading novel<sup>5</sup>, but in this case, it concerned on TikTok However, on the other hand, the negative side is also carried away, where the content on Tiktok can vary greatly, including content that contains language that is not appropriate for children and teenagers to hear, for example the existence of curses and other inappropriate content.

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<sup>3</sup>Conney Stephanie, “Jumlah Pengguna Aktif Bulanan TikTok Terungkap” accessed from <https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2021/04/19/14020037/jumlah-pengguna-aktif-bulanan-tiktok-terungkap?page=all>. dated 24 April 2021.

<sup>4</sup> D. Sulisworo (2016). The Contribution of the Education System Quality to Improve the Nation's Competitiveness of Indonesia. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 10(2), 127. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v10i2.3468>

<sup>5</sup> Niswatin Nurul Hidayati, “Recreational Language Learning: Exploring English Expressions Found in Ika Natassa's Novel” *EDUKASI: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*. 8(2), 2020, 74-93

### **Tik Tok as a Learning Media**

I Wayan Santyasa stated that the learning process contains five components of communication, namely the teacher (communicator), learning materials, learning media, students (communicants), and learning objectives. While teaching materials are materials or teaching materials that are systematically arranged that are used by teachers and students in the learning process.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the learning media is an integral part of the learning system that cannot be separated. Without learning media, the teaching and learning process is impossible, at least it requires one medium to deliver teaching materials.<sup>7</sup> Yusuf Hadi Miarso stated that the first thing teachers must do in effective use of media is to find, find, and select media that meet children's learning needs, attract children's interests, according to their development of maturity and experience as well as the special characteristics of their study groups.<sup>8</sup> These characteristics include the maturity of the child and the background of his experience as well as the mental conditions related to his developmental age.

In addition to the problem of student interest in the media, the representation of the messages conveyed by the teacher should also be considered in media selection. There are at least three functions that move together in the existence of the media. First, the stimulation function which creates interest in learning and knowing more about everything that is in the media. Second, the mediation function which is an intermediary between teachers and students. In this case, the media bridges communication between teachers and students. The three functions of information display the explanation the teacher wants to convey. With the presence of the media, students can capture the information or explanation they need or want to convey by the teacher.<sup>9</sup>

There are several features contained in the Tik Tok application, namely 1) Voice Recording which is used to record sound through a device, then integrated into a personal Tik Tok account. 2) Record a video that is used to record video via a device, then integrated it into a personal Tik Tok account. 3) Backsound (background sound) which is used to add background noise which can be downloaded from the Tik Tok Application storage media. 4) Edit which is used to improve and edit the draft video that has been made. 5) Share which is used to share videos as well as 6) Duet which is used to collaborate with other Tik Tok Application users.

### **Language Learning**

In the language learning process, there are two terms, namely language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition is usually associated with the mother language, while language acquisition is outside the mother tongue, it is a second language or a foreign language. There is a theory in language learning, we know behaviorism theory, which in essence states that language learning is a process of imitation (imitation) and habit formation received from its environment. This includes both verbal and non-verbal learning processes. Lightbown and Spada mentioned that learners receive linguistic input from speakers in their environment and they form "associations" between words and objects or events. These associations become stronger as experiences are repeated. In addition, there is a theory of innatism proposed by Chomsky that basically every child has been equipped with a language skill called Universal

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<sup>6</sup> Wisnu Nugroho Aji, "Aplikasi Tiktok sebagai Media Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia" Pertemuan Ilmiah Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia (PIBSI) XL 2018

<sup>7</sup> Isroqm, A. (2013). UNTUK PEMBUATAN MEDIA PEMBELAJARAN INTERAKTIF (Studi Kasus : Aplikasi PowerPoint), 1317–1336.

<sup>8</sup> Mahnun, N. (2012). Media Pembelajaran (Kajian terhadap Langkah-langkah Pemilihan Media dan Implementasinya dalam Pembelajaran). *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 37(1), 27–35.

<sup>9</sup> Wisnu Nugroho Aji, "Aplikasi Tiktok sebagai Media Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia" Pertemuan Ilmiah Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia (PIBSI) XL 2018

Grammar (UG). Lightbown and Spada mentioned Chomsky's theory of language acquisition is based on the hypothesis that innate knowledge of the principles of Universal Grammar (UG) permits all children to acquire the language of their environment, during the critical period in their development.<sup>10</sup>

From the two language learning theories above, it can be said that the role of the environment is very supportive of the development of children's language skills. If we look at the context of learning English, the teacher becomes one of the determining factors, because children get or learn the language in the classroom. So, the abilities or capabilities of a teacher must be considered, so that the transfer of knowledge that is given goes well. Media is also one of the determinants in the process of learning English for children of this age. Media comes from Latin which means intermediary or medium. Gerlach & Ely states that media are people, materials, or events that build conditions that enable students to acquire knowledge of skills or attitudes. There are several types of media that are often used in Indonesia, for example 1) visual media / graphic media, namely media that can only be seen such as pictures / photos, sketches, diagrams, charts, graphs, cartoons, posters, maps and globes, flannel boards and bulletin boards; 2) audio media, media related to the sense of hearing; 3) projection media (audio-visual).<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, Heinich and Molenda state that there are six basic types of instructional media, including:<sup>12</sup>

1. Text, is a basic element in conveying information that has various types and forms of writing that seeks to provide attractiveness in the delivery of information.
2. Audio media, to help convey announcements more impressively and to help increase the attractiveness of an offering. Audio types include background sound, music or voice recordings and others.
3. Visual media, media that can provide visual stimuli such as pictures/photos, sketches, diagrams, charts, graphics, cartoons, posters, bulletin boards, and others.
1. 4. Motion projection media, including motion films, wristband films, TV programs, video cases (CD, VCD or DVD)
4. Artificial/minature objects, including three-dimensional objects that can be touched and touched by students. This media is made to overcome the limitations of both objects and situations so that the learning process continues to run well.
5. Humans, including teachers, students, or experts in certain fields/materials

### **Two Sided of Tiktok in Language Learning**

According to Mandiberg, social media is a medium for collaboration between users who produce content (user-generated content). Shirky also mentioned that social media and social software are tools to improve users' ability to share, cooperate among users and take collective action, all of which are outside the institutional or organizational framework. Then, Body describes social media as a collection of software that allows individuals and communities to gather, share, communicate, and in certain cases collaborate or play with each other. Social media has the power of user-generated content (UGC) where the content is generated by users, not by editors as in social media institutions. Meanwhile, according to Van Dijk, social media is a media platform that focuses on the existence of users who facilitate them in activities and collaborating. Therefore, social media can be seen as an online medium

<sup>10</sup> Niswatin Nurul Hidayati, "Pentingnya Peningkatan Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris Bagi Guru Anak Usia Dini" *Al-Hikmah: Indonesian Journal of Early Childhood Islamic Education*. 2(1), 2018, 59-74

<sup>11</sup> Latif, Muktar., Zubaidah, Rita, Zukhairina, Afandi, Muhammad. 2014. *Orientasi Baru Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Kencana

<sup>12</sup> Miranti, Ira., Engliana, dan Hapsari, Fitri Senny. (2015). *Penggunaan Media Lagu Anak-Anak dalam Mengembangkan Kemampuan Kosakata Bahasa Inggris Siswa di PAUD*. Faktor Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan Volume II Nomor 2, 2015

(facilitator) that strengthens the relationship between users as well as a social bond. Meike and Young interpret the word social media as convergence between personal communication in the sense of sharing with anyone without any individual specificity.<sup>13</sup>

In every use of social media there are positive and negative impacts. The positive and negative impact is seen from how someone uses it. For everyone, especially social media students, they are very fond of them. Sometimes their time is spent just playing social media. They forget that apart from playing social media they also have responsibilities outside of social media. According to Ngafifi, technological progress will have a negative effect on socio-cultural aspects

- a. Moral deterioration among community members, especially among teenagers and students.
- b. Delinquency and deviant acts among adolescents are increasing the weakening of the authority of the traditions that exist in society. Juvenile and student delinquency is increasing in various forms, such as fights, doodling, traffic violations to crime.
- c. Changing patterns of human interaction. The presence of computers and cell phones in most middle-class households and above has changed the pattern of family interaction.<sup>14</sup>

Behind the negative impact of using social media there are also positive impacts contained in it. According to Nisa Khairuni's quote in an educational journal, consisting of:<sup>15</sup>

- a. Children can learn how to adapt;
- b. Children can learn to socialize with the public;
- c. is able to manage a network of friends (make friends or meet up with old friends);
- d. Make it easy for children in learning activities;
- e. is able to be a means of discussing with friends about school assignments.

This Tik Tok app is an app that allows users to create their own short music videos. This application was launched in September 2016 which was developed by a developer from China. ByteDance Inc, is expanding its business wing to Indonesia by launching a music video and social networking application called Tik Tok. Throughout the first quarter (Q1) 2018, Tik Tok established itself as the most downloaded application, namely 45.8 million times. According to Fatimah Kartini Bohang's quote in 2018 this number beat other popular applications such as Youtube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram. The majority of Tik Tok application users in Indonesia themselves are millennial children, school age, or commonly known as generation Z. This application was blocked on July 3, 2018. The Ministry of Communication and Information has been monitoring this application for a month and found lots of reports that complain about this application, effective until July 3. The incoming reports reached 2,853 reports.

According to Mulyana, there are two factors in using Tik Tok, including internal factors and external factors. Internal factors such as feelings, attitudes and individual characteristics, prejudice, desires or expectations, attention (focus), learning process, physical condition, values and needs as well as interests, and motivation. External factors such as family background, information obtained, surrounding knowledge and needs, intensity, size, opposites, new and familiar things or the alienation of an object.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Rulli Nasrullah, *Media Sosial (Perspektif Komunikasi, Budaya, dan Sositoknologi)*, (Bandung: SimbiosisRekatama Media, 2017),

<sup>14</sup> Sulidar Fitri, *Dampak Positif dan Negatif Sosial Media Terhadap Perubahan Sosial Anak*, Universitas Muhammadiyah Tasikmalaya, Jurnal kajian Penelitian Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran, (2017), h.120

<sup>15</sup> Nisa Khairuni, (2016), *Dampak Positif dan Negatif Sosial Media Terhadap Pendidikan*, Jurna Edukasi Vol 2 No 1, Januari, 92

<sup>16</sup> Demmy Deriyanto, Fathul Qorib, *Persepsi Mahasiswa Universitas Tribhuwana Tungadewi Malang Terhadap Tik Tok*, Universitas Tribhuwana, Jurusan Ilmu Komunikasi dan FISIP, Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, vol. 7 No. 2 (2018), h.78

a. Internal Factor

Internal factors are factors that come from within a person such as feelings. According to Ahmadi, feeling is a spiritual state or psychological event that we experience happily or unhappily in connection with knowing and subjective events. So according to Ahmadi, feeling is an internal factor that affects the use of the Tik Tok application. Because according to him, if someone's feelings or souls don't like or are not happy with the use of this Tik Tok application, then that person will not use it. According to W. Wundt in Ahmadi, feelings can not only be seen or experienced by individuals as happy or unhappy feelings but can be seen from various dimensions. So according to W. Wundt, the use of the tik tok application can not only be seen through his feelings but also seen from his behavior.

In using this Tik Tok application, everyone's way of making it is different, with various situations their feelings are also different. If the feeling of being happy, his behavior in making the Tik Tok application also matches his feelings, the same applies to him. Because their behavior when they use the Tik Tok application proves a user's feeling. According to Gerungan, prejudice is the attitude of people's feelings towards certain human groups, racial groups or cultures that are different from those who are prejudiced. So according to Gerungan, prejudice also has an effect on the use of the Tik Tok application. Because if someone has good prejudice when using the Tik Tok application, there is no negative side to using this Tik Tok application. But vice versa, if someone's prejudice is not good about using the Tik Tok application, then that person will also not want to use the Tik Tok application.

Internal factors are factors that greatly influence the use of the Tik Tok application. Internal factors can also be said to be a learning process in the use of social media including the use of the Tik Tok application. So, the use of social media such as the Tik Tok application is not only for entertainment, but also for learning to interact with new people, then also using the Tik Tok application can increase everyone's creativity. Judging from the negative side, the use of this Tik Tok application can make everyone feel lazy and forget all the work he should be doing.

b. External Factor

In the Tik Tok application, people get information from sharing videos, for example video events such as a ship sinking or in other forms of recording, so quickly information about events is conveyed to other users. Nasrullah said information becomes the identity of social media because social media creates a representation of his identity, produces content, and interact based on information. So, information is something that also greatly affects the use of the Tik Tok application.

If someone doesn't get information about Tik Tok, they may not know the Tik Tok application, even to the point of becoming a user. Therefore, information is said to be very important in using the Tik Tok application. One of the influences of social media which is part of the information media is that it can affect one's knowledge. So with information, someone can also be affected by their knowledge of social media such as Tik Tok.

There are two views of the presence of technology and social media, in this case the use of Tiktok by children and adolescents. In a pandemic like this, Tiktok is considered a suitable medium for the learning process. One of the studies on the use of Tiktok in French language learning. Moerni said that with the creation of Tik Tok videos that are very popular with millennial children and the widespread use of social media, this momentum must be used to optimize online learning. This learning is carried out independently and collegially. In his assessment, emphasis is placed on the accuracy of pronunciation, intonation and attitude. Based on the assessment analysis, it was found that the students' average score was 87.80. As many as 82.14% of students can pronounce imperative sentences correctly, 94.05% of students can use intonation correctly, and 92.86% have good self-confidence. The steps for making this Tik

Tok video can be seen from the planning, implementation, and assessment of the results. In completing assignments, students perform individually and combine them in large groups, so that into one work that represents group products, collaboration between students in class can be seen clearly. With the creation of the Tik Tok video, there is an increase in competence in interpreting instructions through online learning.<sup>17</sup> Another study that shows the positive side of learning English, especially speaking skills is Zaitun, et al. which mentions the application with the use of appropriate methods and techniques can be used as an interactive learning medium that can improve students' speaking abilities. With the various features of the TikTok application, it can be implicated in learning English so that students can use the application in a positive direction. The TikTok application can also make it easier for teachers and students to get information and students also feel happy learning because they have new experiences in learning English in an unconventional way. It is evident from the results of this study that the use of the TikTok application in learning English is very interactive and effective to improve students' confidence skills in speaking in English with the results of students' scores showing a very drastic increase.<sup>18</sup>

Another research conducted by Karthigesu, et al. also mentioned that Tiktok has the benefit of improving English writing skills. The researchers said TikTok ActiV is an excellent tool to encourage high involvement learning using multimedia and social networks. It encourages a student to use action verbs in a fun learning atmosphere and then recalling the information later by viewing the videos created. TikTok ActiV provide students with a portable learning tool rather than having to carry around a mundane textbook. The best part of this tool is, it is highly MOTIVATING! On the other hand, TikTok ActiV allows students to share TikTok videos among their peers to enhance their understanding on more action verbs and ways to apply them in sentence writing. Moreover, it gives way for self-checking and peer-checking which promotes students' confidence when learning new information.<sup>19</sup> Another research that shows the positive side of TikTok is the one carried out by Marini, where she said the results of this study indicate that there is a very significant positive effect between Tik Tok Social Media on Learning Achievement. This is in accordance with the calculation of the researcher using the Microsoft Excel 2010 program, which uses the correlation-test, the value of  $t(\text{count}) > t(\text{table})$  is obtained, namely  $14.21978769 > 2.002272456$ . So, there is a significant positive correlation between Tik Tok Social Media and Learning Achievement at SMPN 1 Gunung Sugih.<sup>20</sup>

Research on Tiktok in relation to hyperreality was carried out by Wijaya and Mashud who stated that the results showed that the hyperreality of students showed that students were chasing instant popularity like famous artists, that students wanted to become artists like those idolized in this pseudo-reality. Students exaggerate the reality that exists in Tik Tok social media to show that they can become like the famous artists in Tik Tok.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Sri Moerni, "Penugasan Pembuatan Tik Tok untuk Mencapai Kompetensi Menafsirkan Instruksi dalam Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh" *Ideguru: Jurnal Karya Ilmiah Guru*. Vol. 6, No.1, Januari 2021

<sup>18</sup> Zaitun, Muhammad Sofian Hadi, Emma Dwi Indriani, "TikTok as a Media to Enhancing the Speaking Skills of EFL Student's" *Jurnal Studi Guru dan Pembelajaran*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Januari - April 2021

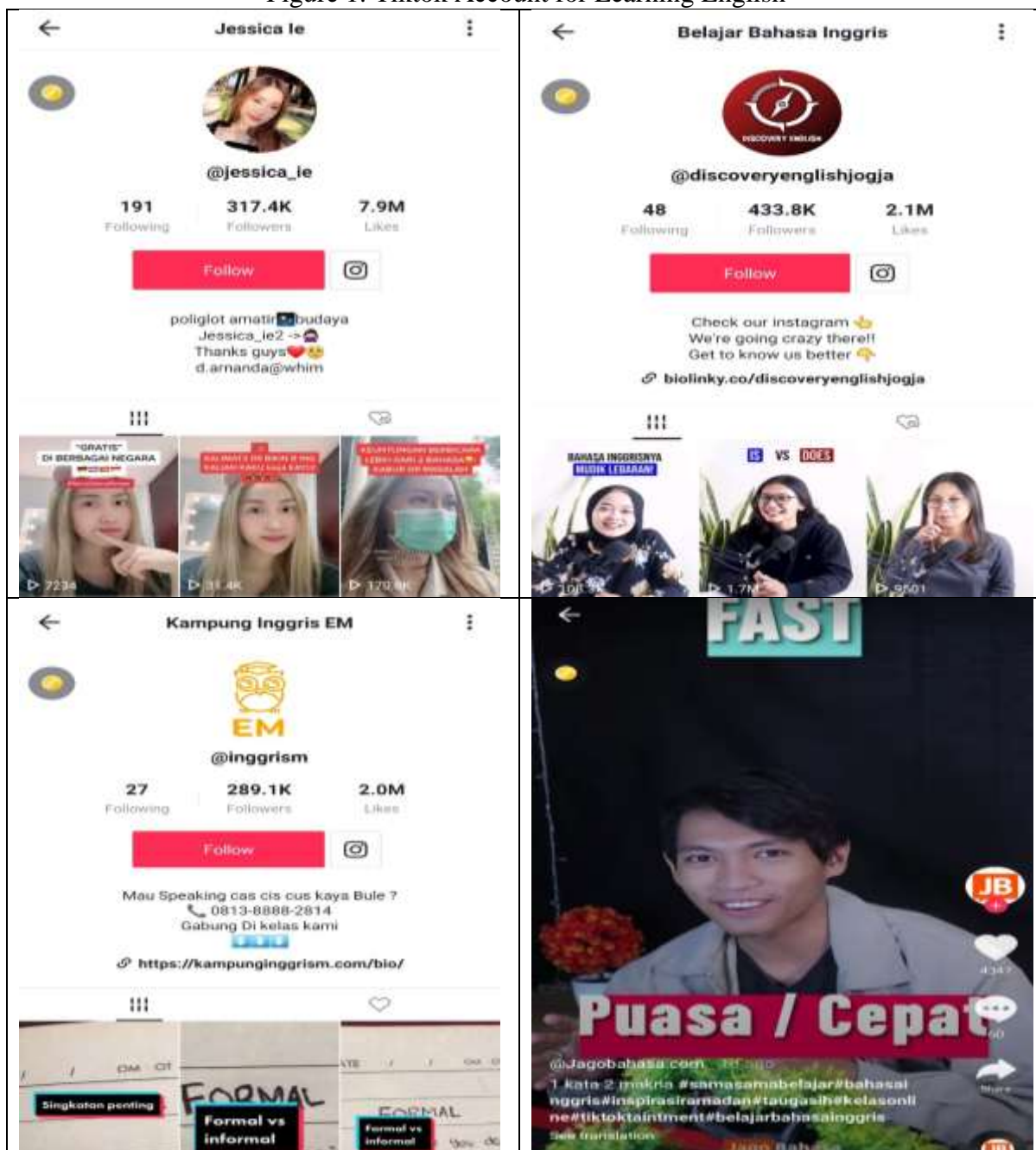
<sup>19</sup> Kamini Karthigesu, Noor Syazana Binti Che Ismail, Wan Izzati Binti W. Ahmad & Melor Md Yunus, "TikTok ActiV as a Tool in Enhancing ESL Writing Skill" *Innovation for Sustainable Growth International Invention & Innovative Competition (InIIC)*

<sup>20</sup> Riska Marini, "Pengaruh Media Sosial Tik Tok Terhadap Prestasi Belajar Peserta Didik Di Smpn 1 Gunung Sugih Kab. Lampung Tengah" *Skripsi, Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung*, 2019

<sup>21</sup> Mukhammad Handy Dwi Wijaya dan Musta'in Mashud, "KONSUMSI MEDIA SOSIAL BAGI KALANGAN PELAJAR (STUDI PADA HYPERREALITAS TIK TOK)" *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama Sosiasal dan Budaya* Vol. 3 No 2 2020. Hal. 170-191 ISSN: 2599-2473 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31538/almada.v3i2.734>

Based on observations made by researchers, the variety of foreign language learning, especially English in Tiktok, varies greatly, from improving vocabulary, expressions, even grammar, presentation practice, telephone calls, interviews, and so on. These content creators do not only come from within Indonesia, but also from various countries. In addition, increasing English language skills, not only comes from accounts that formally specialize in the learning process, but there are also English accounts that can be followed which indirectly When we listen to or watch English content, what is conveyed in it will be internalized in us, starting from English vocabulary and expressions. Here are some examples of accounts that serve them:

Figure 1: Tiktok Account for Learning English



Conclusion



From the previous explanation, it can be concluded that Tiktok is able to become the media in learning languages, both Bahasa as a mother language and English as a foreign language, especially in the online learning. Unfortunately, at the same time, the parents and teachers should aware about the negative effects of Tiktok. This research is limited with the secondary data. Then, the future researchers are able to gather more secondary data from various countries to enrich the description. Besides, the primary data might be added in the following researches.

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