

Uso educativo de TikTok en el aprendizaje del inglés: innovación pedagógica, motivación estudiantil y competencias comunicativas

Educational use of TikTok in english language learning: pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and communicative competence

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RESUMEN

Introducción: La incorporación de plataformas digitales en la educación ha generado nuevas oportunidades para innovar en la enseñanza del idioma inglés. TikTok se presenta como una herramienta audiovisual que puede favorecer la motivación estudiantil, la participación y el desarrollo de competencias comunicativas. El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar el impacto educativo de TikTok en el aprendizaje del inglés, considerando la innovación pedagógica, la motivación y las habilidades lingüísticas.

Metodología: Se realizó una revisión sistemática de la literatura con enfoque cualitativo, alcance descriptivo-analítico y diseño documental no experimental, siguiendo las directrices PRISMA 2020.

Resultados: La literatura examinada identifica aplicaciones educativas de TikTok relacionadas con videos cortos, actividades interactivas y creación de contenido audiovisual. Los estudios reportan oportunidades para fortalecer la motivación, la participación, el vocabulario, la pronunciación y la expresión oral. Sin embargo, presentan diferencias metodológicas y limitaciones vinculadas con distracciones, accesibilidad tecnológica y calidad de los contenidos.

Conclusiones: TikTok constituye un recurso didáctico complementario con potencial para enriquecer el aprendizaje del inglés. Su efectividad depende de la planificación docente, la pertinencia pedagógica y la evaluación de los resultados. Se requieren investigaciones adicionales para establecer efectos consistentes sobre el dominio del idioma.

Palabras clave: TikTok; aprendizaje del inglés; motivación estudiantil; innovación educativa; competencias comunicativas.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The integration of digital platforms into education has created new opportunities for innovation in English language teaching. TikTok has emerged as an audiovisual tool with the potential to enhance student motivation, participation, and communicative competence development. This study aims to analyze the educational impact of TikTok on English language learning, focusing on pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and linguistic skills.

Methodology: A qualitative systematic literature review with a descriptive-analytical scope and a non-experimental documentary design was conducted following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines.

Results: The examined literature identifies educational applications involving short videos, interactive activities, and audiovisual content creation. The studies report opportunities to strengthen student motivation, engagement, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and speaking skills. However, methodological differences and limitations related to distractions, technological accessibility, and content quality are also identified.

Conclusions: TikTok represents a complementary educational resource with the potential to enrich English language learning. Its effectiveness depends on instructional planning, pedagogical relevance, and appropriate learning assessment. Further research is required to establish consistent effects on English language proficiency.

Keywords: TikTok; English language learning; student motivation; educational innovation; communicative competence.



1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technologies has transformed educational practices, creating opportunities to integrate interactive resources into teaching and learning. Social media platforms have evolved beyond entertainment to become complementary educational tools that support knowledge acquisition, student engagement, and collaborative learning. Among these platforms, TikTok has gained attention for its short-form audiovisual content, accessibility, and interactive features. Its educational potential is particularly relevant to English language teaching, where audiovisual exposure, pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative practice are essential. Yang et al. (2026) emphasize that TikTok-based activities can promote student participation across academic disciplines, although their effectiveness depends on appropriate instructional design. Similarly, Caldeiro-Pedreira and Yot-Domínguez (2023) highlight its potential to encourage motivation, digital competence, and active learning. Tan et al. (2022) also examine TikTok's interactive features in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, suggesting that short videos and creative activities may support meaningful language learning.

Previous investigations have examined the relationship between TikTok and English language learning. Hu and Du (2022) explored its application in mobile-assisted learning, highlighting opportunities for informal language practice and access to educational content. Gao et al. (2023) investigated its contribution to learning motivation and oral proficiency through audiovisual activities and interactive participation. Tran (2023) examined English vocabulary learning among Vietnamese university students in an empirical study involving 122 participants, considering attitudes toward the platform and its potential contribution to vocabulary development. These investigations suggest that TikTok can provide contextualized language exposure, pronunciation practice, and vocabulary reinforcement. However, its effectiveness depends on instructional guidance, content quality, and meaningful student participation.

Further research has explored TikTok within structured strategies for strengthening communicative skills and motivation. Setiowati et al. (2024) conducted a quasi-experimental study incorporating TikTok videos into project-based learning activities, reporting statistically significant differences in speaking skills and motivation between experimental



and control groups. Similarly, Qodarsih et al. (2023) identified improvements in students' motivation to practice speaking English following a TikTok-based intervention. Putri et al. (2024), through a systematic literature review, emphasized the platform's benefits as a complementary resource for English language teaching. Collectively, these findings suggest that short-form audiovisual activities may encourage participation, confidence, and oral communication, although differences in research designs and assessment instruments limit direct comparisons.

Recent studies have also examined TikTok's pedagogical applications and limitations across educational contexts. Jantan Anua Jah et al. (2024) identified opportunities to support English language development through creative instructional strategies. Ahen et al. (2025) reviewed its use in Indonesian formal education, reporting benefits related to speaking skills, vocabulary, motivation, and engagement, alongside challenges involving distractions, technical difficulties, and unequal internet access. From a South American perspective, Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026) emphasized the need to critically assess educational outcomes and methodological limitations. Vargas-Saritama and Espinoza-Celi (2026) further examined its integration into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, highlighting creativity, digital literacy, linguistic accuracy, and accessibility. These studies demonstrate the importance of considering both educational opportunities and implementation challenges.

The relevance of this research lies in identifying innovative teaching strategies that respond to students' learning preferences while strengthening English language proficiency. Traditional approaches may provide limited opportunities for authentic language exposure and sustained oral practice, particularly where English is rarely used outside the classroom. TikTok offers possibilities for connecting academic content with everyday communication through dialogues, pronunciation exercises, vocabulary explanations, and student-generated videos. Yélamos-Guerra et al. (2022) examined its motivational potential in higher education. Likewise, Do and Huynh (2026) investigated Vietnamese university students' perceptions, reporting favorable views regarding speaking, listening, motivation, and confidence. Nevertheless, positive perceptions should not be considered definitive evidence of improved language proficiency. Therefore, a critical synthesis of the literature is necessary to identify consistent findings, limitations, and pedagogical conditions associated with meaningful learning.



Based on these considerations, the general objective of this study was to analyze the educational applications of TikTok in English language learning, focusing on pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and communicative competence development through a critical review of scientific literature.

The independent variable is the educational use of TikTok, understood as the incorporation of short audiovisual content, interactive activities, and student-generated videos into teaching and learning. The dependent variable is English language learning, examined through vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, oral expression, and communicative competence. Student motivation is considered an analytical dimension involving interest, engagement, confidence, and participation, while pedagogical innovation refers to strategies for integrating digital resources into English language education. These relationships were examined through previously published evidence rather than direct experimental manipulation.

2. METHODOLOGY

Study Approach

The present study adopts a qualitative research approach with a descriptive-analytical scope, based on a systematic literature review of scientific publications addressing the educational use of TikTok in English language learning. This approach facilitates the identification, interpretation, and comparison of findings related to pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and the development of communicative competencies. The research follows a non-experimental documentary design, since it examines previously published studies rather than directly manipulating variables or collecting primary data from students. The analysis focuses on the relationship between TikTok-based educational activities and English language learning outcomes, particularly vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking skills, and communicative confidence.

Research Method

The methodological framework is based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines developed by Page et al. (2021). This framework provides recommendations for transparently documenting the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of scientific publications. The review



combines PRISMA-guided study selection with qualitative thematic analysis, allowing the organization and interpretation of findings reported in different educational contexts. The selected literature is examined according to methodological relevance, research objectives, educational applications, and reported outcomes. Considering the diversity of research designs and evaluation instruments, the study adopts a narrative and thematic synthesis rather than a quantitative meta-analysis.

Phases of the Study

The methodological process is organized into four complementary phases: literature search, evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. These phases establish a structured procedure for examining scientific evidence related to TikTok and English language education.

Phase 1. Literature Search

The literature search strategy was designed to identify scientific publications examining the educational use of TikTok in English language learning, with particular emphasis on student motivation, speaking skills, vocabulary acquisition, and communicative competence. The information sources included Scopus, Dialnet, Google Scholar, and supplementary academic references.

The final bibliographic search was conducted on June 24, 2026, covering publications available from January 1, 2020, to June 24, 2026. The eligibility criteria prioritized peer-reviewed scientific publications written in English or Spanish, full-text availability, methodological relevance, and alignment with the research objectives.

The search strategy combined the terms "TikTok", "English language learning", "English teaching", "EFL", "ESL", "motivation", "speaking", and "vocabulary" using the Boolean operators AND and OR. Search expressions were adapted to the characteristics and search functions of each academic database.

The identification process reported 70 bibliographic records: 28 from Scopus, 14 from Dialnet, 18 from Google Scholar, and 10 from supplementary academic sources. The database-specific search equations and record counts are presented in Table 1, while the supplementary bibliographic references are detailed in Supplementary Table S1. Following the screening and eligibility assessment process described in Section 2.4, 15 studies published between 2022 and 2026 were included in the qualitative synthesis.



Phase 2. Evaluation of Scientific Publications

The study selection and evaluation process was conducted by two researchers. Both researchers participated in the examination of titles, abstracts, and full-text publications according to the previously established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Duplicate records were identified and removed before the screening stage. Potentially relevant studies were subsequently evaluated according to their relationship with TikTok, English language learning, student motivation, and communicative competence.

Disagreements arising during the selection and evaluation process were resolved through discussion and consensus between the two researchers. The final inclusion decision was based on compliance with the established eligibility criteria and the relevance of each publication to the research objectives.

The methodological quality of the selected studies was assessed qualitatively using predefined criteria, including clarity of research objectives, appropriateness of methodological design, description of the study population or context, transparency of data collection and analysis procedures, consistency between results and conclusions, and acknowledgment of methodological limitations.

Table 1.
Bibliographic Search Strategy and Identification Counts

Database	Search equation	Reported records
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY("TikTok" AND ("English language learning" OR "English teaching" OR "EFL" OR "ESL") AND (motivation OR speaking OR vocabulary))	28
Dialnet	TikTok AND ("aprendizaje del inglés" OR "enseñanza del inglés" OR motivación OR vocabulario)	14
Google Scholar	TikTok "English language learning" motivation OR speaking OR vocabulary	18



Database	Search equation	Reported records
Supplementary sources	Reference-list screening (n = 6) and other academic sources (n = 4). The identification and origin of the 10 supplementary records are presented in Supplementary Table S1.	10
Total reported		70

Note. The search equations and identified records are summarized by information source: Scopus (n = 28), Dialnet (n = 14), Google Scholar (n = 18), and supplementary academic references (n = 10), for a total of 70 records. The eligibility period extended from January 1, 2020, to the final search date, June 24, 2026. Publications in English or Spanish available by that date were considered.

The 15 publications considered for qualitative synthesis were published between 2022 and 2026.

Phase 3. Analysis of Selected Studies

The analysis phase focused on extracting and organizing relevant information from the 15 studies included in the qualitative synthesis. A documentary analysis matrix was used to classify publications according to author, year, geographical context, research objective, methodological design, study population, educational strategies, principal findings, and limitations. The information is grouped into thematic categories corresponding to the research objectives: educational applications of TikTok, student motivation and engagement, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, listening comprehension, speaking skills, and communicative competence. The comparative examination of the studies facilitates the identification of convergences, differences, and methodological limitations that may influence the interpretation of reported learning outcomes.

Phase 4. Synthesis and Interpretation

The synthesis phase integrated the evidence through a qualitative thematic approach, emphasizing relationships among TikTok-based pedagogical strategies, student motivation, and English language learning. The findings were examined comparatively to identify educational benefits, implementation challenges, and areas requiring further investigation. Special consideration was given to distinguishing empirically measured



improvements in language proficiency from perceived benefits reported by students and teachers. The synthesis also examined factors such as instructional planning, teacher guidance, technological accessibility, and the quality of audiovisual content. This procedure provides the basis for discussing TikTok's potential as a complementary teaching resource while acknowledging the methodological limitations of the reviewed literature.

Study Selection Process (PRISMA)

Identification, Screening, and Eligibility

Following PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021), the identification stage yielded 70 bibliographic records. After removing 15 duplicates, 55 records were screened by title and abstract. Twenty-five were excluded at this stage: 12 because they were unrelated to the review topic, eight because they did not address English language learning, and five classified as other reasons.

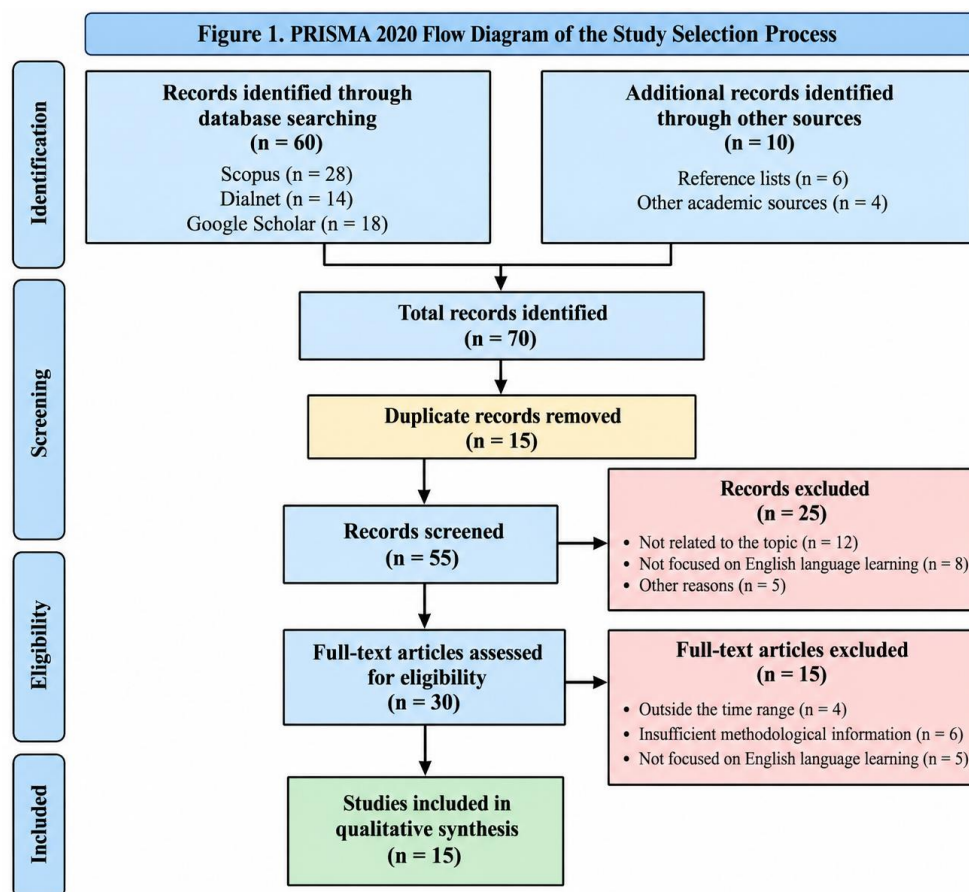
The five records included in the residual screening category were not assigned individual exclusion subcategories in the available search accounting. They are therefore presented as a single category in the selection flow rather than being redistributed among unsubstantiated reasons.

Thirty reports were assessed in full text, of which 15 were excluded: four were outside the publication period, six provided insufficient methodological information, and five did not address English language learning. The remaining 15 studies were included in the qualitative synthesis (Figure 1).

Figure 1.

PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of the Study Selection Process.





Information Sources and Study Sample

The information sources were Scopus, Dialnet, Google Scholar, and supplementary academic references. The identification stage yielded 70 records and the selection process retained 15 publications for qualitative synthesis, considering publication period, educational relevance, methodological clarity, and outcomes related to English language learning.

Inclusion criteria

Scientific articles published between January 2020 and June 24, 2026; studies addressing educational applications of TikTok; research directly related to English language learning or its pedagogical context; peer-reviewed scientific publications with accessible full texts; publications written in English or Spanish; studies examining motivation, language



development, or pedagogical innovation; and empirical and review studies with identifiable research methods.

Exclusion criteria

Publications outside the established period; publications unrelated to TikTok's educational use; studies focused exclusively on entertainment, marketing, or unrelated subjects; theses, dissertations, blogs, opinion articles, and documents lacking sufficient scientific information; publications in other languages without an accessible translation; studies without findings relevant to the research objectives; and duplicate records and publications with insufficient methodological descriptions.

Methodological Quality Assessment

The methodological quality of the selected publications was evaluated through a qualitative assessment based on predefined methodological criteria. The evaluation considered six dimensions: (1) clarity of research objectives, (2) appropriateness of the methodological design, (3) description of the study population or educational context, (4) transparency of data collection and analysis procedures, (5) consistency between reported results and conclusions, and (6) acknowledgment of methodological limitations.

Each publication was examined according to these dimensions, taking into account differences between experimental, observational, qualitative, and literature review studies. The assessment was used to support the critical interpretation of the evidence and identify limitations affecting the reliability and applicability of the reported findings.

No standardized numerical quality score was calculated, and the evaluation was not intended to establish a quantitative ranking of the studies.

The included studies presented different methodological strengths and limitations. Tan et al. (2022) employed a scoping review that provided a structured overview of pedagogical applications, although its conclusions were based on previously published evidence. Hu and Du (2022) provided exploratory evidence concerning mobile-assisted language learning, with limited support for causal interpretations. Yélamos-Guerra et al. (2022) examined student motivation, although motivational outcomes should not be equated with objectively measured language proficiency.

Gao et al. (2023) and Setiowati et al. (2024) employed quasi-experimental approaches that strengthened the examination of learning outcomes, although their findings remain



dependent on the characteristics of the interventions and educational contexts. Tran (2023) investigated vocabulary learning using several data collection procedures, but the quantitative improvement estimates were not sufficiently documented in the present synthesis. Qodarsih et al. (2023) provided measurable motivational outcomes through a pre-experimental design, although the absence of a control group limits causal interpretation. Caldeiro-Pedreira and Yot-Domínguez (2023), Putri et al. (2024), and Jantan Anua Jah et al. (2024) synthesized existing research, contributing broader perspectives on pedagogical applications while remaining dependent on the methodological quality of the original studies. Ahen et al. (2025) and Yang et al. (2026) similarly provided secondary evidence concerning educational benefits and implementation challenges, with potential overlap among the underlying investigations.

Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026) contributed a regional synthesis of educational applications in South America, although the diversity of the reviewed educational contexts limits generalization. Vargas-Saritama and Espinoza-Celi (2026) employed a quasi-experimental approach involving 42 pre-service EFL teachers and multiple data collection instruments; however, the interpretation of the results must consider the specific participant population and the distinction between perceived benefits and objectively measured language development. Do and Huynh (2026) examined university students' perceptions, providing contextual information on motivation and confidence without establishing definitive causal effects on language proficiency.

Overall, the qualitative assessment indicates that the reviewed literature offers relevant contributions to understanding TikTok-based English language learning, but the strength of the evidence varies across methodological designs. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies provide more direct evidence concerning learning outcomes, whereas exploratory investigations, perception-based studies, and literature reviews contribute complementary insights. These methodological differences were considered when interpreting the findings and formulating the conclusions of the present review.

General Research Procedure

The general research procedure was guided by the following research question: How does the educational use of TikTok contribute to student motivation, pedagogical innovation, and the development of communicative competencies in English language learning?



Based on this question, the search strategy, analytical categories, and inclusion and exclusion criteria are established.

Finally, the evidence obtained from the selected publications was synthesized through a qualitative comparative approach. The interpretation distinguished objectively measured language learning outcomes from students' perceptions and reported motivational benefits. This procedure supported the formulation of the study's results, discussion, and conclusions.

Table 2.

Criteria for Qualitative Methodological Quality Assessment

Criterion	Aspect evaluated
Research objectives	Clarity and relevance of the study objectives
Methodological design	Appropriateness of the research approach and design
Population and context	Description of participants or educational setting
Data collection and analysis	Transparency and adequacy of procedures
Results and conclusions	Consistency between findings and interpretations
Methodological limitations	Identification of limitations and potential biases

Note. The criteria provide a qualitative framework for examining methodological quality across the selected publications. No standardized numerical scoring system was applied. Own elaboration.

3. RESULTS

The present study presents a qualitative synthesis of 15 scientific publications published between 2022 and 2026, addressing the educational use of TikTok in English language learning. The analysis focuses on three main dimensions: pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and the development of communicative competencies. The publications were organized into thematic categories according to their research objectives, methodological approaches, educational contexts, and reported findings. The selection framework described in the methodology identifies 70 initial records, followed by the removal of 15 duplicates, the screening of 55 records, and the assessment of 30 full-text reports, leading to 15 publications included in the qualitative synthesis.

The thematic synthesis examines similarities, differences, and methodological limitations across the 15 publications included in the qualitative synthesis.



Pedagogical Innovation and Educational Applications of TikTok

The reviewed publications identified several pedagogical applications of TikTok in English language education. Tan et al. (2022) examined interactive features as resources for English as a Second Language instruction, while Hu and Du (2022) explored the platform within mobile-assisted language learning. These investigations described opportunities for integrating short audiovisual materials, contextualized language exposure, and interactive activities into educational practices.

Caldeiro-Pedreira and Yot-Domínguez (2023) addressed the broader didactic possibilities of TikTok, whereas Yang et al. (2026) examined its integration into higher education. The principal pedagogical applications identified across these publications included vocabulary explanations, pronunciation demonstrations, short dialogues, audiovisual storytelling, collaborative projects, and student-generated videos.

A more specific instructional application was reported by Setiowati et al. (2024), who integrated TikTok videos into project-based learning activities. Their quasi-experimental investigation identified statistically significant differences in speaking performance and student motivation between the experimental and control groups. These findings suggest that educational innovation should be examined not merely through the use of digital technology, but through the instructional strategies and learning activities developed around it.

Student Motivation and Engagement

Student motivation was examined through experimental interventions, motivational questionnaires, and research addressing engagement with digital learning environments. Qodarsih et al. (2023) conducted a pre-experimental investigation involving 32 secondary school students to evaluate the effectiveness of TikTok in supporting motivation to practice speaking English. The mean motivation score increased from 79.43 in the pre-test to 84.53 in the post-test, representing an increase of 5.10 points. The study reported a t-value of 5.86 and an effect size of 0.99, indicating a substantial improvement in the measured motivational outcome.

Setiowati et al. (2024) investigated the integration of TikTok videos into project-based learning, using statistical procedures to compare experimental and control groups. The authors reported significant differences in student motivation and speaking skills, with a reported significance value of 0.001. This finding supports the potential



motivational contribution of structured TikTok-based activities within English language instruction.

Similarly, Gao et al. (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental investigation involving 60 learners, divided equally into experimental and control groups. Following a 12-week intervention, the study reported significantly greater improvements in learning motivation and oral proficiency among participants receiving TikTok-supported instruction than among those receiving conventional instruction.

Yélamos-Guerra et al. (2022) addressed TikTok as a motivational educational resource in higher education. Together, these investigations indicate that motivation can be supported through interactive audiovisual activities, although the strength of the evidence varies according to research design, participant characteristics, and measurement instruments. Importantly, improvement in motivational scores should not be interpreted as equivalent to improvement in language proficiency.

Development of English Communicative Competencies

The reviewed publications addressed English communicative competence through vocabulary acquisition, speaking performance, pronunciation, listening comprehension, and communicative confidence. The strength of the evidence differed depending on whether studies assessed measurable learning outcomes or reported students' perceptions of improvement.

Tran (2023) investigated English vocabulary learning through an empirical study involving 122 participants. The research employed questionnaires, controlled experiments, pre-test and post-test assessments, and interviews to examine vocabulary learning and attitudes toward TikTok. The study contributed evidence concerning the educational application of short audiovisual content to vocabulary instruction, although the available summary does not provide sufficient numerical information to quantify vocabulary improvement.

Gao et al. (2023) evaluated oral proficiency using a quasi-experimental design involving 60 learners, with 30 participants in each group. The results indicated significantly greater improvement in oral proficiency among students receiving TikTok-supported instruction compared with those receiving conventional instruction.

Setiowati et al. (2024) also reported statistically significant differences in speaking skills between experimental and control groups when TikTok videos were incorporated



into project-based learning activities. These findings provide quantitative support for the potential contribution of structured audiovisual instruction to oral language development.

The systematic reviews by Putri et al. (2024), Jantan Anua Jah et al. (2024), and Ahen et al. (2025) identified vocabulary acquisition, speaking practice, and student participation as recurring areas of educational application. Do and Huynh (2026) additionally examined students' perceptions concerning English language skills, motivation, and confidence.

Overall, the evidence suggests that TikTok may support communicative development when incorporated into structured educational activities. Nevertheless, differences among experimental findings, literature reviews, and perception-based investigations prevent the establishment of a uniform quantitative estimate of its effectiveness.

Educational Challenges and Limitations

Despite the opportunities identified in the literature, several investigations report challenges associated with the educational integration of TikTok. Ahen et al. (2025) identified limitations involving distractions, content relevance, technological accessibility, and the quality of educational materials. Vargas-Saritama and Espinoza-Celi (2026) examined pedagogical benefits and challenges in English as a Foreign Language learning, emphasizing the importance of considering digital literacy, linguistic accuracy, and accessibility.

From a regional perspective, Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026) reviewed educational applications of TikTok in South America and highlighted methodological limitations affecting the interpretation and generalization of research findings. Similarly, Yang et al. (2026) emphasized that implementation conditions may influence learning outcomes across educational settings.

These findings suggest that TikTok should be understood as a complementary instructional resource rather than a replacement for systematic language instruction. Effective implementation requires clear educational objectives, appropriate content selection, teacher supervision, and opportunities for meaningful communicative practice.

Comparative Analysis of the Reviewed Studies



Table 3.

Comparative Matrix of Pedagogical Applications and Methodological Designs of the Reviewed Studies

Author(s) and year	Educational application / Research focus	Learning dimension / Context	Methodological design
Tan et al. (2022)	Interactive TikTok features for language instruction	ESL classrooms and digital pedagogy	Scoping review
Hu & Du (2022)	Mobile-assisted English language learning	Digital learning and English language skills	Primary empirical exploratory study
Yélamos-Guerra et al. (2022)	TikTok as a motivational educational resource	Student motivation in higher education	Primary empirical study focused on motivation
Gao et al. (2023)	Audiovisual activities supporting oral communication	Learning motivation and oral proficiency	Primary quasi-experimental study
Tran (2023)	Short-form audiovisual content for vocabulary learning	English vocabulary acquisition in university education	Primary empirical study
Qodarsih et al. (2023)	TikTok activities for speaking practice	Motivation to practice speaking English	Primary pre-experimental study
Caldeiro-Pedreira & Yot-Domínguez (2023)	Educational and didactic uses of TikTok	Pedagogical innovation and digital education	Systematic literature review
Putri et al. (2024)	Review of TikTok applications in English teaching	English language teaching and learning	Systematic literature review
Setiowati et al. (2024)	TikTok videos integrated into project-based learning	Speaking skills and student motivation	Primary quasi-experimental study
Jantan Anua Jah et al. (2024)	Review of TikTok as a pedagogical tool	English language learning	Systematic literature review



Author(s) and year	Educational application / Research focus	Learning dimension / Context	Methodological design
Ahen et al. (2025)	Review of TikTok in formal English education	Language skills, motivation, and implementation challenges	Systematic literature review
Yang et al. (2026)	Review of TikTok integration in higher education	Learning outcomes and implementation factors	Systematic literature review
Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026)	Review of educational TikTok applications in South America	Digital education and pedagogical practices	Systematic literature review
Vargas-Saritama & Espinoza-Celi (2026)	Pedagogical opportunities and challenges of TikTok	EFL learning and digital literacy	Quasi-experimental study with a mixed-methods approach
Do & Huynh (2026).	University students' perceptions of TikTok for learning English	English language skills, motivation, and confidence	Primary quantitative cross-sectional survey study (n = 105 university students)

Note. The comparative matrix presents the 15 publications examined in the review, distinguishing primary empirical investigations from secondary literature reviews according to their reported methodological characteristics. Primary studies provide original evidence derived from educational interventions, observations, questionnaires, or assessments, whereas systematic reviews synthesize previously published findings. Results from secondary reviews were not treated as independent empirical evidence to avoid potential double-counting of underlying investigations.

The reviewed publications were differentiated according to their methodological designs and sources of evidence. Primary empirical studies provided original findings derived from educational interventions, questionnaires, observations, or assessments of English language learning. Secondary studies, including systematic literature reviews, synthesized findings previously reported in other investigations. To avoid overestimating the available evidence, findings from secondary reviews were interpreted as contextual and complementary information rather than additional independent empirical results. Potential overlap among the



primary investigations cited by different reviews was recognized as a methodological limitation, and no pooled quantitative effect estimate was calculated.

Table 4.
Quantitative Indicators Reported in Selected Empirical Studies

Study	Sample	Main quantitative findings
Qodarsih et al. (2023)	32 students	Motivation scores: pre-test M = 79.43; post-test M = 84.53; t(31) = 5.86; effect size = 0.99; significance level (α) = 0.05. Quasi-experimental study involving 60 learners (30 per group). The TikTok group
Gao et al. (2023)	60 learners (30 experimental, 30 control)	showed significantly greater improvements in learning motivation and oral proficiency than the control group following a 12-week intervention. Speaking skills: experimental group pre-test M = 64.00; post-test M = 80.31; normalized gain = 0.453. Motivation: pre-test M = 3.988; post-test M = 4.106; normalized gain = 0.117. Mann–Whitney test for motivation: p = 0.001.
Setiowati et al. (2024)	64 students (32 experimental, 32 control)	



Study	Sample	Main quantitative findings
Tran (2023)	122 participants (total study sample)	The study included a total of 122 participants and employed questionnaires, experimental procedures, vocabulary pre-tests and post-tests, and interviews. The findings indicated improvements in English vocabulary learning and generally favorable perceptions of TikTok as a language-learning resource. The total sample size should not be interpreted as the experimental-group sample size.

Note. The table presents sample characteristics and quantitative findings extracted from the original empirical studies. M = mean; t = Student's t-test statistic; p = statistical significance value. The reported indicators correspond to different research designs, participant populations, and assessment instruments; therefore, direct quantitative comparisons between studies are not appropriate. Own elaboration based on Qodarsih et al. (2023), Gao et al. (2023), Setiowati et al. (2024), and Tran (2023).

Overall Synthesis of Findings

The qualitative synthesis of the 15 publications considered in this review identifies three principal areas of educational interest: pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and English communicative competence development. The examined literature describes opportunities for integrating short audiovisual content into English language instruction through vocabulary explanations, pronunciation practice, speaking activities, interactive communication, and student-generated videos.

Regarding student motivation, the reviewed publications suggest that TikTok-based educational activities may promote participation, interest, and confidence when incorporated into structured teaching strategies. In relation to communicative competencies, several studies examine vocabulary acquisition, oral expression, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. Nevertheless, positive perceptions and increased motivation should not be



interpreted as equivalent to objectively measured improvements in English language proficiency.

The methodological diversity of the examined publications, including empirical investigations, perception-based studies, and literature reviews, limits direct comparison of their findings. Consequently, the results support a cautious interpretation of TikTok as a complementary educational resource whose potential benefits depend on instructional planning, pedagogical relevance, content quality, technological accessibility, and appropriate evaluation procedures. Further empirical research is needed to establish the consistency, magnitude, and sustainability of its effects on English language learning.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings synthesized in this literature review highlight the educational potential of TikTok as a complementary digital resource for English language learning, particularly in relation to pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and the development of communicative competencies. The reviewed investigations identify opportunities for incorporating short audiovisual content, interactive activities, and student-generated videos into English language instruction. These observations are consistent with Tan et al. (2022), who examined the pedagogical potential of TikTok's interactive features in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, and Hu and Du (2022), who explored its application in mobile-assisted English language learning. Similarly, Caldeiro-Pedreira and Yot-Domínguez (2023) emphasized the educational possibilities of TikTok within innovative teaching environments. Nevertheless, while these investigations recognize the value of audiovisual resources, their contributions differ in terms of educational context, methodological design, and the learning outcomes examined. Therefore, the integration of TikTok should not be interpreted as an inherently effective teaching strategy but rather as a technological resource whose educational value depends on appropriate pedagogical planning.

Regarding student motivation, the literature identifies a relationship between TikTok-based educational activities and students' interest, participation, and willingness to engage in language learning. Yélamos-Guerra et al. (2022) examined the motivational potential of TikTok in higher education, while Qodarsih et al. (2023) focused specifically on students' motivation to practice speaking English. In a related investigation, Gao et al. (2023) explored



TikTok in connection with learning motivation and oral proficiency. These contributions coincide in recognizing the relevance of digital interaction and audiovisual content for promoting student engagement. However, Setiowati et al. (2024) provide a different type of evidence through a quasi-experimental design incorporating TikTok into project-based learning activities. Their findings indicate improvements in the evaluated dimensions under the conditions of the intervention. This methodological difference is relevant because studies examining students' perceptions and motivation cannot be interpreted as equivalent to investigations measuring changes in language performance. Consequently, increased motivation may represent a favorable condition for learning, but it does not independently demonstrate improvements in English proficiency.

An important methodological distinction concerns the nature of the evidence included in this review. Primary empirical investigations, such as Gao et al. (2023), Tran (2023), Qodarsih et al. (2023), and Setiowati et al. (2024), reported findings derived from original research procedures. In contrast, systematic reviews conducted by Caldeiro-Pedreira and Yot-Domínguez (2023), Putri et al. (2024), Jantan Anua Jah et al. (2024), Ahen et al. (2025), Yang et al. (2026), and Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026) synthesized previously published evidence. Consequently, the conclusions of these secondary reviews were not treated as independent confirmations of the findings obtained in primary investigations. This distinction reduces the risk of double-counting evidence and supports a more cautious interpretation of TikTok's educational effectiveness. The screening summary also groups five early exclusions under other reasons without record-level subcategories; this limits the detail with which those exclusions can be audited.

In particular, the evidence concerning oral communication should be distinguished from evidence addressing vocabulary acquisition or students' perceived progress, since these dimensions require different assessment procedures.

Another relevant aspect concerns the influence of educational context on the implementation of TikTok-based learning strategies. Yang et al. (2026) examined the integration of TikTok in higher education, considering disciplinary applications, learning outcomes, and implementation factors. Similarly, Rodas-Coloma et al. (2026) reviewed educational applications of TikTok in South America, emphasizing the importance of recognizing methodological limitations and contextual differences. Vargas-Saritama and



Espinoza-Celi (2026) addressed pedagogical opportunities and challenges related to incorporating TikTok into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. These contributions suggest that the educational effectiveness of digital platforms cannot be generalized without considering technological accessibility, institutional conditions, teacher preparation, and students' digital competencies. Furthermore, the findings discussed by Do and Huynh (2026) regarding university students' perceptions provide an additional perspective on the relationship between digital learning experiences, motivation, and confidence. However, favorable perceptions must be differentiated from objectively measured language learning outcomes.

From a critical perspective, the reviewed studies identify challenges that should be considered when incorporating TikTok into formal education. These include distractions associated with entertainment-oriented content, variability in the linguistic accuracy of audiovisual materials, unequal access to digital devices and internet connectivity, and the possibility of prioritizing engagement over meaningful learning. Ahen et al. (2025) and Vargas-Saritama and Espinoza-Celi (2026) highlight several of these implementation difficulties. Such limitations demonstrate the importance of teacher mediation, educational content verification, and clearly established instructional objectives. In addition, the inclusion of systematic reviews alongside primary empirical investigations requires careful interpretation because the same underlying studies may be represented in more than one review. Therefore, findings from secondary studies should be used to contextualize the evidence rather than counted as independent demonstrations of effectiveness.

The theoretical implications of this review are associated with understanding digital language learning as a process involving interaction, motivation, multimedia exposure, and active participation. TikTok may facilitate opportunities for students to encounter contextualized linguistic expressions and participate in creative communication activities. From a practical perspective, its integration could support teaching strategies involving short pronunciation exercises, vocabulary demonstrations, simulated conversations, collaborative video production, and formative feedback. However, these practices should complement rather than replace structured language instruction. The principal contribution of this review is the organization of available evidence around three interconnected analytical dimensions: pedagogical innovation, student motivation, and communicative competence



development. Although the literature suggests promising educational applications, the methodological diversity of the studies and the absence of a pooled quantitative effect estimate prevent the establishment of a definitive causal relationship between TikTok use and improved English language proficiency. Consequently, further research employing robust experimental designs, standardized language assessments, and longitudinal follow-up is necessary to determine the effectiveness and sustainability of TikTok-based educational interventions.

5. CONCLUSION

First, the reviewed literature indicates that TikTok offers potential opportunities for pedagogical innovation in English language education through short audiovisual content, interactive activities, and student-generated materials. These applications may complement conventional teaching strategies by facilitating contextualized language exposure, vocabulary explanations, pronunciation exercises, and oral communication activities. However, their educational usefulness depends on instructional planning, the relevance of the selected content, and alignment with established learning objectives.

Second, the studies examining student motivation suggest that TikTok-based educational activities may encourage interest, participation, engagement, and confidence in English language learning. Nevertheless, these findings must be interpreted according to the methodological characteristics of each investigation. Positive student perceptions and increased motivation represent relevant educational outcomes but do not independently demonstrate improvements in English language proficiency.

Third, some primary empirical investigations reported improvements in specific linguistic dimensions, particularly speaking performance and vocabulary learning, under the conditions examined in their respective educational interventions. However, the diversity of research designs, participant characteristics, assessment instruments, and instructional contexts limits the generalization of these findings. Consequently, the available evidence does not establish that TikTok consistently produces equivalent improvements across educational levels or language skills.

Fourth, the inclusion of primary empirical investigations alongside systematic literature reviews provides a broader understanding of TikTok's educational applications but requires



methodological caution. Findings summarized in secondary reviews should not be treated as additional independent empirical evidence, particularly when the underlying investigations may overlap. This distinction is essential to avoid overestimating the consistency or strength of the available scientific evidence.

Finally, TikTok may be considered a complementary educational resource for English language teaching when its use is supported by clear pedagogical objectives, appropriate teacher guidance, accessibility considerations, and systematic assessment of learning outcomes. Future research should prioritize rigorous experimental, quasi-experimental, and longitudinal studies using validated instruments to determine the magnitude, consistency, and sustainability of potential improvements in English language proficiency.

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CONFLICTO DE INTERESES

No existe.

FINANCIAMIENTO

No aplica.

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