

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

English listening proficiency has increasingly become a central component of communicative competence in academic and real-world contexts. As students encounter English through lectures, interactions, and various digital media, the ability to interpret spoken messages becomes essential. Listening is widely recognized as a foundational skill because it supports the development of speaking, reading, and writing. This view aligns with Gultom (2023), who emphasized that listening plays a crucial role in overall language acquisition and should not be overlooked in the learning process.

Despite its importance, listening remains one of the most challenging skills for Indonesian learners. Many students struggle to understand spoken English due to factors such as speech speed, unfamiliar vocabulary, and accent variation. These challenges are consistent with the observation of Warni (2021), who explained that learners often face difficulties when processing authentic spoken English because of linguistic and cognitive barriers. These problems also appear among students in English Education programs who are expected to develop stronger proficiency compared to general learners.

At the local level, students in the English Education Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University are active users of digital platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. They frequently access English content for entertainment, informal exposure, or personal learning. However, preliminary observations showed that around 75% of students still experience challenges in listening comprehension despite this high exposure. This situation suggests that frequent access to digital content does not automatically translate into improved listening outcomes, raising questions about how students perceive and utilize these platforms.

Considering these conditions, there is an important urgency to understand how students interpret the usefulness of digital platforms particularly TikTok in supporting their listening activities. Listening is not merely a passive process; it

requires attention, interpretation, and response. Purdi, as cited in Abdulnaeim (2021), described listening as an active cognitive activity involving attention, comprehension, interpretation, and memory. Similarly, Sadiku in Noor and Daulay (2023) noted that effective listening requires understanding context, tone, and nonverbal cues, suggesting that platforms rich in audiovisual content may offer meaningful learning opportunities. Because TikTok provides short, dynamic, and authentic English input, students' perceptions are crucial in determining whether the platform becomes a meaningful learning tool or stays merely as entertainment.

Previous studies have highlighted TikTok's potential and limitations in language learning contexts. Bolendea and Macora (2024) reported that students generally hold positive perceptions of TikTok, appreciating its accessibility and engaging format, although challenges such as rapid speech still appear. Novitasari and Addinna (2022) found that TikTok helps learners gain English exposure outside formal classes, making it suitable for informal learning environments. Meanwhile, Laili (2023) showed that TikTok increases students' motivation and provides valuable listening and speaking practice, though students may become distracted by non-educational content. Overall, existing research agrees that TikTok can support language learning, but its effectiveness depends on how students perceive and engage with it.

However, research that specifically examines students' perceptions of TikTok in relation to English listening activities especially in a localized university context is still limited. Most studies focus on general English learning, motivation, or speaking skills rather than listening activities. Therefore, this study offers novelty by investigating how students in the English Education Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University perceive TikTok as a platform related to their listening experiences. This research aims to provide a clearer understanding of how TikTok is used, perceived, and valued as an informal listening resource within their academic and digital environment.

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on the background explanation above, the researcher formulates the problem as follows: "What is the perception of students in the English Education

Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University towards TikTok as a platform related to English listening activities?"

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the problem statement above, the objective of this research is to find out and to describe the students' perception of TikTok as a platform related to English listening activities.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give benefits for:

1. For students, this research can help students realize the extent to which the use of TikTok can relate to their listening skills in English. By understanding this relationship, students can be wiser in utilizing TikTok as an alternative media to support their learning process, especially in improving comprehension through oral input.
2. For lecturers and teachers, the results of this research can provide lecturers with an overview of student perceptions of the relationship between TikTok use and their listening skills. This information can be taken into consideration in designing learning strategies that are more relevant to students' habits in the digital era.
3. For other researchers, this research can serve as a basis or inspiration for future research that wants to examine more deeply the influence or relationship of social media on other language skills, or with a quantitative approach in the context of digital learning.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This study limited its focus to the perceptions of students of the English Education Study Program at Cokroaminoto Palopo University regarding the relationship between TikTok use and English listening activities. This study only involved active students as participants and did not include lecturers or other parties. The variables studied included the frequency of TikTok use, the type of English content consumed, and students' perceptions of the relationship between TikTok use and their listening skills. The aspects of listening skills observed are limited to students' subjective perceptions of their understanding and experience

of listening through TikTok, without objectively measuring listening skills or testing learning outcomes. The method used is descriptive quantitative, with data collected through questionnaires. In addition, this study only discusses the TikTok platform as the social media used, so other social media are not included in the scope of the study.

1.6 Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstandings regarding this research, some terms are clarified as follows:

1. Students' Perception: Student perception is the process of assessing or responding subjectively to an object or phenomenon based on their experience, knowledge, and understanding. Student perceptions refer to students' views or attitudes towards the relationship between the use of TikTok and their ability to understand spoken English. This perception is measured through a questionnaire containing statements regarding their views on whether TikTok affects or relates to their listening skills.
2. TikTok: TikTok is a short video-based social media platform that allows users to create, watch, and share short-form videos with a variety of content categories, including entertainment, education, and language. TikTok in this study refers to a social media application used by university students to watch English content, either consciously for learning purposes or indirectly. The focus of the research lies on the frequency of TikTok usage, as well as the type of English content consumed by university students.
3. Listening: Listening is the ability to understand oral messages conveyed in the target language, including understanding of vocabulary, sentence structure, intonation, accent, and contextual meaning. Listening skill refers to students' subjective perceptions of their ability to understand spoken English when consuming TikTok content. The aspects observed include the understanding of words, the ability to capture the meaning of different accents, and the ability to understand the content of the videos they listen to.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Some Pertinent Ideas

1. Perception

a. Definition of Perception

Perception is the process of individuals understanding and judging something based on what they see, hear, or feel, and then relating it to their experiences and knowledge. Everyone can have different perceptions, because the way they capture and interpret the things around them is influenced by what they have experienced and felt before. According to Zhafira et al. in Liputo (2024), perception is defined as a cognitive operation to understand stimuli received through sensory channels, the same as Effendy and Sunarsi (2020) also mention that perception is a thinking (cognitive) process experienced by each individual in examining information related to the surrounding environment through hearing, smell, touch, and vision. As stated by Omotayo and Haliru (2020), perception is also defined as the ability to see, understand, and then interpret a stimulus so that it becomes something meaningful and produces an interpretation.

In addition, according to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989) and reviewed by Taherdoost (2018), perception is closely related to how individuals evaluate the usefulness (perceived usefulness) and ease of use (perceived ease of use) of a particular technology. This model explains that individuals tend to develop positive or negative perceptions based on how beneficial and convenient they find a technological tool. In the context of this research, students' perception of TikTok as a learning platform can be understood through these dimensions how they perceive its usefulness for learning English and how easy the platform is to use in supporting their listening activities.

Based on the explanations above, perception can be understood as a complex cognitive process that involves how individuals receive, interpret, and evaluate stimuli based on their experiences and beliefs. From a classical perspective, perception not only involves sensory interpretation but also includes the evaluation of usefulness and convenience, as described in the Technology

Acceptance Model. Therefore, in this research, students' perceptions are viewed as their personal judgments and evaluations of TikTok as a learning platform that combines both technological usability and learning benefits.

b. Types of Perception

Perception can be classified into several categories depending on how individuals interpret and respond to a particular object or experience. According to Walgito (2010) perception is the result of an individual's process of interpreting stimuli, and the resulting response may be positive, neutral, or negative depending on their evaluation of the object. A positive perception occurs when individuals view an object as beneficial, enjoyable, or supportive of their needs and goals. In the educational context, a positive perception toward a learning platform such as TikTok means that students find it effective, engaging, and helpful for their English listening exposure. A neutral perception appears when individuals neither fully accept nor reject the object but maintain a balanced or indifferent stance. Rahman and Arifin (2022) explain that neutral perception arises when users recognize both the advantages and disadvantages of a medium but do not show strong agreement or disagreement toward its usefulness. For instance, some students may see TikTok as interesting but not necessarily effective for structured language learning. Meanwhile, a negative perception occurs when individuals consider the object unhelpful, distracting, or irrelevant to their goals. Warni (2022) notes that negative perceptions in digital learning often stem from a lack of understanding, limited exposure, or experiences that do not meet expectations. In this case, students who perceive TikTok merely as an entertainment platform may find it difficult to view it as a legitimate learning medium.

According to the experts above, perception can thus be seen as a continuum ranging from positive to negative, with neutrality in between. Each level represents a different degree of acceptance and satisfaction. Therefore, in this study, students' perceptions of TikTok as a platform for English listening are categorized into positive, neutral, and negative, based on how they interpret their experiences of using the platform for learning purposes.

c. Factor Affecting Perception

Based on a book written by Toha entitled "Educational Psychology with a Multidisciplinary Perspective" in Rosyid (2023) that there are two factors that influence perception, namely:

1) Internal Factors

Internal factors include focus, physical condition, motivation, attitude, character of each individual, prejudice, values, interests, feelings, and hopes and desires.

2) External Factors

External factors include information obtained, family background, surrounding needs and knowledge, new things obtained, and unfamiliarity with a material.

In the context of education, these factors manifest in students' experiences, motivation, and exposure to technology. For example, internal factors such as interest in digital media and learning goals may influence how students perceive TikTok as useful or distracting. Meanwhile, external factors such as social influence, teaching environment, and availability of online resources can also shape students' attitudes toward using social media for academic purposes.

2. TikTok

a. Definition of TikTok

TikTok is a very popular app right now in Indonesia. Based on data from Alamsyah et al. (2025), TikTok has grown into a very popular app, especially among teenagers and young adults. About 69% of TikTok users are aged 16 to 24, suggesting that the platform has significant appeal among the younger generation. Mahardika et al (2021) stated that TikTok users in Indonesia are in fourth place in the world ranking, where TikTok users in Indonesia are dominated by Generation Y and also Generation Z. Tapyor and Anwar (2025) explain that TikTok is a social media platform launched by a company from China, namely ByteDance. This TikTok application allows users to create 15-60 second videos accompanied by a wide selection of features such as music, channel stickers, and several other features so that users can edit the videos they upload as creatively as possible.

Based on the explanations of several experts above, it can be concluded that TikTok is a rapidly growing social media platform that has gained massive popularity among younger generations, particularly Generation Y and Generation Z. The platform's success lies in its simple yet engaging video-sharing format, which allows users to create and consume short, creative, and easily accessible content. Supported by various editing features such as music, filters, and stickers, TikTok encourages self-expression and interactive participation among its users. Therefore, TikTok is not only considered a source of entertainment but also a dynamic digital space that reflects modern communication trends and has the potential to be utilized in educational contexts, including language learning.

b. Various Kinds of Content on TikTok

1) Daily Conversation Content

Daily conversation content is a content of light conversation between two or more people. It is a short dialog that is often used in real-life situations such as at school, at home, at a restaurant, or when making acquaintances. This content is very useful because it trains students to recognize common vocabulary and expressions that are often used in everyday life.



Picture 1. TikTok Content: Daily Vlog

2) Educational English Content

Educational content is a learning context where the creator usually provides tips on how to learn grammar, pronunciation, idioms, and phrases. This kind of

content helps students practice listening skills while understanding sentence structure and correct vocabulary usage.



Picture 2. TikTok Content: Learning English

3) Storytelling Content

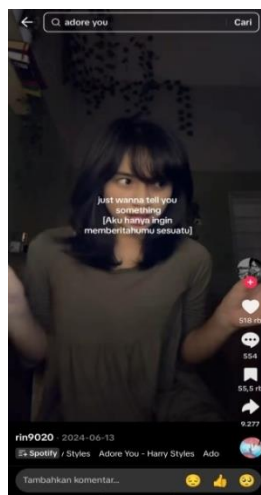
On TikTok, there is a lot of short story content that is usually created by the creator to share personal experiences, inspirational stories, historical stories, and even short fairy tales. Content like this is very useful for building the ability to understand storylines and context.



Picture 3. TikTok Content: Story about life

4) English Song Content

Many TikTok videos feature English songs, and there are usually song lyrics within a video. This kind of content allows students to practice their hearing through music. Songs accompanied by lyrical text help students recognize words, intonation, and pronunciation in a fun and memorable way.



Picture 4. TikTok Content: A girl sing a song

5) Reaction and QnA Content

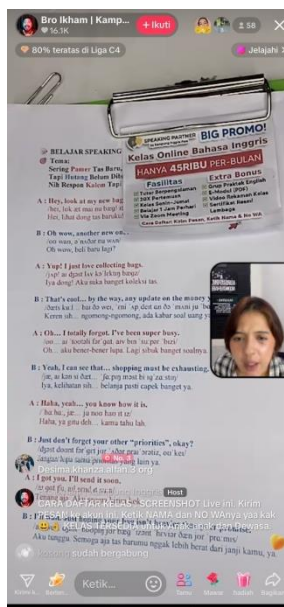
Usually the creator gives a reaction to the video, as well as responds to questions or statements from other users. This creates a two-way conversation that can be used as an exercise in understanding spoken language in the form of questions and answers.



Picture 5. TikTok Content:QnA

6) TikTok Live

TikTok provides a TikTok Live feature for users to interact and share moments in real time. Through this broadcast, students can practice listening skills in spontaneous conversations that are more natural and unstructured, just like interacting directly with native speakers.



Picture 6. TikTok Content: A woman teaches English live on TikTok

c. TikTok as a Learning Platform

TikTok has become an influential platform not only for entertainment but also for educational purposes. According to Agustina (2023) short and visually engaging videos on TikTok can facilitate students' incidental learning, especially in language acquisition. In addition, Cahyono and Perdhani (2023) explain that most TikTok users are students. This indicates that school-age children are very fond of and engaged with the TikTok application, which contributes to its use as an English learning medium. The app's algorithm promotes personalized content exposure that helps learners engage with materials suited to their level and interests. Rohman and Ulfa (2024) also highlight that TikTok encourages learners to practice English skills informally through user-generated content and peer interaction, thus transforming learning into a social and enjoyable activity. As pointed out by Limpo et al. (2023), the utilization of the use of the TikTok application in the learning process is that the teacher makes a learning video about English vocabulary and its meaning then the teacher gives assignments to students by directing students to make video explanations of the material that has been

learned at that time using the TikTok application. Students can also be creative by adding music, filters, stickers, and so on. Then, by giving tasks like that, students can improve their editing skills, speaking, listening, reading, and understanding of vocabulary in English. In addition, TikTok offers various ways for students to engage with content and learn, from watching educational videos to creating and sharing their videos, as described earlier. Interacting with others through comments enhances the learning experience by encouraging discussion and exchange of ideas (Hartomo et al., 2024). This indicates that TikTok functions as a form of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), AbuSa'aleek (2014) stated that Mobile Assisted Language Learning considers as approach in which mobile is used to support and enhance learning of languages. In the present study, the researcher uses the terms Mobile Assisted Language Learning to refer also to Mobile Learning (M-Learning). where users learn through short, authentic, and accessible materials anytime and anywhere.

In conclusion, TikTok offers diverse opportunities for English language learning through its accessible, multimodal, and interactive environment. Its short and authentic content enables learners to practice listening and comprehension in a more enjoyable and informal way. Therefore, understanding students' perceptions of using TikTok as a learning platform provides valuable insight into how modern digital tools can complement traditional English learning methods.

3. Listening

a. Definition of Listening

Listening is one of the most fundamental skill components in learning English. Purdi in Abdulnaeim (2021) defines listening as "an active and dynamic process of attending to, understanding, interpreting, remembering, and responding to expressions (verbal and nonverbal), needs, concerns, and information offered by other humans." Ali (2021) adds that listening is a crucial language skill, not only for communication purposes but also in the process of learning a second language, namely English. When one is learning English, listening plays a key role in all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages can be received and interpreted inaccurately in the communication process, which can reduce its effectiveness and, consequently, lead to

misunderstandings. In addition, Sadiku in Noor and Daulay (2023) says listening is not just hearing. Listening is a state of receptivity that enables the listener to comprehend what they hear and actively participate in the communication process. In addition, Suryanto (2023) also said that effective listening requires attention to the speaker's tone of voice, body language, and other contextual indicators that can be used to interpret what they are saying.

Based on the explanations from several experts, it can be concluded that listening skills play a very vital role in learning English. Listening is not only understood as a passive activity but is an active and complex process that includes understanding, interpretation, and response to messages received, both verbally and nonverbally. Effective listening skills are key in supporting accurate and meaningful communication and contribute greatly to second language acquisition. Therefore, listening must be done with full awareness, paying attention to various aspects such as intonation, body language, and the context of communication so that the meaning of the message can be fully understood and participation in communication can take place optimally.

b. Kinds of Listening

Nurhayani, as cited in Septiari (2022), categorizes listening skills into two types, extensive listening skills and intensive listening skills. People generally practice extensive skills in everyday environments without special guidance. While intensive listening skills emphasize more the ability to understand the material that requires full concentration so that the information or message conveyed can be understood, in the process it requires guidance.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that there is a difference between intensive listening and extensive listening, which lies in the purpose, duration, and focus of listening activities. Intensive listening is a comprehensive listening activity that concentrates on language details like vocabulary, sentence structure, and pronunciation. In formal classroom learning, this activity typically involves short audio texts, followed by exercises like answering multiple-choice questions or completing sentences. In contrast, extensive listening is a longer listening activity with the aim of understanding the content in general without analyzing every detail. This activity aims to improve fluency and listening habits

through materials such as podcasts, movies, or audio stories. Extensive listening is often done independently and is more recreational. These two types of listening complement each other in the language learning process because intensive listening strengthens the micro aspects (language details), while extensive listening improves the ability to understand the message as a whole in a real context.

c. Process of Listening

Tyagi (2013) explains the process of listening as:

1) Hearing

Hearing is a physical response to sound waves that stimulate the sense of hearing in the ear. This process occurs automatically without requiring special attention. However, to be able to truly listen, one not only needs to hear but also must give full attention. This approach means that not all sounds heard will be consciously processed by the brain. The brain naturally filters out various stimuli and focuses only on those that are considered important. This filtering process is called attention, which is the main requirement for listening activities to take place effectively.

2) Understanding

This step helps us understand the symbols we see and hear by analyzing their meaning. These symbols are not only words but can also be sounds, such as applause, or visual displays, such as blue uniforms, all of which have certain meanings. The meanings of these symbols are formed based on our past experiences and the situation in which they appear. In order for interpersonal communication to go well, the listener needs to understand the intent of the symbols used as well as the context intended by the speaker.

3) Remembering

Remembering is an important part of the listening process because it shows that a person not only receives and understands the message but also stores it in memory. In the process of listening, we only focus on certain things, so it is the same with what we remember. Often, what we store in our memory can be different from what we actually heard or saw.

4) Evaluating

Only active listeners engage in this stage of the listening process. At this stage, the listener assesses the content of the message by considering evidence, distinguishing between facts and opinions, and recognizing bias or prejudice. A good listener will wait until the message is finished before starting to evaluate. If the assessment process is carried out too quickly, attention to the ongoing message can be distracted, so the listening process is not maximized.

5) Responding

This stage requires the listener to respond, either verbally or through gestures. Because the speaker cannot know whether the message is understood without a response, the response from the listener is the only way for the speaker to assess whether the message has been received properly. Based on the explanation from the expert, it can be concluded that the listening process consists of five main interrelated stages, namely listening, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. Each stage has an important role in ensuring that the messages received can be processed properly and produce effective communication. Starting from physically capturing the sound, then understanding its meaning, storing it in memory, and assessing the content of the message to providing a response, this whole process shows that listening is not a passive activity but an active skill that requires deep attention and understanding.

2.2 Previous Studies

In conducting this study, the researcher reviewed several previous studies related to student perceptions of the relationship between tiktok and listening skills. These studies serve as references and provide insight into how similar topics have been explored by other researchers.

The first study is by Bolendea and Macora (2024) with the title "Students' Perception Towards The Use of TikTok in Learning English" which aims to determine students' perceptions of the use of TikTok as a medium for learning English at SMAN 4 Poso. The results showed that students had a positive perception towards the use of TikTok, with the average perception score reaching

77.10%. Students felt that TikTok provided an interesting and accessible learning experience, although there were some challenges such as the short duration of the videos and the speed of the narrator's speaking.

The second study conducted by Novitasari and Addinna (2022) entitled "Students' Perception on the Use of TikTok for Learning English" aims to describe the perceptions of English Education students towards the use of TikTok as a learning medium. This study found that students have a positive view of TikTok because it is considered relevant to their learning needs and can be used flexibly to support English learning outside the classroom.

The last study by Laili (2023) entitled "Students' Perspectives on Using TikTok Videos as a Medium for Learning English" aims to find out students' views on the utilization of TikTok videos in English learning. The results showed that students utilize TikTok to develop skills such as listening, speaking, and pronunciation. Despite the distraction of non-educative content, students still recommend TikTok as a fun and effective alternative medium for learning English independently.

By looking at the results of the three previous studies, it can be concluded that TikTok has potential as an alternative media in learning English, especially in developing listening skills. However, each of these studies has its own focus and approach. However, there has been limited exploration on how students actually use TikTok and what their perceptions are toward it as a platform for listening exposure. This study, therefore, differs by focusing not on skill improvement but on the patterns of use and students' perception of TikTok as an informal medium for English listening practice.