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The Influence of Viral English Songs on Tiktok Towards Students Learning Motivations

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Abstract—This study explores the impact of viral English songs on TikTok on students' motivation in learning English. As a popular social media platform, TikTok has become an influential space for teenagers, shaping their interests, daily habits, and even their learning behaviors. The main objective of this research is to examine how viral songs that circulate widely on TikTok can influence students' motivation to learn English. This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, with the primary data source being a viral English song titled "You'll Be in My Heart," performed by NIKI, which gained widespread attention on TikTok. The song was selected due to its emotional lyrics and memorable melody. The findings of this study indicate that the viral song elicited positive emotional responses among students and significantly increased their interest in English language learning. The engaging melody and meaningful lyrics encouraged students to explore vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and actively engage in both individual and classroom learning. These results suggest that using viral songs from social media platforms can serve as an effective learning tool, particularly for enhancing student motivation. In the era of digital learning, incorporating relevant and relatable media such as TikTok songs can make the learning experience more enjoyable and impactful for students.

Keywords: viral song, TikTok, English students learning motivation.

Abstrak—Penelitian ini membahas pengaruh lagu-lagu berbahasa Inggris yang viral di media sosial TikTok terhadap motivasi belajar siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. TikTok, sebagai platform media sosial yang sangat populer di kalangan remaja, memiliki pengaruh besar terhadap kehidupan dan kebiasaan belajar generasi muda, termasuk dalam konteks pembelajaran bahasa asing. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui sejauh mana lagu-lagu viral yang sering muncul di TikTok dapat memengaruhi minat dan motivasi siswa dalam mempelajari bahasa Inggris. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif, dengan data utama berupa lagu berjudul "You'll Be in My Heart" yang dinyanyikan oleh NIKI dan viral di platform TikTok. Lagu ini dipilih karena popularitasnya yang tinggi dan kandungan lirik yang bermakna emosional. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lagu tersebut mampu membangkitkan emosi positif, rasa nyaman, serta meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam proses belajar. Lirik yang menyentuh dan irama yang mudah diingat menjadikan lagu tersebut sebagai alat bantu pembelajaran yang efektif. Siswa menjadi lebih termotivasi

untuk memahami makna lirik, memperkaya kosakata, serta berlatih pelafalan dan intonasi bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, lagu-lagu viral di TikTok dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai media pembelajaran yang inovatif, menarik, dan relevan dengan kehidupan siswa saat ini.

Kata kunci: lagu viral, TikTok, motivasi belajar siswa bahasa inggris

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, the integration of social media into educational settings has become inevitable, especially in language learning. TikTok, a short-video platform, has emerged as a highly engaging medium for students, particularly through its viral music content. Viral English songs on TikTok are not only a form of entertainment but also act as informal learning resources that influence students' attitudes and motivation toward English learning.

According to Ibrahimovic (2024), viral English songs circulating on TikTok have a significant impact on students' vocabulary mastery, especially for 12th graders in vocational education. While his research focuses on vocabulary acquisition, it reveals a broader implication: that students are drawn into learning when media is emotionally resonant and culturally relevant. This emotional and psychological engagement is what also underlies learning motivation. Further supporting this, Hafisha (2022) found that English songs used via TikTok improved students' speaking performance due to repetitive exposure and emotional involvement.

The influence of TikTok on students' motivation was also studied by Mulyanah, Ahmad, and Ishak (2024), who reported that TikTok became a motivational learning tool for EFL students during the COVID-19 pandemic, fostering both consistency and emotional resilience in digital learning. Their findings emphasize the platform's role in sustaining student interest in an otherwise isolating online environment. Similarly, Alfitri (2024) showed that Generation Z students learn more effectively through short-form content like TikTok, as it aligns with their media consumption habits and attention span. The integration of such platforms creates an immersive and familiar environment for learning English.

From a motivational and emotional standpoint, Ferstephanie and Pratiwi (2021) demonstrated that TikTok enhances students' motivation in speaking classes, where the music-based challenges and duet features encouraged students to express themselves. Likewise, Syaiba (2024) examined the challenges EFL students face in

creating speaking content on TikTok, highlighting that despite technical barriers, the platform helped build learner autonomy and confidence. These findings underline the motivational dimensions of TikTok beyond just language acquisition.

Additionally, the effectiveness of TikTok in building motivation is consistent with the theory of content-based instruction. Rohmah (2015) argued that when learning materials are meaningful and relevant, especially for young learners, it enhances learning outcomes. Viral English songs on TikTok, such as "You'll be in My Heart" by Niki, represent a form of content-based learning that is emotionally loaded and linguistically rich.

In short, these previous studies converge on the idea that viral English songs, particularly when embedded in a social media context like TikTok, play a crucial role in shaping students' motivation and enthusiasm in learning English. This study, therefore, aims to explore how one such viral song affects student learning motivation, using a qualitative descriptive approach.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the influence of viral English songs on students' motivation in learning English. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate to gain a deeper understanding of students' emotional and behavioral responses toward the use of viral music in digital media, particularly TikTok. Data were collected using a combination of observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations focused on students' classroom engagement and reactions while interacting with TikTok content. Interviews were conducted with selected students to gather insights into their personal experiences and perceptions regarding the influence of the viral song on their learning motivation.

The primary data source in this study was the viral English song titled "*You'll Be in My Heart*" by Niki, which gained popularity through TikTok, especially in lip-sync, storytelling, and emotional content. Documentation included screenshots, user comments, and sample videos from the platform.

Participants consisted of ten high school students who were known to actively use TikTok and had previously interacted with the song. These students were selected purposively to ensure relevance to the research focus. Their experiences, emotional reactions, and motivational changes were explored to determine how the song affected their desire to improve English language skills, including vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening comprehension.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that viral English songs on TikTok can significantly enhance students' learning motivation. Observations and interviews revealed that students felt more emotionally connected to the lyrics, enjoyed repeating the song, and were motivated to look up meanings and pronunciations. The selected song, "You'll Be in My Heart" by Niki, became a stimulus for students to engage with English not only cognitively, but also emotionally.

These findings are in line with Andri, Rohmah, and Fitrianingsih (2024), who emphasized the importance of integrating enjoyable activities such as games or music to build a positive English learning environment. Similarly, Hartomo et al. (2024) found that students perceived TikTok as effective for learning unfamiliar vocabulary, as the platform provided multimodal cues—visual, audio, and contextual—that reinforced understanding.

From a motivational perspective, Widiya and Salmiah (2024) also discovered that TikTok increased students' interest in English learning through its entertaining features and peer-shared content. The emotional impact of music, especially when embedded in a culturally familiar platform like TikTok, makes it easier for students to stay engaged.

In another related study, Ichara Sinta (2022) investigated how students used TikTok duet features to memorize adjectives. She concluded that repetition, melody, and peer collaboration helped improve vocabulary memorization—an important factor in developing overall language competence.

In terms of digital readiness, Fitrianingsih et al. (2023) argued that modern learning media must foster 5Cs skills—Creativity, Critical thinking, Collaboration,

Communication, and Computational thinking. The use of TikTok in this research reflects creativity and communication, as students were motivated to discuss, sing along, and reflect on the lyrics in class and online settings.

However, the use of digital media is not without challenges. According to Agita (2023), students still struggle with comprehension in digital listening tasks, especially when exposed to fast or unfamiliar accents. This reinforces the need for careful selection of TikTok content that is level-appropriate and contextually relevant. Moreover, Zein (2019) emphasized the importance of using interactive visual aids to support listening skills in young learners – something TikTok offers naturally through its video features.

Thus, this study supports the idea that viral English songs on TikTok are not only useful in building vocabulary but also play a significant role in fostering emotional motivation, engagement, and learner autonomy in EFL contexts.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that viral English songs on TikTok, such as "You'll Be in My Heart" by Niki, have a significant and positive influence on students' motivation in learning English. The emotional connection evoked by the song's heartfelt lyrics and soothing melody encourages students to engage more deeply with the language. Many students reported increased enthusiasm in understanding the song's meaning, which naturally led to improvements in their vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy, and listening skills. This engagement also fosters a sense of enjoyment and reduces the anxiety often associated with foreign language learning.

TikTok, as a widely used digital media platform, provides an interactive and relatable space for students. It aligns well with their everyday media consumption habits, making the integration of such content into the learning process feel more organic and less forced. In this context, learning does not only happen in the classroom but also extends into students' personal time, creating opportunities for informal and incidental language learning. The combination of audiovisual elements in TikTok content reinforces comprehension through both auditory and visual channels, which is beneficial for diverse learning styles. When used intentionally and guided by

educators, viral TikTok songs can serve as a powerful pedagogical tool to boost student motivation and support more engaging and contextualized English language learning experiences.

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