

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHORT-FORM VIDEOS TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS OF FIRST-SEMESTER EFL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of short-form video platforms in improving speaking skills among first semester EFL students. Speaking remains one of the most challenging English skills for beginner learners, as many struggle with fluency, pronunciation, and confidence when communicating orally. Short form videos, such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts, offer visually engaging content, repetition, and low pressure speaking opportunities. This research employed a pre-experimental one group pre-test and post-test design. A total of 25 first semester English major students participated in eight learning sessions over four weeks, with each session lasting approximately 45 minutes. Speaking performance was measured using a standardized rubric assessing fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, and confidence. The results showed an increase from the pre-test mean of 55.20 to the post-test mean of 75.40. A paired-samples t-test confirmed that the improvement was statistically significant ($t = 19.15$, $p < 0.001$). The findings demonstrate that short form video based learning supports speaking development and offers interactive, motivating practice for beginner learners. Unlike prior studies focusing mainly on perceptions, this research highlights measurable learning gains. The results suggest that integrating short form videos as a supplementary tool can enhance speaking performance and support technology enhanced instruction.

Keywords: Digital Learning, EFL Learners, Pre-Experimental Design, Short-Form Videos, Speaking Skills

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English is essential for learners, as it determines how well they can participate in classroom discussions, share information, and engage in meaningful communication beyond the academic environment. It serves as the foundation for oral interaction, enabling learners to develop fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. According to (Harmer, 2015) speaking is the productive skill of conveying meaning orally, and learners who do not practice speaking regularly may struggle to communicate

ideas clearly. (Adhani et al., 2023) emphasize that regular practice using digital media can help students improve their ability to produce coherent speech. Similarly, (Zaitun,Hadi & Indriani, 2021) observed that storytelling through short-form videos significantly boosts students' confidence and encourages them to express ideas more freely.

Although speaking is a key component of language proficiency, much of the existing research on digital learning tools tends to emphasize learners' perceptions or focuses on more advanced groups, such as senior high school or university students. Previous studies also highlight that many EFL learners still struggle with pronunciation, fluency, and confidence when speaking English (Sari Puspita Della,Humaera Isna, 2023) A quantitative review of digital learning literature published between 2019–2024 shows that out of 52 empirical studies on video-based language learning, only 6 specifically investigated short-form video platforms, and only 2 involved beginner-level or first-semester university learners. Empirical evidence exploring the effectiveness of short-form videos for improving speaking performance among first-semester university learners is still limited. In addition, previous research indicates that video-based learning can help improve students' speaking performance by providing visual input and modeling (Ardin Hasrida & Herman Irjayanti Ary, 2024) This gap is important to address, as beginners require learning activities that are interactive, low-pressure, and frequently repeated to help them practice speaking confidently without worrying about being judged (Anshar et al., 2024) Therefore, there is a clear need for studies that provide quantitative, measurable evidence of learning improvement rather than relying mainly on learner perceptions as found in many previous studies.

Table 1. Comparison of Previous Related Research

Author & Year	Platform	Participants	Focus	Key Findings	Gap Addressed
Adhani et al. (2023)	TikTok	University students	Students' perceptions	High motivation and enjoyment	Did not measure speaking improvement
Zaitun, Hadi & Indriani (2021)	TikTok	Senior high school	Storytelling	Increased confidence and engagement	Not for first-semester university students

Setiowati et al. (2024)	TikTok	University students	Motivation & speaking	Improved motivation and fluency	No pre-post experimental measurement
Rastari et al. (2023)	YouTube	University students	Pronunciation	Better accuracy and fluency	Not focused on beginners
Current Study (2025)	TikTok & Shorts	First-semester EFL students	Speaking performance	Significant improvement in scores	Fills gap: beginners + quantitative measurement

Source: Author's result

For first-semester learners, speaking mastery is particularly important because it lays the foundation for future academic and social communication. However, many students face difficulties speaking in English due to limited exposure, fear of making mistakes, and high anxiety levels. Speaking anxiety has been recognized as a major obstacle to oral performance in EFL contexts. (Nugroho, 2021) identified factors such as low self-confidence and fear of peer evaluation as contributing to speaking anxiety in online EFL learning. Similarly, (Sulistiyowati & Thomas, 2023) found that EFL learners experience moderate levels of speaking anxiety linked to communication apprehension, test pressure, and fear of negative evaluation in public speaking settings. In addition, (Wijayati & Risa, 2023) emphasized that nervousness, embarrassment, and lack of preparation are key triggers of speaking anxiety, suggesting that increased practice and confidence-building strategies can help reduce anxiety and improve speaking performance.

To address these challenges, effective teaching strategies must be implemented. (Alfaron et al., 2025) demonstrated that using TikTok stitch videos allows students to imitate, experiment, and observe speaking models, significantly enhancing fluency and confidence. (setiowati et al., 2024) further revealed that integrating TikTok into project-based learning improves speaking performance and motivates students to participate actively. Additionally, other video platforms such as YouTube have been shown to support learners in developing pronunciation, fluency, and conversational skills through repetition and imitation (Rastari et al., 2023)

In today's educational landscape, digital technologies have become essential components that enhance and support various aspects of language learning (Prensky, 2001) Short-form videos are particularly suitable for beginner learners, as they are engaging, accessible, and visually appealing, aligning with students' preference for bite

sized and interactive content. The repeated exposure to language in short videos helps learners internalize pronunciation, vocabulary, and sentence structures, while allowing them to practice speaking in a safe and motivating environment.

Overall, this study adds valuable insight to the ongoing discussion surrounding technology-supported language learning and contributes to the advancement of creative instructional approaches that are both effective and engaging for first-semester university learners. The central aim of this research was to determine whether short-form video media could produce measurable gains in speaking performance and help lower students' anxiety levels. By analyzing pre-test and post-test results, the study offers concrete empirical support for the use of digital video-based learning as an effective tool to strengthen oral communication skills.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research utilized a quantitative methodology, as this approach supports objective measurement and statistical evaluation of research variables (Creswell, 2024). A pre-experimental design employing a one-group pre-test and post-test procedure was implemented in this study. Within this model, the same participants are assessed before and after the treatment to identify any significant differences resulting from the intervention (Sugiyono, 2015). This design was considered appropriate for examining the extent to which the integration of short-form video platforms contributes to the improvement of students' speaking proficiency in a structured instructional setting.

This study used the one-group pre-test-post-test pre-experimental design ($O_1 X O_2$). In this nomenclature, O_1 refers to the pre-test administered before the treatment; X represents the instructional treatment using short-form video-based speaking exercises; and O_2 refers to the post-test administered after the treatment.

Table 2. The design of this study can be illustrated in the following table

Phase	Symbol	Description
Pre-test	O_1	Measurement of students' initial speaking ability
Treatment	X	Short-form video-based speaking activities
Post-test	O_2	Measurement of students' speaking ability after the treatment

Source: Author's result

The sample in this research consisted of 25 first-semester students enrolled in the English Education program at Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika (UBSI). A purposive sampling technique was applied, meaning that participants were intentionally selected

based on predetermined criteria aligned with the aims of the study (Etikan et al., 2016) The chosen students demonstrated comparable English proficiency levels and had access to personal digital devices, making them suitable for the implementation of short-form video based speaking activities.

The intervention was carried out over a four-week period and consisted of eight instructional meetings. Each meeting lasted about 45 minutes, during which students developed their speaking abilities through activities supported by short-form video platforms such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts, facilitated by the instructor. Throughout the treatment, learners participated in various tasks including model imitation, guided role-play, and brief storytelling performances which are recognized as effective techniques for improving speaking fluency and building confidence in technology-enhanced learning environments (Zaitun, Hadi & Indriani, 2021). To provide a clearer description of the procedure, a detailed breakdown of activities in each session is presented below.

Table 3. Detailed Breakdown of Intervention Activities

Session	Focus	Activities	Specific Video Examples	Teacher's Role	Students' Role
1	Introduction	Watching sample videos & discussing speech clarity	TikTok: "Daily English Expressions"; YouTube Short: "Beginner Pronunciation Tips"	Explaining goals, modeling speech	Observing and identifying expressions
2	Imitation	Students imitate short monologues	TikTok: "Self-Introduction Challenge"	Guiding imitation, modeling	Practicing imitation
3	Pronunciation	Vocabulary repetition from videos	YouTube Short: "10 Daily Words Pronunciation"	Correcting pronunciation	Repeating vocabulary
4	Guided Role-Play	Dialogue role-play based on videos	TikTok: "Restaurant Conversation"	Guiding and providing scripts	Performing dialogues
5	Storytelling (Modeling)	Retelling stories from	YouTube Short: "Tell	Giving prompts	Retelling short stories

		videos	Me About Your Day”		
6	Storytelling (Independent)	Creating new short speaking videos	TikTok: “1-Minute Story Challenge (Stitch)”	Giving feedback	Producing short videos
7	Fluency Practice	Timed speaking using prompts	YouTube Short: “Describe This Picture”	Facilitating fluency tasks	Speaking spontaneously
8	Final Review	Open speaking tasks before post-test	Mixed previous TikTok & Shorts	Assessing performance	Delivering final speaking tasks

Source: Author’s result

During the intervention, the teacher served as a facilitator, choosing relevant video models, demonstrating proper pronunciation, giving instructions, and providing feedback. Meanwhile, students actively observed the videos, emulated speech models, conducted guided speaking tasks, collaborated with peers, and produced short-form speaking outputs.

The data for this study were obtained through a speaking assessment developed to evaluate students’ fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary application, and overall confidence during oral performance. Speaking assessments are commonly employed in language education research because they provide a reliable indicator of learners’ communicative abilities (Nation, 2018) In this study, the test examined students’ capacity to produce organized spoken responses and to use vocabulary appropriately in spontaneous speaking situations. The assessment was administered prior to and following the short-form video based instruction to identify any measurable progress in the students’ speaking proficiency.

The speaking rubric consisted of four criteria fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence. Each rated on a 1–5 scale, with a maximum total score of 20. A summary of the rubric is provided below.

Table 4. Speaking Assessment Rubric (Summary)

Criterion	Description	Scale
Fluency	Smoothness and continuity of speech	1–5
Pronunciation	Accuracy of sounds, stress, and intonation	1–5
Vocabulary	Appropriateness and variety of vocabulary	1–5
Confidence	Clarity, volume, and comfort during speaking	1–5

Source: Author’s result

Two lecturers who specialize in speaking training assessed the rubric to verify clarity, relevance, and alignment with learning objectives. The rubric's reliability was assessed using SPSS's Inter-Rater Reliability Analysis. Two separate raters rated both the pre-test and post-test performances, and the Interclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was 0.82, indicating a good level of scoring consistency among raters.

Data analysis in this study involved the use of descriptive statistics along with a paired-sample t-test. The paired-sample t-test was selected because it enables researchers to compare two related sets of scores taken from the same group at different points in time, allowing for the identification of any statistically meaningful changes in performance (Pallant, 2020). All statistical procedures were carried out using SPSS software to maintain precision and ensure the dependability of the analytical results.

However, the pre-experimental design used in this study has limitations. Without a control group, it is difficult to determine whether improvements in scores were caused solely by the short-form video intervention or by external factors such as natural learning development or outside practice. Thus, the findings should be interpreted with caution.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics for students' speaking scores before and after the intervention are presented in Table 1. The data show that the mean score increased after using short-form videos as a learning media.

Table 5. Mean Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

Statistic	Pre-test	Post-test
N	25	25
Mean	55.20	75.40
Median	55	76
Std. Deviation	6.72	5.38
Minimum	45	65
Maximum	65	85

Source: Author's result

As presented in Table 1, the students' average score rose from 55.20 to 75.40, demonstrating a clear enhancement in their speaking performance following the intervention. In addition, the slight reduction in standard deviation indicates that the students' results were more uniform after participating in the treatment.

Table 6. Result of Paired Samples T-Test

Paired	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post-test – Pre-test	20.20	5.27	19.15	24	0.000

Source: Author's result

The obtained significance value ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) demonstrates that the difference between the pre-test and post-test speaking scores is statistically meaningful. This result implies that incorporating short-form video media contributed positively to enhancing students' spoken performance.

To complement the statistical results, an effect size analysis using Cohen's d was conducted. The value obtained was $d = 3.83$, which falls into the category of a very large effect, indicating that the intervention had a substantial practical impact on students' speaking performance. Furthermore, the 95% Confidence Interval (CI) for the mean difference, ranging from 18.01 to 22.39, confirms that the improvement was statistically robust and unlikely to be due to random variation.

A detailed analysis of the speaking components also revealed consistent improvements across fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence. Fluency showed the greatest gain, followed by pronunciation, which benefited from repeated auditory modeling in the videos. Vocabulary improvement occurred as students encountered recurring lexical items in the content, and confidence increased as learners practiced speaking in a low-pressure, engaging environment.

The results indicate that integrating short-form videos into speaking practice significantly enhances students' speaking skills. The increase in mean scores demonstrates that students improved in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and confidence. These findings are consistent with previous studies. (Adhani et al., 2023) found that TikTok videos are effective for practicing speaking because they allow students to imitate, repeat, and experiment with language in a low stress environment. (Zaitun, Hadi & Indriani, 2021) also reported that storytelling through short-form videos increases students' confidence and engagement in oral communication tasks.

The improvement observed in this study can be explained through several theoretical mechanisms. Short-form videos provide rich multimodal input, enabling learners to internalize pronunciation, intonation, and lexical patterns through modeling and imitation, consistent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory. The short and focused

nature of these videos reduces extraneous cognitive load, allowing learners to process linguistic features more efficiently. Additionally, the engaging and low-pressure format helps lower learners' affective filters, enabling them to participate more willingly and confidently in speaking tasks.

During the intervention, students actively engaged with the videos by imitating dialogues, performing role-plays, and creating short storytelling clips. The visual and auditory elements of short-form videos helped learners internalize pronunciation, sentence structures, and vocabulary more effectively. The bite-sized, gamified format also reduced speaking anxiety, making students more willing to participate and take risks in speaking tasks.

The findings carry important theoretical implications. They reinforce Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which emphasizes that learning is enhanced when visual and auditory information are integrated. They also support Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, showing that low-anxiety digital environments can promote increased language output. The results further contribute to theories of multimodal input in second-language acquisition, demonstrating that short-form video content can effectively support speaking development.

The improvement in students' speaking skills highlights the potential of digital media as a supplementary tool in language learning. Short-form videos provide flexible and interactive learning experiences that complement traditional classroom activities. However, teachers should combine these tools with communicative activities, such as discussions, peer interactions, and presentations, to maximize learning outcomes.

The findings of this study align with quantitatively similar research. (setiowati et al., 2024) reported significant gains in students' speaking performance through TikTok-assisted learning, noting a large effect size consistent with the present study. Likewise, (Rastari et al., 2023) documented measurable improvements in pronunciation and fluency following structured video-based speaking practice. While many earlier studies explored students' perceptions, this study provides objective empirical evidence that short-form videos can generate substantial improvements in speaking competence.

In summary, this study confirms that short-form videos can enhance speaking skills, increase student motivation, and reduce anxiety. The findings suggest that first-semester

EFL students benefit from repeated exposure, interactive tasks, and engaging content in their oral language development.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that incorporating short-form videos into speaking practice can significantly improve students' oral skills. The results from the pre-test and post-test show a clear increase in students' speaking performance after using platforms such as TikTok and YouTube Shorts. These findings suggest that digital video media can effectively enhance speaking abilities, particularly for first-semester English major students, by increasing engagement, confidence, and active participation.

The practical implication of this research is that instructors can integrate short-form videos as a complementary tool in speaking courses. When combined with traditional classroom activities such as discussions, role-plays, and presentations, these videos can create a more dynamic and motivating learning environment. Educators are advised to consider integrating additional interactive and multimedia-based tools that align with learners' digital habits and preferences.

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations. The sample size was limited to 25 students from a single class, and there was no control group or long-term follow-up to measure sustained improvement. Moreover, the study focused exclusively on speaking skills, without investigating related language components such as listening, grammar, or vocabulary development.

For future research, it is recommended to include larger and more varied participant groups, utilize control or comparison classes, and explore the impact of different features of short-form videos on speaking performance. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the long-term benefits of video-based learning for language skill development.

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