

Secondary-school Students' Perspectives of Utilizing Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the EFL classroom

Huining Yang*

School of Macquarie University, Sydney, New South Wales 2122, Australia

*Corresponding author e-mail: 513413031@qq.com

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Abstract: The popularization of mobile devices and the Web 2.0 technology provide incredible chances for diverse social media applications to play significant roles in today's society. As one of the most popular social media applications in China, Tik Tok also takes a place in the international field, comparable to Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Wechat and so on. Even though massive relevant studies have suggested that utilizing social media for language teaching can have positive effects on learning performance, limited literature shed lights on the utilization of Tik Tok for educational purposes. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gaps, exploring secondary-school students' perspectives of utilizing Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the EFL classroom. 187 secondary-school students from China were voluntary to take part in the quantitative survey research, employing an online questionnaire as the research instrument. The findings revealed that secondary-school students held positive attitudes towards introducing Tik Tok as video aids into EFL classroom teaching meanwhile using it as an English learning strategy out of class. Moreover, students expressed strong desire for being guided and supported by their teachers to effectively utilize Tik Tok for English learning.

1. Introduction

The evolution of Web 2.0 technology provides infinite possibilities for the development of social media, which features for content generation, information dissemination as well as interactive communication [66]. With the support of advanced Web 2.0 technology and the proliferation of smart mobile devices, various social media applications, which reflect different forms of social media, have sprung up. For instance, Facebook is the representative of social networking form while Instagram and Youtube feature multimedia sharing. Besides, Wechat(instant messaging), Twitter(blogging) as well as Wikipedia (knowledge collecting and sharing) are also popular social media applications that characterized by diverse social media forms [40]. The application to be discussed in this study is Tik Tok, which features short-video sharing, ranging from 15 seconds to 5 minutes. According to the International market data, Tik Tok ranked seventh for top 10 applications by all-time downloads worldwide from 2010-2019 Fall[8] and ranked second for applications downloads worldwide in Apple store and Google play in 2019[48]. As for the market of Chinese social media applications, 40 million users made Tik Tok one of the most influential domestic social media applications in 2019[55].

As Gupta and Bashir [20] stated, there were four main purposes for using social media applications, which are entertainment, socialization, informativeness and academic. Resulting from educators' practice of introducing social media applications into language teaching and learning contexts to improve learners' language proficiency, "academic" has gradually become a major factor. Take Tik Tok as an example, language-learning videos ranked second among the most popular knowledge-sharing videos in 2019[55]. As a matter of fact, massive studies have explored the effects of utilizing social media to support language learners to enhance their language skills and proficiency. However, limited researches have examined the feasibility of utilizing Tik Tok for EFL teaching from students' perspectives. Hence, this study aims to fill the gap by investigating secondary-school students' perceptions of utilizing Tik Tok for English learning and beyond the

EFL classroom.

The questions of the research:

- 1) From students' perspectives, what are the benefits and defects of integrating Tik Tok with EFL classroom teaching?
- 2) What are students' perspectives of using Tik Tok to learn English beyond the classroom?

2. Literature Review

Lots of scholars have explored the effects of utilizing social media to enhance English learners' language learning performance. As Sharma [49] concluded, most EFL students regarded social media applications as useful tools for improving their English language skills as well as English learning motivation. Specifically, social media has been proven to have positive influence on improving English vocabulary skills at university level [21, 24, 29]. In terms of writing skills, the results of relevant studies indicated that majority of students held positive attitudes towards introducing social media into English writing classroom [46, 65, 64]. Moreover, social media is also regarded as beneficial for improving students' English reading motivation, listening skills [9] as well as speaking skills [62]. In addition, numerous scholars examined the effects of utilizing some specific social media applications as educational tools for English teaching and learning.

2.1 The research of international social media application

As the most popular social media application worldwide published in 2004, Facebook has been found useful not only for improving students' English learning skills[60, 15], such as writing skills[22, 58, 59], reading skills[59] as well as oral communication skills[7], but also for enhancing students' English learning motivation and confidence[2]. The other well-known social media application that have been examined for educational purposes is Twitter. A large amount of studies, which explored the impact on using Twitter for English language teaching and learning, revealed that majority of students enjoyed using Twitter for English learning[54] as it can not only significantly improve students' English language skills[6], but also enhance their English learning motivation.

Apart from the benefits of using social media for English learning, the limitations of doing so have also been examined. For instance, the results of relevant studies showed that students might use informal abbreviations that they learned from social media into their formal writing tasks [36, 50]. Besides, limited skill training and guidance for teachers, lack of access to the Internet and the distraction of students when using social media have also been figured out [64, 30].

2.2 The research of domestic social media applications

Although the studies talked above can provide profound educational implications for English educators and students, situations are different in Chinese social media market. Due to various reasons, some worldwide popular social media applications are unavailable in China. As a result, diverse made-in-China social media applications, such as Wechat and Tik Tok, were created to suit Chinese people's needs meanwhile compete with other popular applications in the world market, attracting users around the world. Under this circumstance, lots of educators and scholars started exploring the values of utilizing these domestic social media applications in Chinese EFL teaching. Relevant literature has paid attention to the effects of using Wechat, which is the most popular instant chatting application in China, in and beyond the EFL classroom to assist students to improve their English writing skills [63] , pronunciation skills[61] as well as their learning motivation and interests. However, no previous studies shed lights on the feasibility of using Tik Tok as an educational tool for EFL teaching. Characterized by short-video sharing, Tik Tok provides video authors with much flexibility to create videos of any style and theme, except for the duration of videos. Unlike other video-sharing social media applications, the length of the videos in Tik Tok ranges from 15 seconds to 5 minutes. This feature is not only consistent with the current fast-paced information acquisition style, but also an opportunity for video creators to make their videos more influential. Owing to this unique feature, Tik Tok not only attracts numerous domestic

English language educators, but also draw lots of native English speakers' attention. These English-teaching video creators provide plentiful English learning materials for EFL teaching and learning, making it possible for EFL teachers and students to employ Tik Tik for English teaching and learning in and beyond the EFL classroom.

3. Theory base

3.1 Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL)

Defined as using mobile devices to assist language learning, MALL can either be regarded as the specialization of mobile learning(mLearning)[57] or a unique field that share some commons with computer-assisted language learning(CALL) and mLearning[51]. The main features of mobile devices, which are portability, interactivity, connectivity as well as context sensitivity[32, 26, 17], determining the characteristics of MALL, concluded as ubiquitous, accessibility, immediacy, interactivity and situating of instructional activities[35, 37]. Therefore, MALL provide maximum opportunities for both language teachers and learners to make language learning happen without time and location limit and get access to abundant English learning materials and resources by using their mobile devices, such like smart phones, pads, MP3, MP4 and so on. In addition, lots of research have proven that MALL can be utilized to improve learners' vocabulary, listening, reading and other English language skills [32].

3.2 Audio-visual aids

Audio-visual aids are effective educational tools in language teaching classroom, especially in communicative language teaching (CLT) classroom, which emphasizes the importance of learning a language through real-life communication [43]. The definition of audio-visual aids refers to all sorts of language learning materials that can be listened and seen. To be more specific, audio materials include any type of recorded dialogue, speech and music that can be used as language teaching materials while video materials conclude various types of videos and video clips, powerpoints, pictures and so on[28]. Numerous of results of relevant studies shed lights on the positive effects of using authentic audio-visual aids in English teaching classroom to improve language learners' language skills and their comprehension of abstract knowledge meanwhile enhance their learning motivation[31, 5, 34, 38].

3.3 Language learning strategy beyond the classroom

In addition to formal classroom language learning, informal out-of-class language learning has also been proven to have significant influence on language learners' learning outcomes [13, 39]. To achieve successful language learning results beyond the classroom, effective learning strategies need to be employed. Although defined in various ways, learning strategy refers to techniques, devices or actions employed by language learners to acquire knowledge and regulate their language learning process [44, 19]. As for the classification of language learning strategies, Oxford's taxonomy[cited in 14] has been widely accepted, which classified language learning strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies. Specifically, direct strategies contain memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies while indirect strategies include metacognitive strategies, affective strategies as well as social strategies. According to the choice of different strategies, learners' learning motivation, attitude towards of language learning as well as the years of learning have been proven to have influence on learners' choice of language learning strategies [47].

4. Research design

This research is a qualitative survey research, employing an online questionnaire. The aims of this research are to investigate secondary-school students' perceptions of utilizing Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the EFL classroom. Meanwhile, pedagogical implications and

recommendations will be provided for EFL teachers according to the results of the research.

5. Participants and instrument

187 Chinese secondary-school students were voluntary to take part in this research by completing an online questionnaire, including 9 multiple-choice questions and 1 open-minded short-answer question.

6. Data collection and analysis

Data of this research were collected via a questionnaire and analyzed in a descriptive way.

7. Findings and Discussion

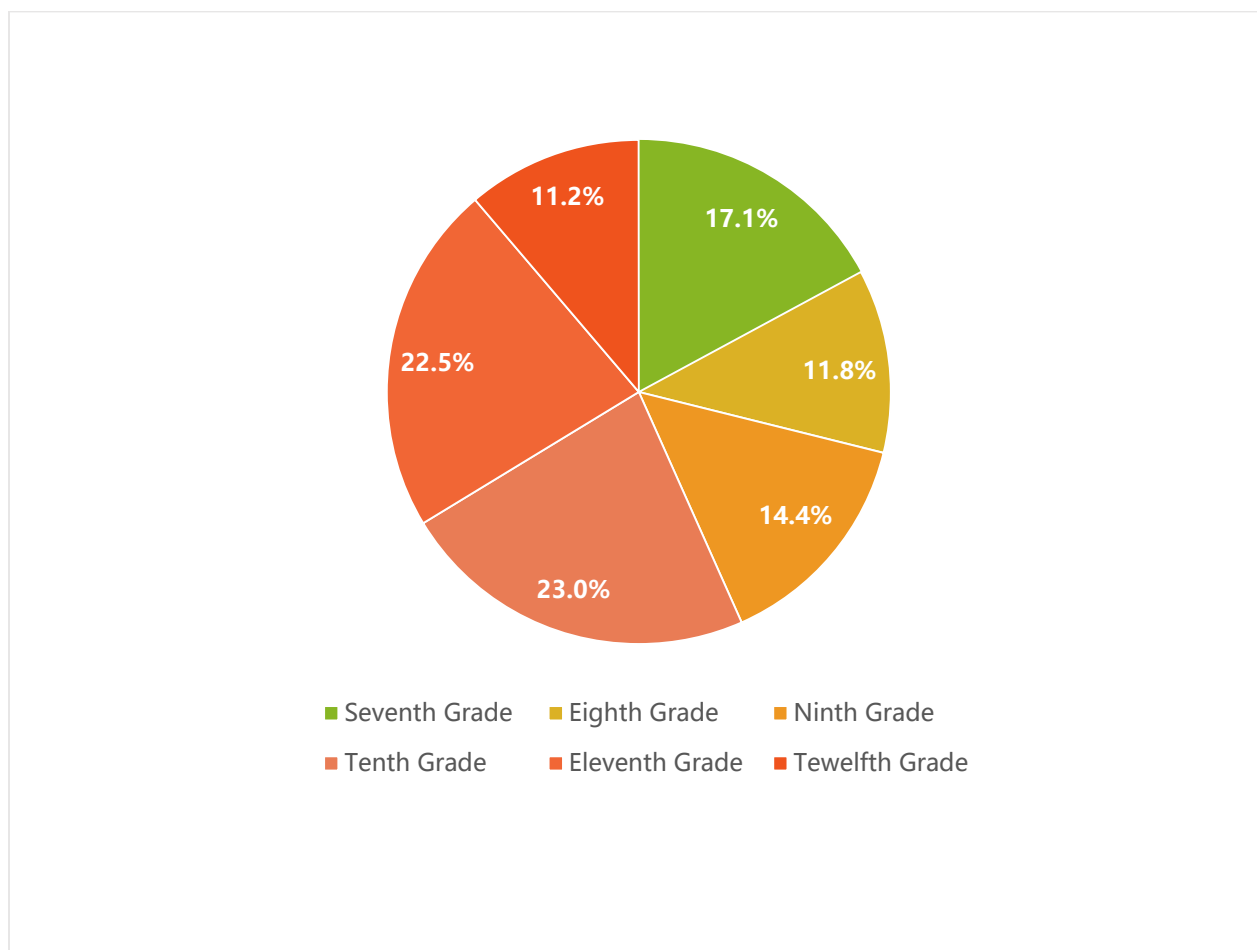


Fig.1 What is your grade?

The first question in the questionnaire is “What is your grade?” This question is aimed at investigating the distribution of 187 participants’ grades, preparing for the data analysis in different grades. Out of 187 participants, 43 tenth-grade students(23.0%), 42 eleventh-grade students(22.5%) and 32 seventh-grade(17.1%) are the majority of participants who have ever noticed or followed English teaching videos on Tik Tok; 27 students, which corresponded to a 14.4%, are in ninth grade; 22 eighth-grade students and 21 twelfth-grade students take up 11.8% and 11.2% respectively.

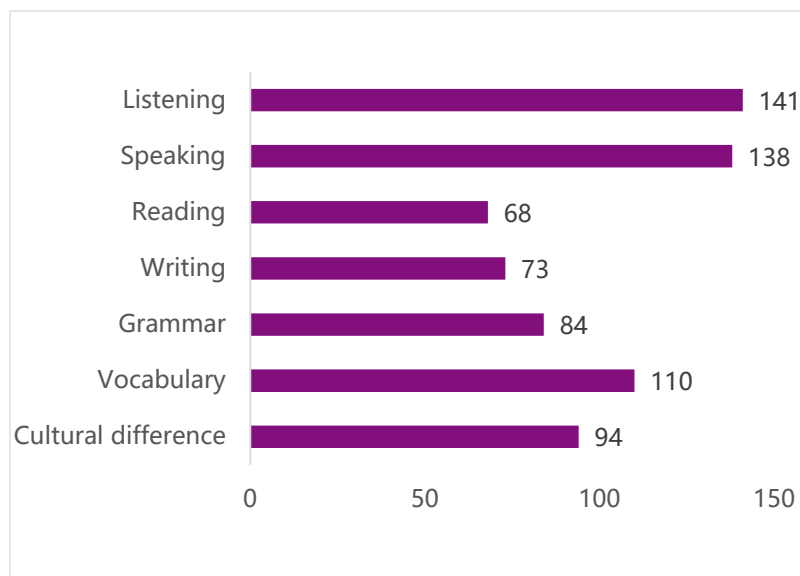


Fig.2 Which language skill do you want to improve by using Tik Tok for English learning?

The second question is “Which language skill do you want to improve by using Tik Tok for English learning?” This question was designed to analyse participants’ preference for English skills that they expect to enhance by utilizing Tik Tok for English learning. According to the data, 141 participants(75.4%) preferred using Tik Tok to enhance their English listening skills; 138 participants(73.8%) and 110 participants(58.8%) expected to upgrade their speaking skills and vocabulary skills separately; 94 participants, which corresponded to a 50.3%, would like to enhance their awareness of cultural difference on Tik Tok; Grammar is another popular choice selected by 84 participants(44.9%); 73 participants(39%) intended to improve their writing skills via Tik Tik while 68 participants, which took up 36.4%, expected to promote their reading skills by learning from English teaching videos on Tik Tok.

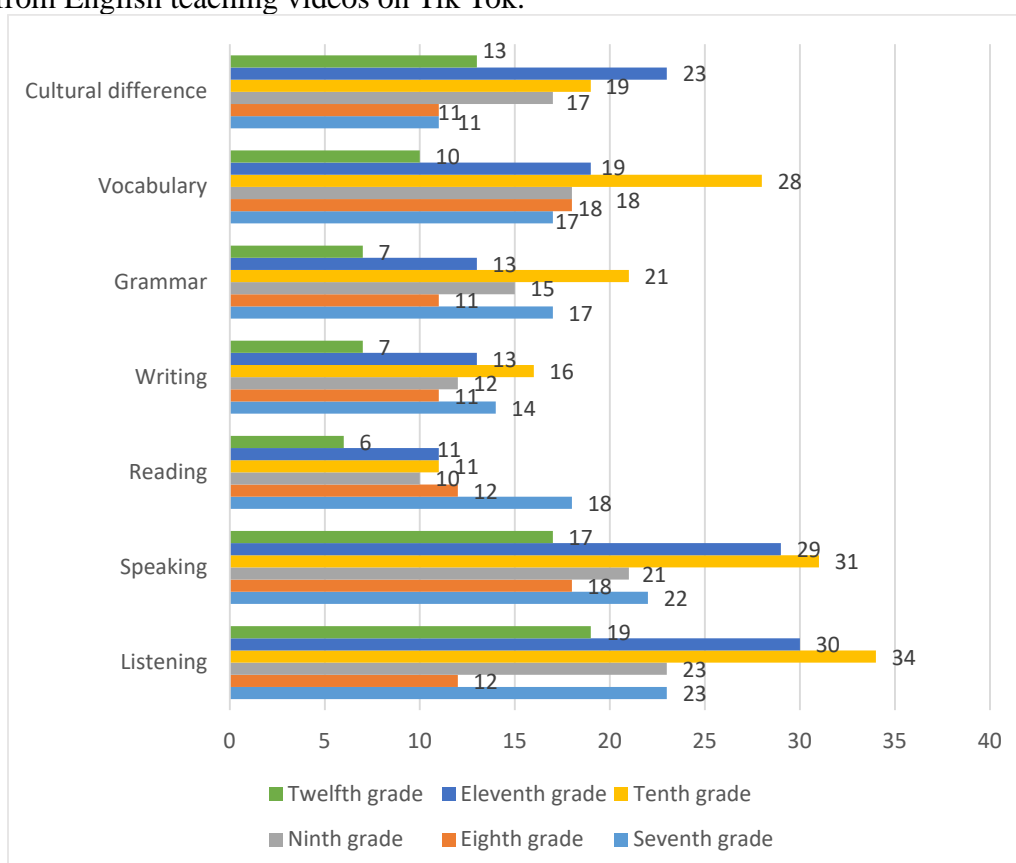


Fig. 3 English skills that participants in different grades expect to improve

From the perspective of grade difference, students in different grades held diverse expectations for the English skills that they would like to enhance on Tik Tok. According to the data, 23 seventh-grade participants(71.88%) selected listening skill as the one that they wanted to upgrade while 34.38% seventh-grade participants, corresponding to 11 participants, selected the awareness of cultural difference as the least popular English skill that they expect to promote on Tik Tok. As for eighth-grade participants, speaking skill and vocabulary skill were the skills that they want to enhance the most, chosen by 18 students(81.82%) respectively whereas writing skill, grammar as well as the awareness of cultural difference were the least popular choices selected by 11 students(50%) separately. What’s more, the results of the most welcomed English skills and the least welcomed English skills were similar among ninth-grade students to twelfth-grade students. Specifically, listening skill was chosen as the most welcomed English skill that students desired to promote on Tik Tok, selected by 23 ninth-grade students(85.19%), 34 tenth-grade students(79.07%), 30 eleventh-grade students(71.43%) and 19 twelfth-grade students(90.48%). On the contrary, reading skill was the least popular skill, selected by 10 ninth-grade participants(37.04%), 11 tenth-grade participants(25.58%), 11 eleventh-grade participants(26.19%) as well as 6 twelfth-grade participants, which corresponded to a 28.57%.

Results may have relevance to the feature of Tik Tok. Featuring for the short-video function, learning materials that can be displayed in the form of video are easily to be utilized and understood by learners to enhance relevant English skills. For instance, listening skill, speaking skill, vocabulary skill, grammar and the awareness of cultural difference can be improved by watching recorded English-teaching videos, American or British TV series or v-logs of native English speakers on Tik Tok. However, English reading and writing materials that require sufficient time to read and think are not suitable to be displayed in the form of short video. Therefore, students show less expectations to upgrade their writing and reading skills on Tik Tok.

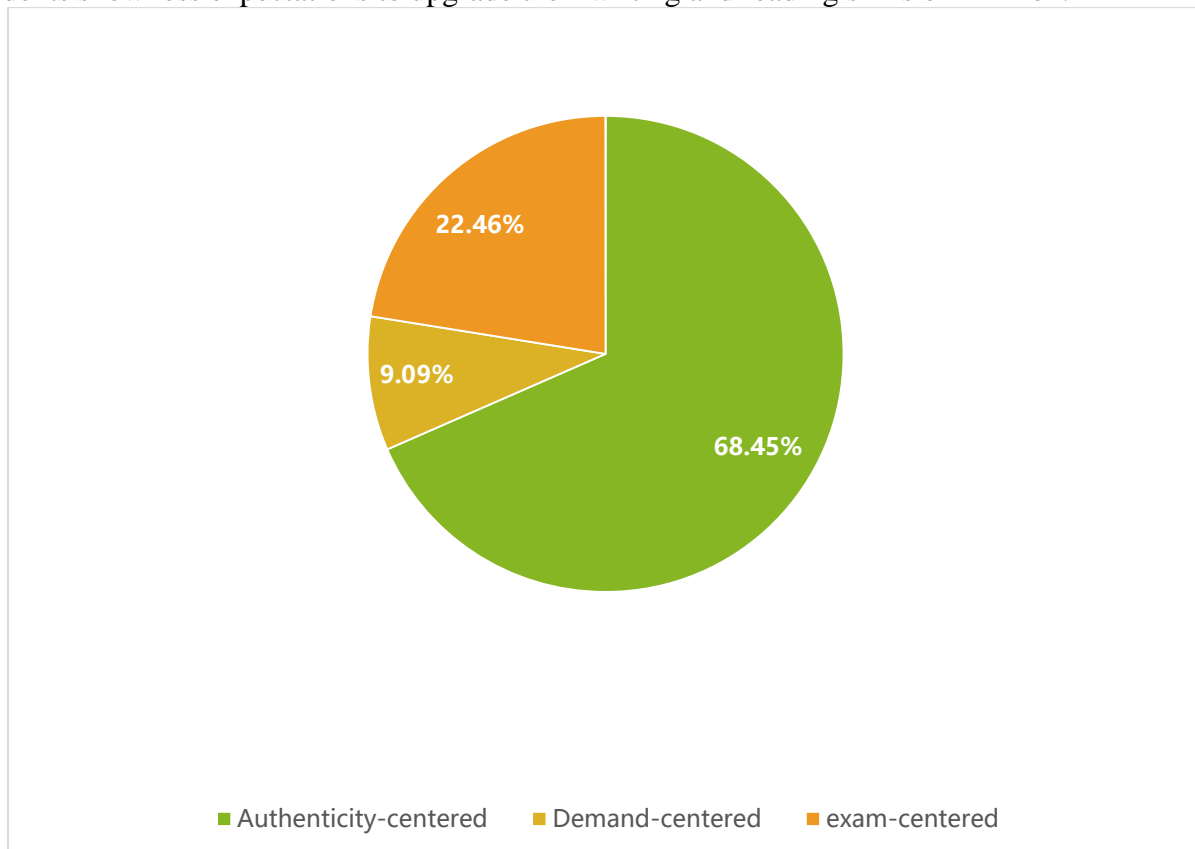


Fig.4 Which type of English teaching video do you prefer when learning English on Tik Tok?

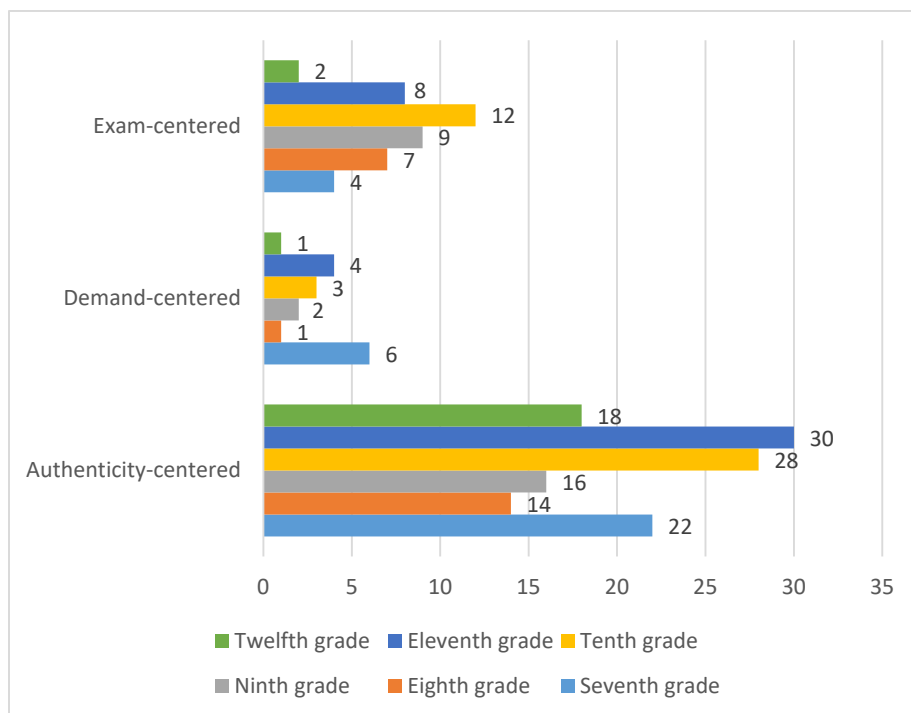


Fig. 5 English teaching videos that participants in different grades prefer

The third question in the questionnaire is “Which type of English teaching videos do you prefer when learning English on Tik Tok?” This question was set to know about participants’ preference for different types of English teaching videos when using Tik Tok for English learning. English-teaching videos on Tik Tok can be divided into three main types, which are authenticity-centered videos, demand-centered videos and exam-oriented videos. Guided by authenticity-centered English teaching approach (ACA), authenticity-centered videos focus on providing abundant authentic English learning materials for English learners. As a branch of material-centered language teaching approach that emphasizes the essential role of language learning materials, authenticity-centered approach (ACA) was proposed by Mishan [33] to highlight the importance of applying authentic learning materials during the language leaning process. Authentic materials are widely accepted as materials that are not designed for pedagogy purposes but are genuine real-life language samples [45]. As a matter of fact, authentic materials has been proven to have positive effects on English learners’ language proficiency. For instance, the result of Albiladi [4]’s research indicated that introducing authentic materials into ESL reading classroom significantly enhanced students’ learning motivation and academic performance. Similarly, Polat and Erişti [41] conducted a research among students from different levels of English proficiency and found that authentic video materials could effectively improve students’ listening skills and mitigate their learning anxiety at the same time. Besides, applying authentic materials into English teaching classroom can also positive influences on students’ English writing skills [12] and reading skills [27]. Tik Tok provides infinite opportunities for video authors to upload various types of real-life English videos, such as American and British TV series with bilingual subtitles or explanations of key words or idioms, English music and movie clips, English speech, interviews of native English speakers or introducing items that are frequently used in real life in English. All of these authentic materials are made into the short-video form and uploaded on Tik Tok, bringing measureless possibilities for English teachers as well as English learners to utilize these authentic materials as valuable English teaching and learning resources, which can not only effectively improve students’ English skills but also stimulate their learning motivation and interests.

As for demand-centered videos, they are guided by demand-oriented method, which is an language teaching approach that highly emphasizes students’ needs when learning English [67]. Learners learn English for various reasons, such as education needs and vocational needs. However,

different demand requires different teaching materials and strategies. As a consequence, based on diverse English learning needs, English teaching can be divided into business English, academic English and general English, etc. By using Tik Tok for English learning, learners can search the key words related to their needs, such like “business English vocabulary”, “Secondary-school English grammar” or “IELTS listening”, all relevant videos will be displayed, providing learners with different English-learning experiences. Apart from that, learners can also message their favourite video authors, telling them what skills or strategies you would like to learn. Then the authors will prepare relevant learning materials for learners according to their demand. This function can be regarded as a “customized” learning process.

Determined by the nature and the characteristic of Chinese education system, exam-oriented approach is one of the main English teaching approach employed both in and beyond the language classroom, meaning that achieving higher scores in English examinations becomes main goal of learning English for most Chinese students [25]. Even though many scholars has discussed the negative effects of examination from washback perspective and other perspectives[25, 3], exam-centered teaching approach and principle will not be substituted until new evaluation system can be created and put into practice.

Under this circumstance, not only in-class English learning materials are designed to be exam-centered, but also English teaching short videos on Tik Tok provide exam-centered English learning materials for learners, aimed at strengthening their exam-related English skills and imparting test-taking skills at the same time. As a result, many students prefer to use these videos as valuable supplements to consolidate their exam-related English knowledge, expecting to achieve higher grades in English examinations.

The results of this question showed that 128 participants (68.45%) preferred authenticity-centered videos; 17 participants (9.09%) selected the demand-centered videos while 42 participants, which corresponded to a 22.46%, had a preference for the exam-centered videos. Table 5 showed the distribution of English teaching videos that participants in different grades prefer on Tik Tok. The results showed that participants from six grades select the authenticity-centered video as the most popular one. This can be an implication for EFL teachers to utilize more authenticity-centered English videos as supplementary teaching resources in class. Besides, participants from eighth grade to twelfth grade regarded the demand-centered video as the least welcomed one, except for seventh-grade participants, who believed that exam-centered videos were the least popular English teaching videos on Tik Tok.

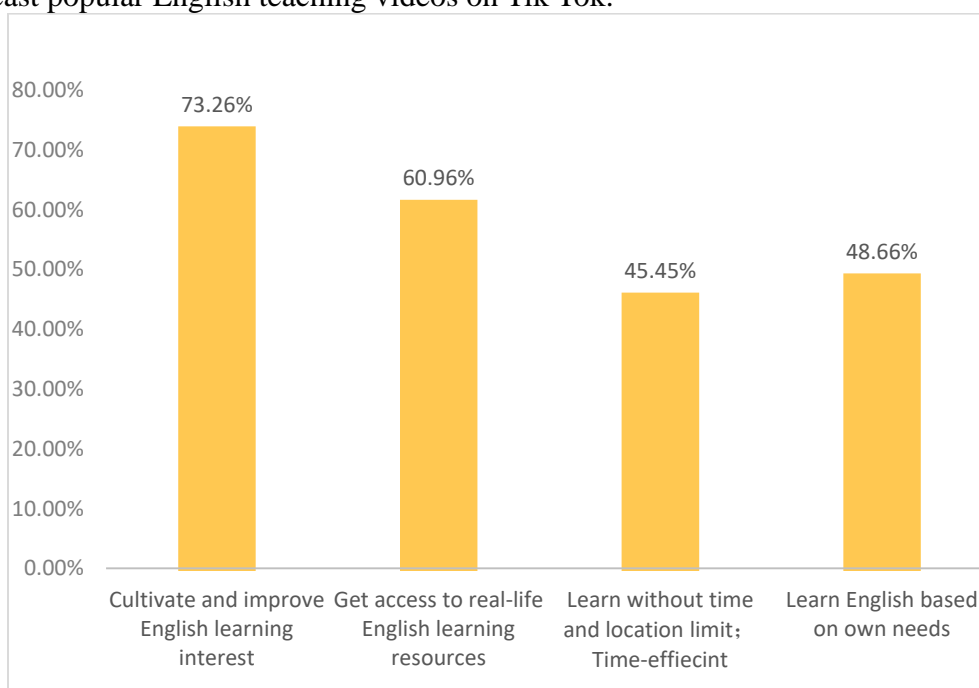


Fig. 6 The benefits of using Tik Tok for English learning

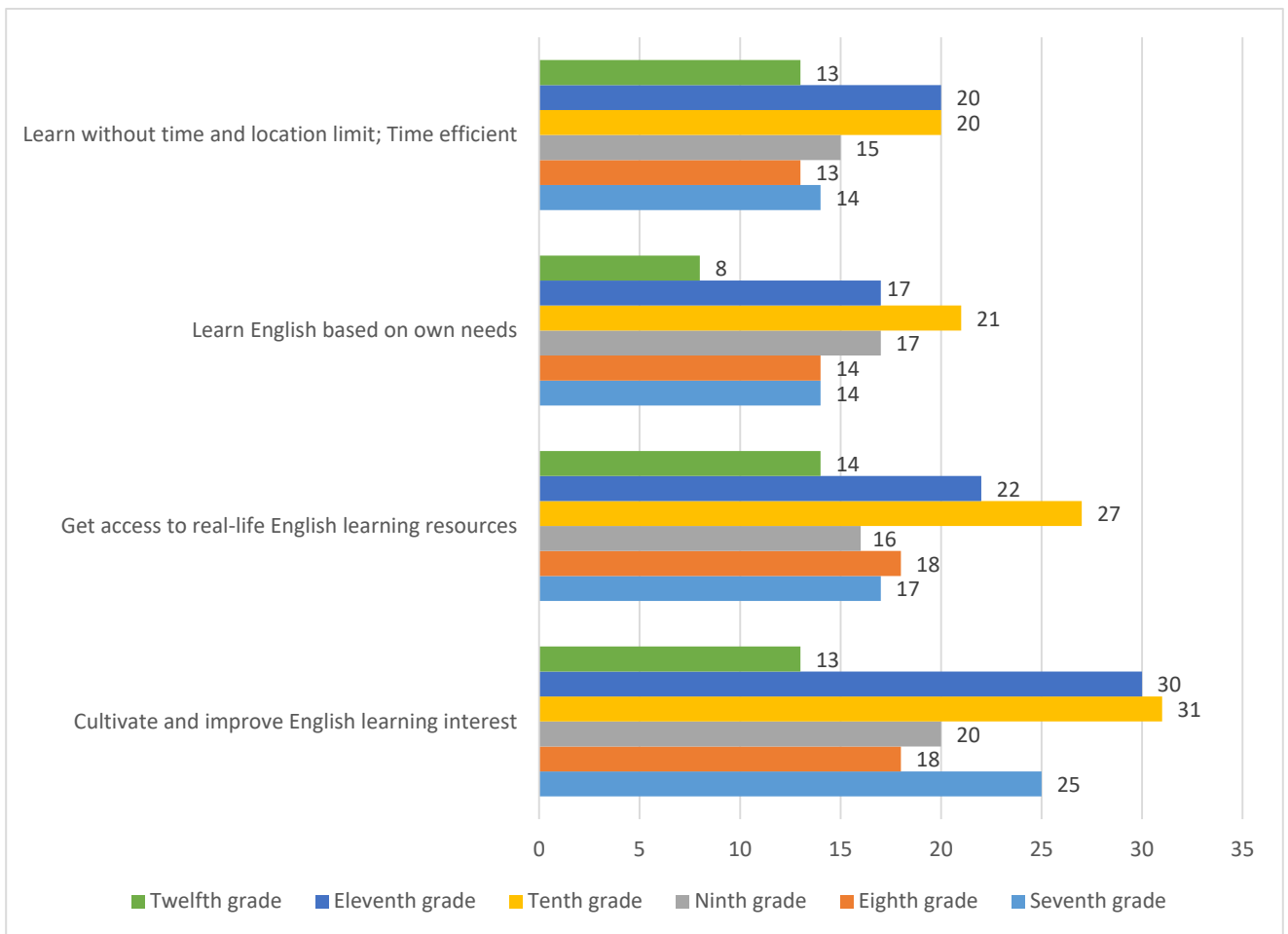


Fig. 7 Participants' perceptions of the benefits of using Tik Tok for English learning- From the perspective of grade difference

The fourth question is “What do you think are the benefits of using Tik Tok for English learning?” This question was designed to investigate participants’ views on the merits of using Tik Tok for English learning. According to the data, 73.26% of participants, equivalent to 137 participants, believed that using Tik Tok for English learning could cultivate and enhance learners’ interests of learning English; 114 participants(60.96%) agreed that utilizing Tik Tok for English learning could get access to abundant real-life learning materials and resources, which reflects the “situating of instructional activities” characteristic of MALL [35, 37] ; 91 participants(48.66%) selected “learning English based on own needs” as the merit of learning English on Tik Tok; 85 participants, corresponding to a 45.45%, regarded “Learning without time and location limit and time-efficient” as one of the benefits of using Tik Tok to learn English, in line with the characteristic of MALL, which are ubiquitous, accessibility and immediacy [35, 37, 1] and the feature of Tik Tok-short video.

From the perspective of grade difference, participants from Grade 7 to Grade 11 believed that “cultivate and improve learning interest” was the most essential merit of using Tik Tok for English learning. Apart from learning interests, “get access to real-life learning resources” was selected as the main benefit of learning English on Tik Tok by Eighth-grade participants as well as twelfth-grade participants. Due to the fact that twelfth-grade participants are facing the college entrance examination, which is one of the most vital examinations in their lives, obtaining English learning materials and resources that may be beneficial to achieve better grades in the examination is more important than improving their learning interests at this special stage.

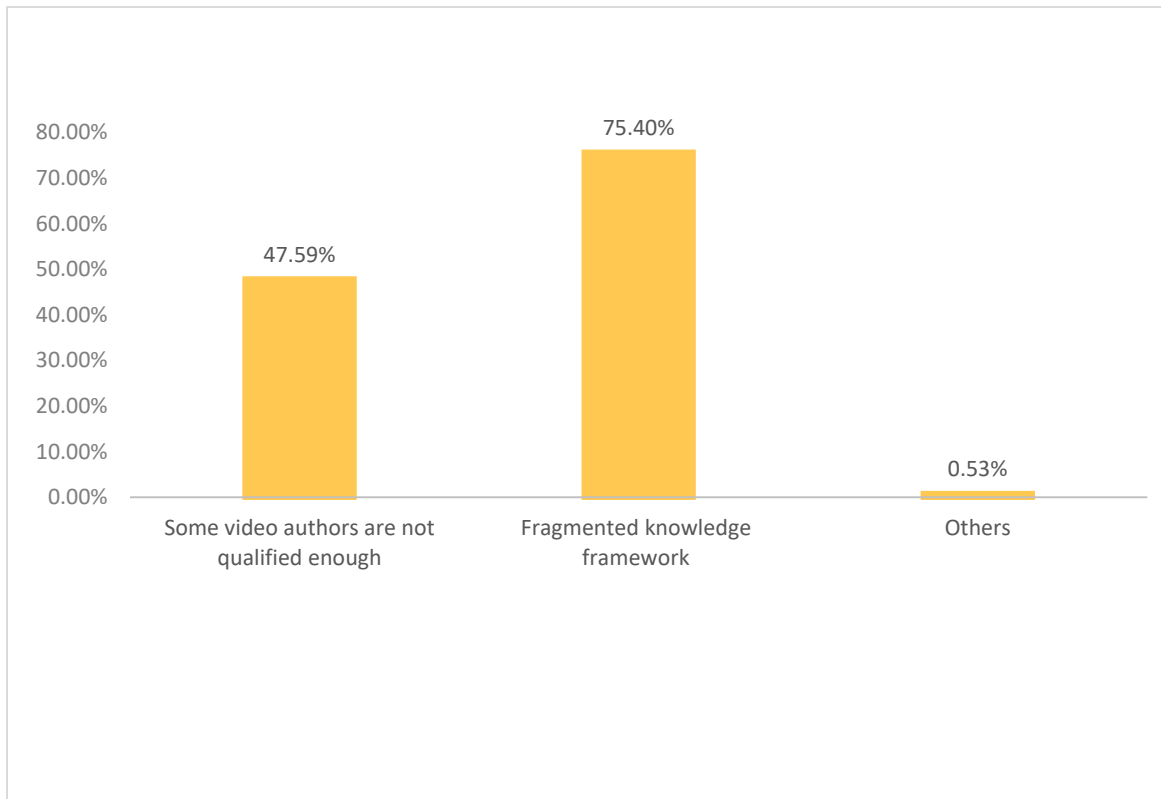


Fig. 8 The defects of using Tik Tok for English learning

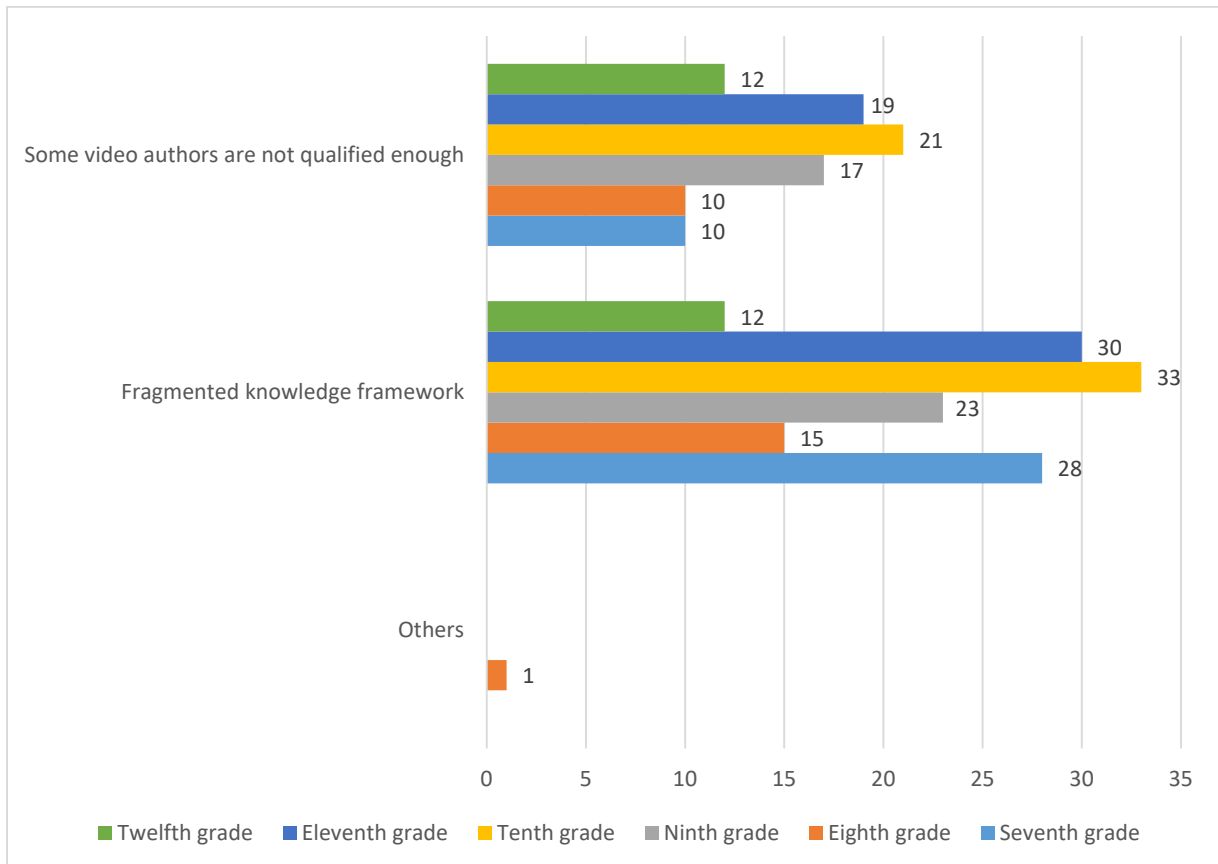


Fig. 9 Participants' perceptions of the defects of using Tik Tok for English learning- From the perspective of grade difference

The fifth question in the questionnaire is “What do you think are the defects of using Tik Tok for English learning?” This question aimed at exploring participants’ impression of the demerits of

using Tik Tok to learn English. As the results indicated, 89 participants(47.59%) worried that the video authors were not qualified enough to impart correct and professional English knowledge on Tik Tok. To be an English-teaching video author does not need to provide relevant teaching certificates or go through strict qualification scrutiny, which means everyone who wants to be an English-teaching video author can upload their videos on Tik Tok directly, no matter he was trained before to be a qualified English teacher or not. Besides, the English teaching videos uploaded on Tik Tok do not need to go through professional scrutiny to review their correctness. Due to this flaw, short videos that may contain incorrect or out-of-date English knowledge will be difficult to be distinguished by English learners, especially for low-level English learners. What’s more, 141 participants, which corresponded to a 75.4%, concerned that the knowledge framework constructed through learning from English-teaching videos on Tik Tok was not systematic, owing to Tik Tok’s unique characteristic-short videos. The time limit of a Tik Tok video ranges from 15 seconds to 5 minutes, which is much shorter than traditional classroom teaching or online English class. This distinguishing feature requires video authors to compress their English teaching process and content to meet the time requirement of Tik Tok, which may lead to the imperfect explanation of knowledge points. Due to the time limit, sequential videos need to be made to make clear explanations of complicated English knowledge. When learners finish one video and would like to continue, they have to “jump” to a new video or even wait for subsequent videos for several days. However, sometimes learners may find that they cannot find the subsequent videos as the video authors has already “jumped” to a new knowledge point, causing learners to be distracted from continuous English learning. Because of the feature of Tik Tok, all of these flaws may cause learners to absorb fragmented knowledge instead of constructing a systematic English knowledge framework.

In terms of grade difference, seventh grade to eleventh grade participants regarded fragmented knowledge framework as the main defect of using Tik Tok for English learning whereas twelfth-grade participants believed that both unqualified video authors and fragmented knowledge framework were major defects of learning English on Tik Tok. Moreover, one eighth-grade participant worried that using Tik Tok to learn English may have bad effects on students’ eyesight.

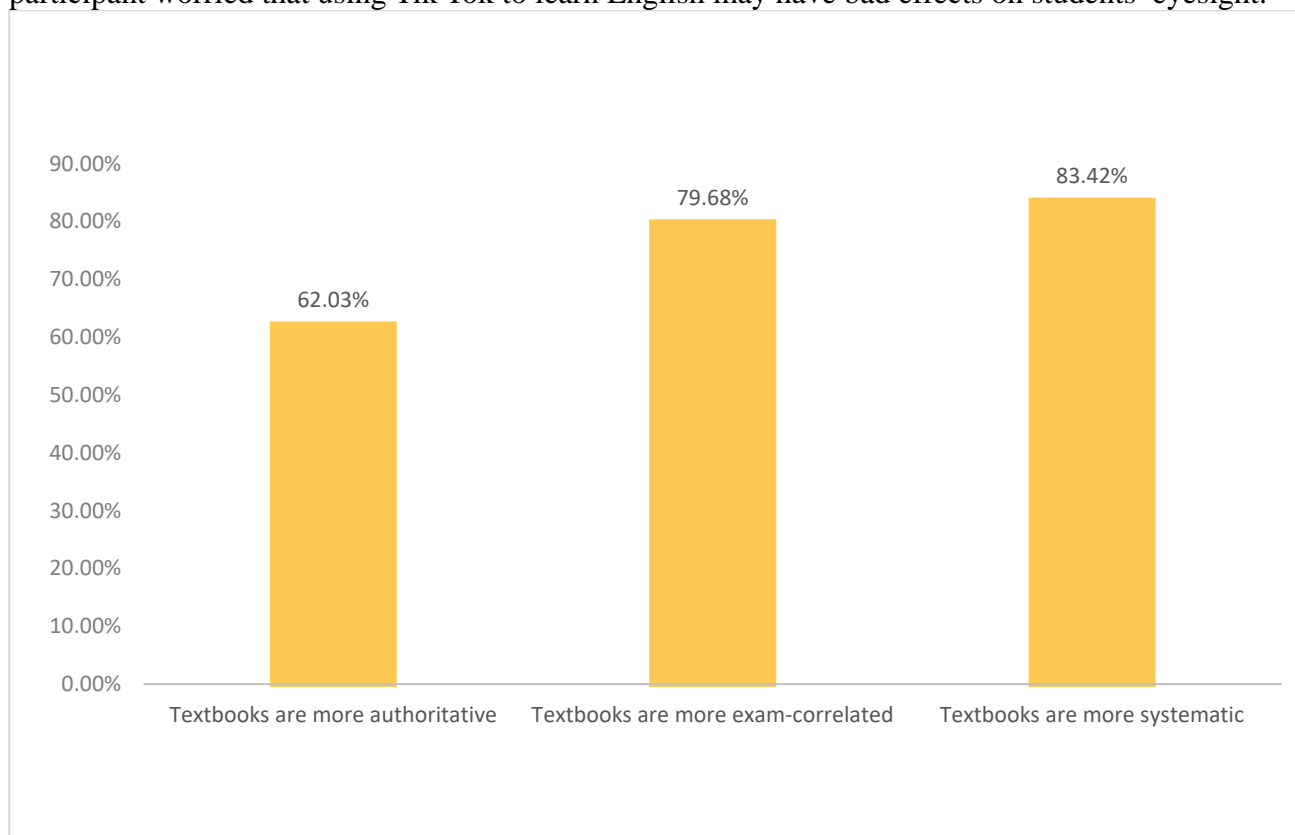


Fig. 10 Compared to Tik Tok, the advantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English

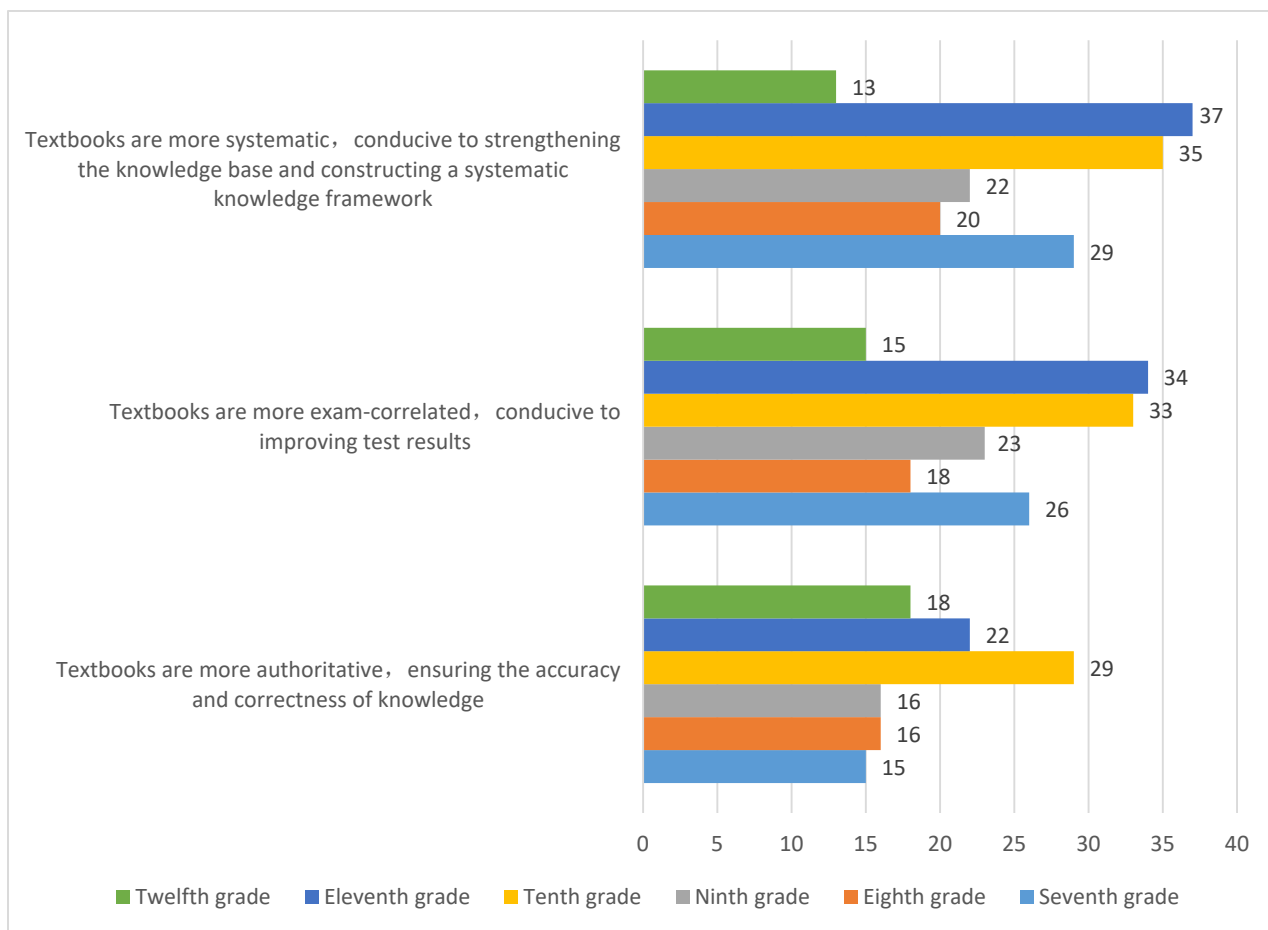


Fig.11 Participants' perceptions about the advantages of using in-class English textbooks for English learning-From the perspective of grade difference

The sixth question is “Compared to Tik Tok, what do you think are the advantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English?” This question was designed to investigate participants’ views of the merits of using in-class English textbooks to learn English when compared to using Tik Tok for English learning. The results of the research suggested that the major merit of utilizing in-class English textbooks for English learning is the systematicness of the textbook, selected by 156 participants (83.42%). As stated above, learning English on Tik Tok may have negative effects for learners to build a systematic English knowledge framework to some extent. However, in-class English textbooks are designed and edited logically and systematically, catering to the needs of all-level English learners, which can support students to strengthen their knowledge base and construct a systematic English knowledge framework from the beginning. Besides, 149 participants, corresponding to a 79.68%, believed English textbooks are exam-correlated, which would helped them achieve higher grades directly. Furthermore, 116 participants (62.03%) selected “textbooks are more authoritative” as the answer. As mentioned above, the lack of qualification scrutiny and correctness scrutiny are main demerits of using Tik Tok for English learning. By contrast, in-class English textbooks are edited by a large amount of English language education specialists, carefully reviewed by quantities of scholars meanwhile authorized by the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. As a consequence, the knowledge taught in English textbooks is accurate and correct.

From the perspective of grade difference, participants from seventh grade to eleventh grade considered the systematicness of English textbooks as the major advantage of learning English through textbooks, except for ninth-grade participants, who regarded “textbooks are more correlated” as the dominant merit of textbooks. What’s more, the authority of in-class English textbooks was selected by twelfth-grade participants as the main advantage of using textbooks to learn English when compared to using Tik Tok for English learning.

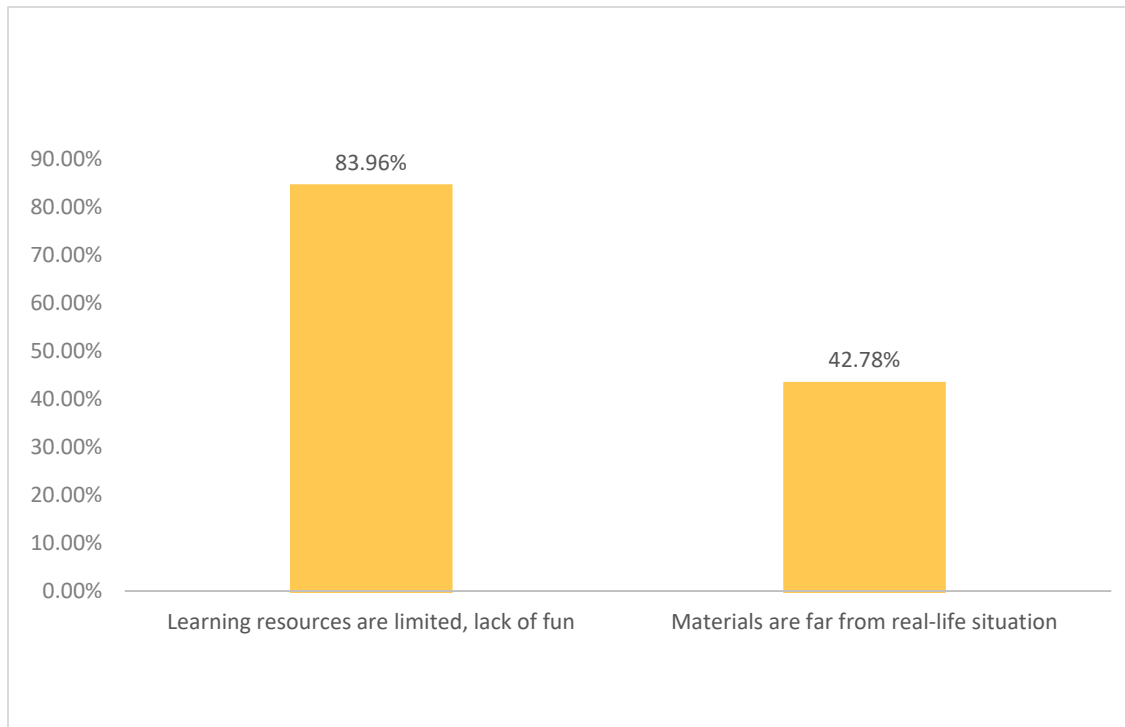


Fig. 12 Compared to Tik Tok, the disadvantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English

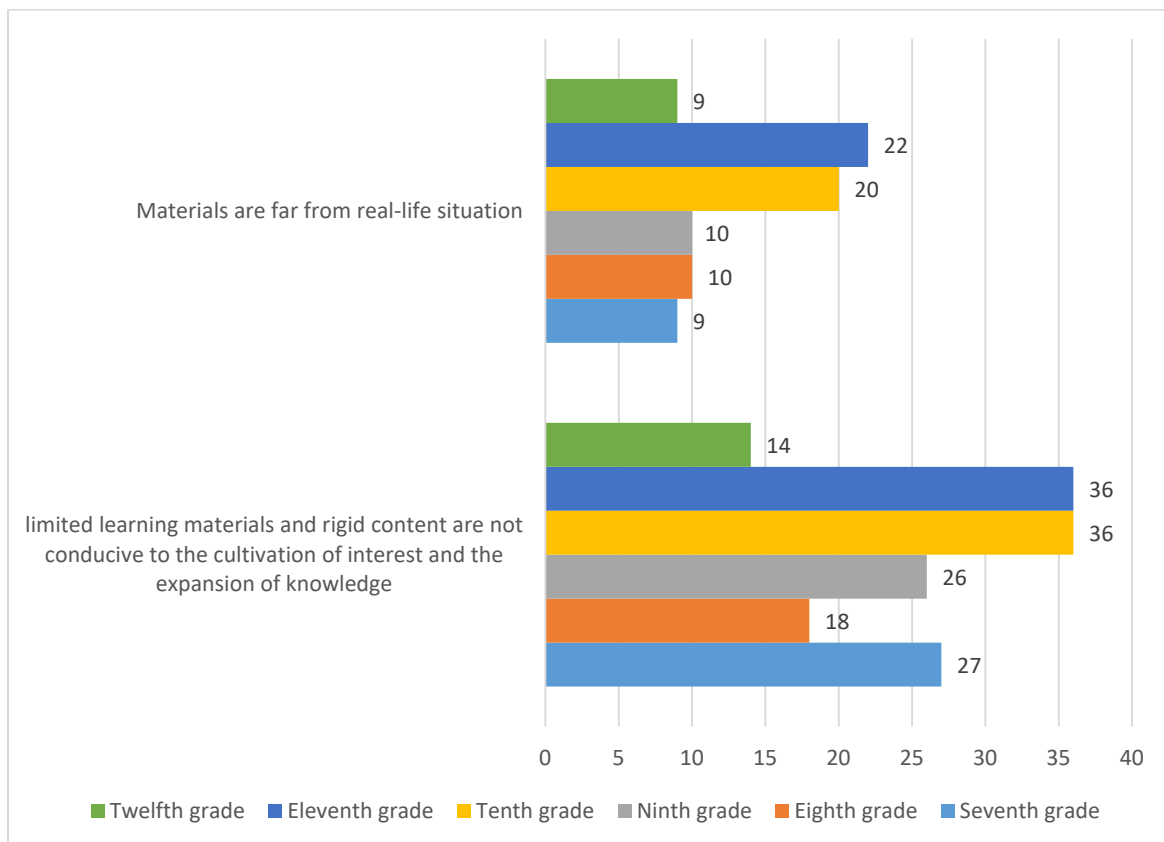


Fig.13 Participants' perceptions about the disadvantages of using in-class English textbooks for English learning-From the perspective of grade difference

The seventh question is “Compared to Tik Tok, what do you think are the disadvantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English?” This question aimed at exploring participants’ impression of the shortcomings of utilizing in-class textbooks to learn English when compared with using Tik Tok for English learning. According to the results, 83.96% of participants, equivalent to

157 participants, considered “Limited resources are not conducive to the cultivation of interest and the expansion of knowledge” as the dominant drawback of employing in-class English textbooks for English learning. The content of English textbooks are mostly exam-oriented, designed to improve students’ four Basic English skills and passing the examinations. As a result, the learning materials in textbooks are not rich and fascinating enough to expand students’ English knowledge and cultivate their learning interests, distinguished from abundant and inspiring learning materials on Tik Tok. Besides, 80 participants (42.78%) believed that the materials in English textbooks were far away from real-life situation. As a matter of fact, most of textbooks can be classified as contrived or artificial learning materials, designed and modified to simplify the English learning process [56] and meet for the exam-centered requirements. By contrast, derived from real life, authentic materials are not designed for pedagogy purpose. In other words, authentic materials can not only suit for English learners’ needs but also can apply to native English speakers. As a consequence, compared to in-class English textbooks, authentic learning materials on Tik Tok can prepare students for real-life situations better. Furthermore, participants of all grades agreed that the major disadvantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English is the native influence on interests cultivation and knowledge expansion, caused by limited materials and rigid content of English textbooks.

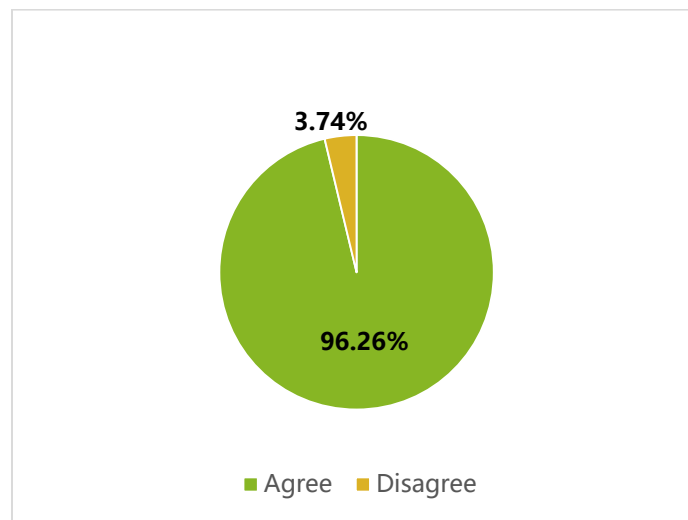


Fig.14 Do you agree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom?

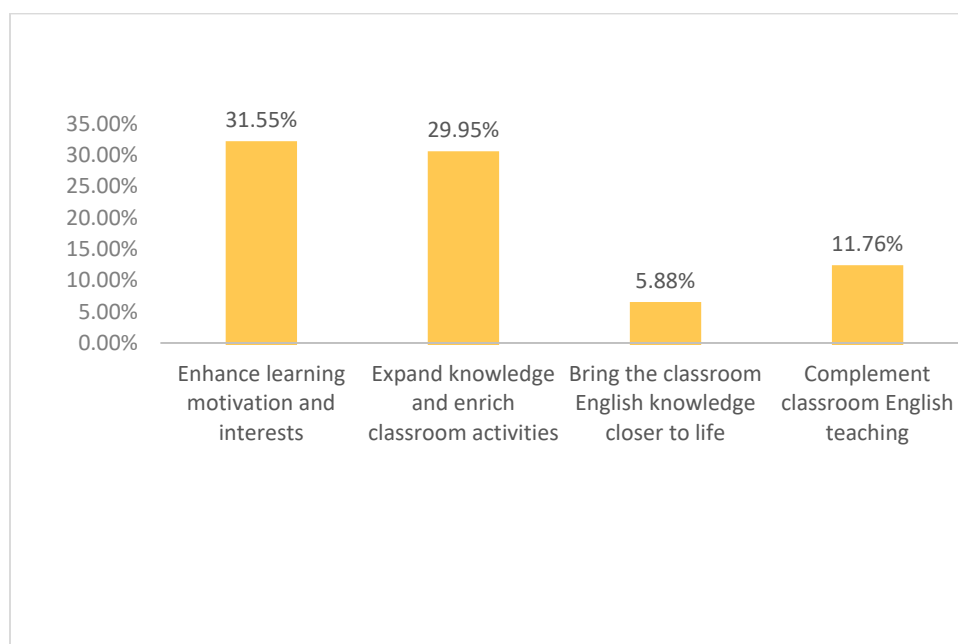


Fig. 15 The reason why participants agree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom

The eighth question in the questionnaire is “Do you agree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom?” aiming at explore participants’ attitudes towards integrating social media application-Tik Tok with traditional EFL classroom teaching. According to the data displayed in table 14, 96.26% of participants, corresponding to 180 participants, agreed with introducing Tik Tok into their EFL classroom while 3.74% of participants, equivalent to 7 participants, disagreed with doing so.

In order to investigate participants’ perceptions of introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom more specifically, the ninth question was set, which is “The reason why you agree or disagree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom”. The results indicated that there were four dominant reasons why participants were in favor of integrating Tik Tok with EFL classroom teaching. For the first reason, 59 participants(31.55%) believed that utilizing English Tik Tok teaching videos in EFL classroom teaching could enhance their English learning motivation and provoke their learning interests, reflecting the positive effects of employing video-aids as educational tools for in-class English teaching. The second reason raised by 56 participants(29.95%) was that introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom could enrich their classroom teaching activities meanwhile expand their English knowledge. Apart from absorbing the basic knowledge on textbooks, abundant English learning materials on Tik Tok provide infinite opportunities to expand their English knowledge and deepen their understanding of obscure knowledge. Besides, combined with well-designed classroom teaching activities, English-teaching videos on Tik Tok can positively engage students to join in the learning process proactively[52]. In addition, 5.88% of participants, which corresponded to 11 participants, believed that utilizing Tik Tok in EFL classroom could bring English knowledge closer to life. In contrast to the contrived English learning materials on textbooks, authentic video materials on Tik Tok are more likely to offer opportunities for EFL students to get access to authentic English language and make the knowledge they learned in EFL classroom practical and pragmatic[11]. Furthermore, 22 participants(11.76%) agreed with combining EFL textbooks with Tik Tok, complementing and supporting each other. For example, owing to the fact that oral English has not been included in Chinese major English examinations, oral English skills seldom be taught and practiced in EFL classroom. However, as a type of language, English should be learned not only for passing examinations but also for communication, which requires of adequate learning resources as well as plenty of opportunities for practice. Therefore, introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom can be an effective way of dealing with this issue as Tik Tok contains abundant oral English learning materials. If these video materials can be utilized effectively in-class by EFL teachers, students may achieve significantly progress in oral English skills, remedying the defects of classroom English teaching. On the other hand, even though there are adequate English learning videos on Tik Tok, as stated above, due to the loophole of Tik Tok’s scrutiny system, learners’ may have trouble in filtering correct and suitable videos for learning by themselves. Hence, EFL teachers can filter out valuable video materials that fit students’ English proficiency and cater for their learning needs, integrating these videos as supplementary materials in class and designing relevant in-class activities at the same time, exerting Tik Tok’s positive influence on students’ in-class English learning. Besides, the integration of Tik Tok and classroom teaching can also help student to develop autonomous learning, by actively involving students in English learning, offering learning resources for students and supporting them to utilize useful materials[10].

In terms of grade difference, participants in different grades focused differently on the benefits of introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom. Seventh grade to ninth grade participants regarded “expand knowledge and enrich classroom activities” as the main benefit while tenth grade to twelfth grade participants paid more attention to the benefit that integrating Tik Tok into EFL classroom could stimulate students’ motivation and interests of in-class English learning.

As for the disagreement of utilizing Tik Tok in EFL classroom, two participants worried that English learning videos on Tik Tok were beyond the teaching syllabus so there was no sense in introducing Tik Tok video materials into classroom teaching; one participant expressed his concern about students’ learning distractions in class caused by employing Tik Tok videos in classroom

teaching.

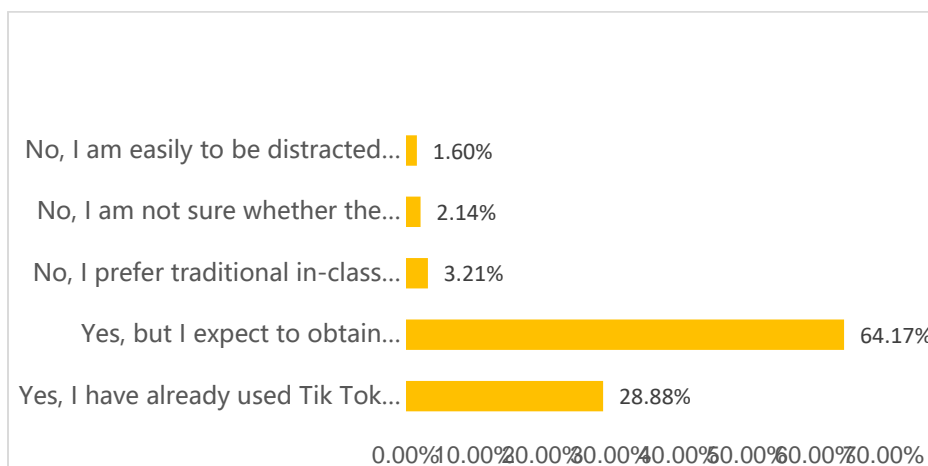


Fig. 16 Would you like to use Tik Tok to learn English beyond the classroom?

Apart from being applied in classroom teaching, social media applications also have the potential to be used for English learning beyond the classroom. The tenth question-“Would you like to learn English on Tik Tok beyond the classroom?” was designed to explore participants attitudes towards using Tik Tok as an English learning strategy beyond the classroom. According to the classification of language learning strategies, using Tik Tok for English learning beyond the classroom can be either a direct strategy or an indirect strategy [cited in 14], depending on learners’ learning demand as well as learning targets. For example, Tik Tok can serve as a memory strategy when learners learn new words or expressions from American or British TV series clips on Tik Tok; Tik Tok can play a role of an affective strategy when learners utilize interesting English short videos to cultivate and enhance English learning motivation; Tik Tok can also be used as a social strategy if learners use it to learn English with video authors and other English language learners on Tik Tok. The results demonstrated that 28.88% of participants, equivalent to 54 participants, had already utilized Tik Tok as their out-of-class English learning strategy in their free time; 120 participants(64.17%) would like to use Tik Tok for English learning beyond the classroom but they expressed strong needs for teachers’ guidance; 6 participants(3.21%) were unwilling to employ Tik Tok for English learning as they preferred traditional in-class English teaching style; 4 participants, corresponding to a 2.14%, refused to learn English on Tik Tok out of class as they were uncertain about the correctness of the knowledge taught on Tik Tok; 3 participants(1.60%) worried that they would be easily distracted by other entertainment videos on Tik Tok meanwhile they did not have enough time to learn English on Tik Tok. In terms of the distraction, similar concern was expressed when discussed the disagreement of introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom. There are two major reasons for this concern. The first reason is the nature of Tik Tok. As a social media application, Tik Tok is not designed for educational purposes but for entertainment purposes, which means it lacks specialized educational functions to support learners to have a focused and efficient learning experience. Besides, as “digital native” [42], students lack self-control, self-direction and self-regulation ability, causing them to be distracted from learning easily. As for the limited time of using Tik Tok for English learning out of class, one major reason may be onerous in-class English learning tasks.

8. Implications and recommendations

The results of the research indicate that most participants held positive attitudes towards utilizing Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the EFL classroom. Specifically, participants expected to use the English-teaching short videos on Tik Tok to improve their English skills, especially for their listening, vocabulary as well as their speaking skills. Among three main types of English teaching videos on Tik Tok, participants preferred authenticity-centered videos the most. When comes to the benefits and defects of using Tik Tok for English learning, most participants

believed that cultivating and enhancing English learning interests were the dominant benefits while the fragmented knowledge framework was the major defect of utilizing Tik Tok for English learning. Compared to using Tik Tok to learn English, most participants agreed that systematicness was the dominant advantage of in-class English textbooks, which could be beneficial for students to strengthen their knowledge base and construct a systematic knowledge framework. Meanwhile, limited learning materials and rigid teaching contents were the main defects of using textbooks for English learning as they were not conducive to the cultivation of learning interests and the expansion of knowledge. Moreover, the vast majority of participants approved of integrating the social media application Tik Tok into EFL classroom as video aids because Tik Tok could enhance their interests and motivation of in-class English learning, enrich classroom teaching activities and expand their English knowledge. Furthermore, most of participants were willing to use Tik Tok to learn English beyond the classroom as an English learning strategy. At the same time, they expressed their strong needs for teachers' guidance on how to effectively utilize Tik Tok for English learning out of class.

According to the results, several pedagogy recommendations are proposed here for EFL teachers, students as well as the software managers of Tik Tok.

Firstly, EFL teachers should follow the trend of times, holding positive attitudes towards introducing mobile-assisted social media application, such like Tik Tok, into EFL classroom teaching [53, 63].

Secondly, it is necessary for teachers to spend time carefully filtering English-teaching short videos on Tik Tok, fitting both students' English proficiency, learning needs and teaching goals [51]. For instance, short videos with accurate pronunciation and moderate pace can be utilized to practise students listening skills; short videos contain real-life dialogue can be applied to practise oral skills; amusing American or British TV series clips that contain valuable knowledge points can be used to cultivate students' learning interests and enhance their understanding of difficult concepts at the same; short videos that introduce foreign culture can be employed to expand student' knowledge and broaden their horizons. Moreover, grade difference should be taken into account when selecting video materials for students in different grades.

Thirdly, in order to maximize the effects of these video aids, well-designed tasks and activities should be prepared and applied in class. For example, role-play activities can be arranged in class, cooperating with short videos that contain real-life dialogues and fit the teaching themes at the same time. Teachers will play the video first and students will be asked to imitate the dialogue, which can be beneficial for students' oral skills. Besides, dictation tasks, repeat sentences tasks can also be applied effectively, cooperating with abundant short video materials on Tik Tok.

Fourthly, on the basis of the results of this research, participants in different grades held different views on some questions so teachers are expected to employ Tik Tok according to grade differences. For example, seventh grade to twelfth grade participants, except for eighth-grade participants, expected to use Tik Tok to improve their listening skills the most whereas eighth-grade participants' prior choice is using Tik Tok to enhance their oral skills as well as vocabulary skills. Therefore, teachers should introduce videos, which are targeted at different English skills, into different grades on the basis of students' learning demand. As for the benefits of integrating Tik Tok into EFL classroom, Grade 7 to Grade 9 participants focused on using Tik Tok in class to enrich classroom teaching activities and expand their knowledge while Grade 10 to Grade 12 participants paid more attention to utilize Tik Tok in class to stimulate their English learning interests and arouse their motivations. Hence, for seventh to ninth grade students, teachers can select short videos that can expand their English knowledge, cooperating with elaborate task-based activities, maximizing the value of integrating Tik Tok and EFL classroom teaching. In terms of tenth grade to twelfth grade students, teachers ought to filter out interesting English teaching videos, which meet the teaching goals at the same time, to stimulate their in-class English learning interests.

Finally, teachers should provide sufficient support for students, guiding them to effectively utilize social media application for English learning in and beyond the classroom[62, 23].

According to the results of the research, some participants expressed their concern of using Tik Tok to learn English, worrying about the learning distraction and the difficulty in distinguish correct knowledge taught by qualified video authors from the incorrect knowledge taught by unqualified video authors. Hence, instead of only sharing short videos as complementary learning materials in class, teachers ought to recommend qualified video authors and relevant English short videos for students to follow, which can exert significant influence on students' out-of-class English learning on Tik Tok. Besides, studies have proven that out-of-class language learning and in-class language learning performance complement each other[13].Hence, teachers are expected to support students' out-of-class English learning on Tik Tok by keeping close connections with students to receive feedback and giving them targeted assistance[16]; ensuring students' out-of-class learning time; designing out-of-class English learning activities and reviewing students' out-of-class learning outcomes in class. Furthermore, during the process of guiding students to utilize Tik Tok effectively for English learning in and beyond the classroom, teachers should assist students to develop self-control, self-regulate as well as self-directed language learning abilities[18], which will be beneficial for their life-long learning.

Students are encouraged to make the most use of mobile-assisted social media application-Tik Tok for English learning in and beyond the language classroom. In class, students should engage themselves in well-designed in-class activities based on Tik Tok video aids to enhance their basic English skills and construct a systematic English knowledge framework. Out of class, students are expected to effectively utilize Tik Tok to get access to abundant authentic English-learning materials, expose themselves to English contexts as much as possible, expand their English knowledge, cultivate their learning interests and develop their self-directed as well as self-control abilities with the help of EFL teachers.

As for the software mangers of Tik Tok, both the qualification scrutiny system for video creators and the correctness scrutiny system for English teaching videos should be improved, to purify the online English teaching environment and provide convenience for both EFL teachers and students to employ Tik Tok as an effective tool for English teaching and learning English. Besides, given that language learning videos are one of the most popular video contents, specialized educational function can be developed, mitigating students' learning distractions and ensuring their efficient language learning process.

9. Summary

Advanced web 2.0 technology and pervasive usage of mobile devices make it possible for social media applications to exert its significant influence on English learning in and beyond the language classroom. This research explored 187 Chinese secondary-school students' perspectives of utilizing a social media application, which is called Tik Tok, for English learning in and beyond the classroom. The results of the research revealed that despite grade differences, the vast majority of secondary-school EFL learners held positive attitudes towards using Tik Tok to learn English in and out of class. In EFL classroom, Tik Tok can be utilized as supplementary video aids to complement traditional in-class English teaching, enriching classroom activities, enhancing their learning motivation and improving their basic English skills. Out of class, Tik Tok can be used as an English learning strategy to expand students' English knowledge, get access to plentiful authentic learning materials and cultivate their English learning interests. Despite of the positive effects of utilizing of Tik Tok for English learning, secondary-school students also expressed their worries, which need to be supported and guided by EFL teachers. What's more, practical recommendations for EFL teachers, students as well as the software mangers of Tik Tok platform have been proposed, based on the results of this research. There are some limitations of this research. First, the sample data is not large enough. Second, this research lacks of experiments to verify the effects of using Tik Tok to improve students' English learning performances. Future research can include experiments as instruments and expand sample data to make experimental results more representative and meaningful.

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Appendix

The questionnaire involved in this research will be displayed in this appendix.

Question 1: What is your grade?

Question 2: Which language skill do you want to improve by using Tik Tok for English learning?

Question 3: Which type of English teaching videos do you prefer when learning English on Tik Tok?

Question 4: What do you think are the benefits of using Tik Tok for English learning?

Question 5: What do you think are the defects of using Tik Tok for English learning?

Question 6: Compared to Tik Tok, what do you think are the advantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English?

Question 7: Compared to Tik Tok, what do you think are the disadvantages of using in-class English textbooks to learn English?

Question 8: Do you agree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom?

Question 9: The reason why you agree or disagree with introducing Tik Tok into EFL classroom

Question 10: Would you like to learn English on Tik Tok beyond the classroom?