

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Student's Perception

1. Definition of Perception

Perception is fundamental psychological process by which individuals understand and interpret objects and events in their surroundings. According to Bernstein et al. (1998) and Santrock (1998), as cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), perception is the process by which individuals understand objects in their environment by organizing and interpreting sensory impressions to give meaning to their surroundings. In other words, perception involves not only the reception of stimuli but also the intergration of memory and prior experience in shaping one's understanding of the word.

In the context of language education and learning, where student perception determines their opinions, attitudes. And evaluations of particular media, method, or learning tool. As noted by Hong et al. (2003), as cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), student perception is used to measure their attitudes toward the use of something in language learning, and whether they agree or disagree with its use in achieving a particular goal. Therefore, examining student perception is crucial because their views directly determine the success or failure of any learning media used in the classroom.

2. Importance of Student's Perception in Language Learning

Understanding student's perception of learning tools and methods is crucial for effective language teaching. Positive perceptions can encourage students to engage more actively with the learning material and also increase their motivation to learn, which in turn can improve their diminish students' interest in a particular learning approach, there by limiting it's educational benefits.

In the context of technology based learning student's perceptions of digital media are crucial because their acceptance or rejection of such media directly impacts the level of the usage and the quality of its application. When students' view a technology as useful, engaging, and aligned with their needs, they tend to use it consistently in the learning process (Kamilasari et al., 2025). As emphasized by Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), students' perceptions of the tools used in the classroom determine their success. Therefore, understanding students' perceptions is a crucial aspect in assessing the effectiveness of a learning medium.

B. English Vocabulary

1. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the most important elements of language because it serves as the foundation of the communication process. Vocabulary refers to all the words a person knows or uses in a given language. Moreover people must know vocabulary first. According to Alqahtani (2015), vocabulary is a collection of lexical units that individuals use to convey meaning in communication. Without sufficient vocabulary, students will have difficulty understanding and using the language effectively. Therefore, in foreign language learning, vocabulary mastery is considered the primary foundation for the development of other language skills (Yuniar et al., 2026).

Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) state that vocabulary is the cornerstone of second language (L2) learning. Without a solid grasp of vocabulary, communication in a second language becomes difficult. A strong command of vocabulary helps students understand the language and communicate effectively, and it helps them learn grammar and sentence structure more easily (Alderson, 2005). Furthermore, vocabulary knowledge supports students in building confidence when using English in both daily and academic activities.

2. Importance of Vocabulary Learning

Understanding students' perceptions of teaching materials and methods is a crucial aspect of creating effective language instruction. Positive perceptions can encourage students to be more active in the learning process, boost their motivation to learn, and have a positive impact on their learning outcomes (Abednego, et al., 2023). Negative perceptions can diminish students' interest in a particular teaching method, thereby reducing its effectiveness in the learning process. According to Alderson (2005), having a large vocabulary in an L2 provides many advantages for learners, especially in understanding and using the language effectively.

In technology-based learning, students' perceptions of digital media are crucial because they can influence how students use such media in the learning process. When students perceive a technology as useful, engaging, and aligned with their needs, they are more likely to use it in their daily learning activities. Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) state that students' perceptions of learning tools can determine the success of their use in the classroom. Therefore, understanding students' perceptions is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of learning media.

3. Challenges in Vocabulary Learning

Although important, many students face challenges in learning and remembering new vocabulary. One of the most common difficulties is memorization; students often struggle to recall new words, understand their meanings in context, and use them appropriately in various communicative situations. Rohmatillah (2014), as cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), notes that students with insufficient vocabulary often face difficulties in expressing themselves, which hinders their ability to communicate freely and effectively.

Another challenge in vocabulary learning is that teaching methods still often rely on conventional, memorization-based approaches. Such methods can make the learning process feel tedious and unengaging for students. As a result,

students may lose motivation and become less interested in expanding their vocabulary (Telaumbanua et al., 2024). Therefore, the use of innovative, technology-based learning approaches is becoming increasingly important to help students learn vocabulary in a more interactive and enjoyable way.

4. Vocabulary Learning Strategies in the Digital Era

Beyond identifying the challenges students face in vocabulary learning, it's also important to consider the strategies that support effective vocabulary acquisition, particularly in a digital learning environment. Webb and Nation (2017) explain that vocabulary learning is most effective when learners are exposed to repeated, meaningful encounters with new words in varied contexts, rather than through isolated memorization of word lists. This principle aligns closely with how short-form video platforms present vocabulary, since a single word or phrase is often repeated across multiple videos with different visual and situational contexts, reinforcing both form and meaning simultaneously (Boiliu et al., 2025).

In relation to mobile and digital technology, Godwin-Jones (2018) highlights that mobile applications and digital platforms can support incidental vocabulary learning by exposing learners to authentic language use outside the traditional classroom setting. This is particularly relevant to TikTok, where vocabulary is often embedded in short, entertaining videos that learners encounter as part of their daily digital habits rather than through deliberate study sessions. Such incidental exposure, combined with the repetition and contextualization emphasized by Webb and Nation (2017), provides a theoretical basis for why students may perceive TikTok as a supportive medium for vocabulary learning, a perception that is examined empirically in the following sections of this study.

C. Tiktok Application

Tiktok is digital social media application that allows users to create, share, and

watch short form videos. The application was first launched by the Chinese technology company ByteDance under the name Douyin in September 2016, and was later introduced internationally as TikTok (Putri,2002). Through this platform, users can create videos ranging from about 15 seconds to several minutes in length, complete with music, sound effects, text, filters, and various other creative editing features.

TikTok has experienced rapid growth and has become one of the most popular social media platforms in many countries. The platform is widely used by young people, particularly users aged 13–29, who are considered harder to reach through conventional media. Data from the United States shows that 32.5% of TikTok users are in the 10–19 age range, while another 29.5% are aged 20–29 (McCashin & Murphy, 2022). In addition to being a form of entertainment, Bernard (2021) in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) explains that TikTok can also be utilized as a digital platform that provides educational content through short-form videos.

1. TikTok features for Language Learning

TikTok offers various features that support language learning. The platform provides many options for learners to study languages through videos and other multimedia features, while also helping them learn new vocabulary from real-life content (Bernard, 2021, as cited in Alshreef & Khadawardi, 2023). These features include tools for creating and editing videos, audio dubbing, duet features that allow users to interact with other videos, and trending sounds that help learners understand pronunciation and daily language use.

According to Putri (2022), TikTok is growing in popularity because it offers a variety of engaging features, such as the creation and sharing of short videos and multimedia content. In language learning, these features can help students learn new vocabulary through videos, text, and audio used in everyday life. Additionally, TikTok's algorithm allows users to discover English-language educational content that aligns with their interests, enabling students to be exposed to English vocabulary more consistently (Hartomo et al., 2024).

2. Tiktok for English Vocabulary Learning

Several studies have shown that TikTok can be used as a tool for learning English vocabulary. Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) conducted a study involving 115 female students at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia and found that most students had positive perceptions of using TikTok videos for vocabulary learning. The study showed that 82.6% of participants considered TikTok a fun way to learn vocabulary, 77.4% stated that TikTok helped them remember vocabulary, and 73.9% found learning vocabulary through TikTok interesting and enjoyable.

The findings indicate that TikTok videos can be used to help expand students' English vocabulary and can serve as an alternative learning medium for language teachers (Alshreef & Khadawardi, 2023). Bernard (2021), cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), also explains that TikTok helps students learn new vocabulary through videos and content related to daily life. Additionally, TikTok can create a more enjoyable learning environment and motivate students in their English language studies. Research by Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) also found that the use of TikTok has a positive influence on students' vocabulary mastery as well as their attitudes toward language learning.

3. Tiktok as Educational Media

In recent years, TikTok has evolved from a platform that began as a source of entertainment into a widely used tool for educational purposes (Meidina, 2025). Many content creators and educators share knowledge through engaging short videos covering a variety of topics, including English language learning. In the context of EFL, TikTok has been used to present vocabulary lessons, pronunciation guides, grammar tips, and everyday English expressions in a visually engaging and easy-to-understand format. According to Haleem et al. (2022), rapid advances in digital technology have transformed many aspects of education by providing learning opportunities that are more flexible, accessible, and enjoyable.

One of the benefits of TikTok is its ability to showcase the use of English

in everyday contexts through videos that are engaging for students. Dwipa et al. (2024) state that TikTok has the potential to be an effective tool for supporting English vocabulary learning. This is because TikTok presents vocabulary in everyday contexts that are more engaging than rote memorization methods. Additionally, students can rewatch content as needed, which helps them recognize and remember new vocabulary through repetition in the videos. The use of TikTok as a learning medium also indicates a shift in students' learning habits, as they increasingly utilize digital platforms that are closely integrated into their daily lives (Ilham et al., 2025).

The importance of TikTok as a learning tool can also be seen in students' perceptions of its use. When students view TikTok as beneficial for learning, they tend to use the app to aid in vocabulary acquisition. Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) found that 69.6% of students agreed that TikTok can improve their opportunities to learn vocabulary, and 73% of students considered TikTok a good medium for learning vocabulary. These results indicate that students not only have a positive view of TikTok but also see it as a medium that helps them learn English vocabulary.

D. Theoretical Framework

1. Technology Mediated Learning Theory

This study uses the Technology-Mediated Learning Theory proposed by Bower (2019) as its theoretical foundation. This theory explains that technology plays an important role in supporting and shaping the learning process. In formal education, digital tools such as social media, mobile applications, and learning platforms are increasingly used because they help facilitate interaction between teachers and students.

According to Bower (2019), as cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), Technology-Mediated Learning Theory consists of three main ideas. First, technology supports learning by helping students access learning materials, receive feedback, and submit assignments more easily. Second, it makes learning more engaging through features like multimedia content, online

discussions, and collaborative activities. Third, it expands access to education by allowing students to learn anytime and anywhere.

This theory is relevant to this study because TikTok can be used as a technology-based learning tool to help students learn English vocabulary. Through short videos and interactive features, TikTok helps students understand vocabulary in the context of daily life and is accessible anytime and anywhere.

2. Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was proposed by Davis (1989) to explain an individual's acceptance of technology use. This model has two main components: Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. Perceived Usefulness refers to the belief that a technology can help improve the learning process, while Perceived Ease of Use relates to the ease with which the technology can be used. In this study, TAM is used to understand students' perceptions of using TikTok as a medium for learning English vocabulary. If students find TikTok useful and easy to use, they are likely to have a positive view of its use in learning.

3. Social Media in Language Education

Social media is one of the most influential digital platforms in education today. According to Yang (2020), as cited in Putri (2022), social media serves four primary purposes: entertainment, socializing, obtaining information, and academic needs. The use of social media for academic purposes has increased significantly as more students incorporate these platforms into their study habits and educational activities.

The use of social media in language learning aligns with language teaching principles that emphasize the importance of authentic communication and meaningful interaction in the language learning process (Irawan et al., 2025). When students view and interact with English-language content on platforms like TikTok, they are more frequently exposed to commonly used vocabulary, correct pronunciation, and everyday language in real-life situations.

This indirect and relaxed form of learning can support classroom instruction while also extending the learning process beyond the classroom.

4. Previous studies

Several previous studies have examined students' perceptions of TikTok in the context of English vocabulary learning, providing an important foundation for the present research. The following studies are particularly relevant as they share a similar focus on how students perceive the importance and usefulness of TikTok as a vocabulary learning medium in the EFL context.

Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) conducted a descriptive quantitative study at King Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia, involving 115 female students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), to investigate their perceptions of the use of TikTok videos in English vocabulary learning. Using a 16-item Likert-scale questionnaire, the study found that the majority of students held positive perceptions of TikTok as a vocabulary learning tool. The results indicated that 82.6% of participants viewed TikTok as a fun way to learn vocabulary, 77.4% reported improved vocabulary retention, and 69.6% stated that it increased their opportunities to learn vocabulary. This study concludes that TikTok is viewed as an effective alternative medium for vocabulary development in EFL classrooms. This study aligns with current research as it focuses on students' perceptions of TikTok in vocabulary learning.

Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) investigated the impact of TikTok on students' vocabulary and attitudes and found that TikTok use has a significant positive effect on vocabulary development. Students who regularly use TikTok to learn vocabulary showed an increase in the number of words they mastered and demonstrated a more positive attitude toward learning English. Bernard (2021), as cited in Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023), also found that TikTok makes it easier for students to acquire vocabulary through TikTok video content and is considered an entertaining and motivating method for vocabulary learning. Dwipa et al. (2024) also emphasize that TikTok has positive potential as a media tool for vocabulary learning because it is engaging and easily

accessible.

In addition to studies conducted in university and general EFL settings, several more recent studies have examined TikTok specifically among senior high school students, a population closer to the context of the present study. Tirtayasa, Mahardika, and Adnyani (2024) investigated the effectiveness of TikTok as an instructional media for improving students' English vocabulary mastery and found that TikTok significantly improved students' vocabulary scores compared to conventional teaching methods. Similarly, Rosa and Suhartatik (2025) explored how TikTok functions as a medium for contextual vocabulary learning and found that it provided accessibility, engagement, and authentic contextual examples that helped learners understand vocabulary usage in real-life situations. Simanungkalit and Katemba (2023) examined university students' perspectives on utilizing TikTok as a medium for learning English vocabulary and reported that students perceived TikTok positively, particularly due to its short, repetitive, and visually engaging video format.

From a broader perspective, Siraji (2025) found that TikTok content can drive students' motivation for developing linguistic competence in English, suggesting that the platform's influence extends beyond vocabulary retention to learners' overall motivation to study the language. Khlaif and Salha (2021) further argue that TikTok can be considered a form of micro-learning or nano-learning, in which short, focused video segments allow learners to absorb information in brief, manageable sessions that fit into their daily routines. This characteristic is particularly relevant to the present study, as it helps explain why short-form TikTok videos may be an effective medium for introducing and reinforcing new vocabulary among high school students.

Although the studies reviewed above consistently report positive perceptions of TikTok as a vocabulary learning medium, most of them were conducted among university students or in EFL contexts outside Indonesia, such as Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) in Saudi Arabia, or focused broadly on university students' perspectives, as in Simanungkalit and Katemba (2023).

Comparatively fewer studies have specifically examined senior high school students' perceptions using the two Technology Acceptance Model dimensions, Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use, as the primary analytical framework. Furthermore, studies such as Rama et al. (2023) and Pratami and Syafriyadin (2023) tend to measure students' general attitudes toward TikTok without disaggregating the analysis into specific usefulness and ease-of-use indicators. This gap indicates a need for a descriptive quantitative study that specifically investigates senior high school students' perceptions of TikTok through the TAM framework, which is the focus of the present research conducted at SMAN 1 Margaasih.

5. Factors Influencing Students' Perception of Technology-Based Learning Media

Beyond the two core TAM dimensions, several researchers note that students' perceptions of technology-based learning media are also shaped by additional contextual factors. Abas, Krishnamurthi, Rasli, and Gusteti (2025) identified factors influencing school students' adoption of social media as a learning platform, including peer influence, perceived enjoyment, and prior digital experience. Similarly, in the context of English learning through social media, Ma, Wang, Li, Wang, Pang, and Wang (2024) and Liu and Ma (2023) note that learners' acceptance of a digital tool is influenced not only by its usefulness and ease of use, but also by the learner's habitual engagement with similar platforms in daily life. These findings suggest that students who already use TikTok frequently for entertainment may be predisposed to perceive it positively as a learning tool as well.

At the same time, some scholars caution that the original Technology Acceptance Model has limitations when applied to informal, social-media-based learning contexts. Malhotra and Galletta (1999) argue that the original TAM is incomplete because it does not fully account for social influence in technology adoption, a factor that is highly relevant to platforms like TikTok, where content is user-generated and often shared through peer networks. This

suggests that while TAM provides a useful lens for understanding students' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use, the findings of this study should be interpreted with an awareness that other factors, such as content quality and peer recommendation, may also contribute to students' overall perception of TikTok as a vocabulary learning medium.

6. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the integration of three main theoretical foundations, namely the Technology-Mediated Learning Theory (Bower, 2019), the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), and the concept of students' perception (McDonald, 2012). These theories are combined to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding students' perceptions of the importance of TikTok as a medium for learning English vocabulary.

The framework starts from the idea that English vocabulary learning is an important but challenging part of EFL learning (Cahyani et al., 2026). Students often have difficulties in memorizing and using new vocabulary, especially with traditional methods. This creates a need for technology-based learning media that is more engaging and effective. In this context, TikTok is seen as a potential learning medium that provides authentic, accessible, and interactive vocabulary content that fits students' digital habits.

Drawing from the Technology-Mediated Learning Theory (Bower, 2019), TikTok acts as a technological mediator in vocabulary learning by providing structured vocabulary content, supporting learning through multimedia features, and giving wider access to English input. Meanwhile, the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) explains students' perceptions of TikTok through two main aspects: Perceived Usefulness (PU), which refers to students' belief that TikTok is helpful in improving English vocabulary, and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), which refers to how easy and convenient TikTok is to use as a learning tool.

This framework focuses primarily on students' perceptions of the

perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use of TikTok for vocabulary learning. These perceptions come from students' direct experience with TikTok features such as short educational videos and authentic English content. According to McDonald (2012), perception is subjective and influenced by prior experience and expectations, so students may have different views depending on their familiarity with TikTok and their attitudes toward digital learning. This study aims to explore how important students consider TikTok as a medium for learning English.

E. Summary of the Literature Review

Taken together, the literature reviewed in this chapter indicates that vocabulary mastery is a foundational component of English proficiency, yet students often face persistent challenges in memorizing and retaining new words through conventional, memorization-based teaching methods. Digital platforms, particularly TikTok, have emerged as an alternative medium that offers repeated and contextualized exposure to vocabulary through short, engaging videos, a characteristic that is well supported by vocabulary learning theory (Webb & Nation, 2017) and by research on mobile-assisted incidental learning (Godwin-Jones, 2018).

Previous studies, ranging from Alshreef and Khadawardi (2023) among university students in Saudi Arabia to more recent studies conducted in senior high school settings (Rosa & Suhartatik, 2025; Tirtayasa et al., 2024), consistently report positive student perceptions of TikTok as a vocabulary learning tool. However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, comparatively few of these studies have specifically examined senior high school students' perceptions through the two dimensions of the Technology Acceptance Model, Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. This gap forms the basis for the present study, which is grounded in the Technology-Mediated Learning Theory (Bower, 2019) and the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989) as its main theoretical foundations. Building on this conceptual and empirical foundation, the following chapter presents the research methodology used to investigate students' perceptions of TikTok as a medium for learning English

vocabulary at SMAN 1 Margaasih.

