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Exploring The Relationship between Motivation and Vocabulary Use among TikTok Users

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Abstract

Over the years, people have added more way in which they can communicate via social media. Indeed , people have learnt to depend on social media to communicate. One social media that has gained so much popularity from the past few years is TikTok. TikTok is a video sharing application that is being used by most young adults. While some say Tik Tok is just a social media meant for people to interact, language instructors have noticed how it has benefitted language learners. This quantitative study explore users' motivation to use TikTok and how the application influence their use of vocabulary in English. 129 respondents were purposively chosen for this study. The instrument used is a survey. Findings reveal that there is also a moderate positive relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users. Findings also reveal interesting motivations for users to turn to TikTok and also how Tik Tok influence vocabulary use. Results of this study bear interesting implications in language learning, particularly vocabulary acquisition.

Keywords: Tik Tok, Interact, Language Learning, Vocabulary, Motivation

Introduction

Over the years, people have added more way in which they can communicate via social media. Indeed , people have learnt to depend on social media to communicate (Desta et.al., 2021). One social media that has gained so much popularity from the past few years is TikTok. TikTok is a video sharing application that is being used by most young adults. TikTok functions as a digital platform for creation of short videos (Montag et al., 2021). Bernard (2021) states that TikTok has become one of the fastest growing social media platforms globally and as of January 2020 it has more than 400 million active users (*TikTok Dau exceeded 400 million in Jan 2020*, 2020). The number of TikTok users have increased tremendously due to the lockdown that happened because of the global pandemic. People are jumping on the bandwagon and start using TikTok for various reasons. This online application allows users to produce short videos of their hobbies and interests such as singing, dancing, gaming, DIY projects, food videos and many more (Yang, 2020). Other than that, Montag et al (2021) summarise that TikTok is a platform that can be used to inform young adults on health

relevant information, official information from the government, political discussions, tourism content, live sales and educational content.

With the popularity of TikTok increasing these days, how useful is it in helping people learn language? Pickart and Botezat (2021) suggested that the situation of utilizing social media in learning language needs further investigation and analysis. This study is done to explore users' motivation to use TikTok and how the application influence their use of vocabulary in English. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- How do learners perceive their motivation to use Tik Tok?
- How do learners perceive their vocabulary use in language learning?
- Is there a relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users?

Literature Review

Social media and Language Learning

In the era of technology tools, learning takes place even on the social media. One category of learning that is popular on social media is language learning According to Muftah (2022), social media has affected learning-especially in the learning of language . The use of social media had given impacts on the social structure. It has influenced the way the society interacts. One popular type of social media today is Tik Tok. Tik Tok can be a tool to enhance language learners to acquire vocabulary. In addition to that, Desta et.al (2021) also agreed that people use social media to communicate. They use social media to improve understanding of how to use the language skills, practice in the real world. One common way is through reading the comments given by users. Learning language is seen as incidental when it is done through the social media.

TikTok is social media for learners to learn language in fun ways. Some users use TikTok to lip sync what they want to say. Some use to listen to natural speech Basically, Tik Tok is seen as an effective way to learn language for short attention spans. In addition to that, users also create content in their target language and the audience learn more about the content as well as the target language used.

Vocabulary Use

When language learners learn vocabulary, they do so at many levels. According to Nation (2001), there are four levels of vocabulary. The levels are high frequency words. These are the words that users use on a daily basis. It is automatic in the users' schemata. Next, is the academic vocabulary. These are the words that users are able to elicit when writing or speaking in academic discourses. The third level is technical vocabulary and these are words that users are aware of when they read technical texts. They may know the usage but do not necessarily use them in their everyday spoken or written interactions. The last level is low frequency words. These are words that the users rarely use for themselves but still know the meaning and usage when presented to them.

Past Studies on Social Media and Vocabulary Use

The study by Alvear (2022) was done to investigate the effectiveness of TikTok as a medium for English vocabulary learning among 22 students of 3rd of Bachillerato General Unificado from "Juan Leon Mera La Salle" School. A validated Cambridge Assessment English test was used as the instrument. This test was adapted and used as pre- and post- test to examine the students' vocabulary knowledge before and after TikTok videos were

incorporated in the study. It was revealed in the post test that TikTok has increased the students' vocabulary range thus showing its effectiveness in improving vocabulary. The study concluded that TikTok improves English vocabulary learning as it provides the students with different experience than traditional learning and recommended the usage of TikTok for an enjoyable vocabulary learning experience because the application offers various content that teachers can use to match the students' needs and interests.

Similarly, the study by Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) also looked at the effectiveness of TikTok in improving sixth-graders of Phanang-Phakerng School Thailand's vocabulary. As an addition, this study aimed to examine the students' attitude towards learning English through TikTok. Just like the research by Alvear (2022), this study employed the pre- and post- test design for data collection process and this study used a semi-structured interview as a measuring instrument. The findings reported that the students' improvement rate was 95% which shows the effectiveness of TikTok in mastering vocabulary. In addition, the interview results showed the students' positive attitude towards learning English through TikTok. This study claimed that TikTok can be used as an alternative strategy to teach and learn vocabulary due to the students' positive attitude.

Slim and Hafedh (2019) conducted a study to explore the effects of social media-assisted teaching on learning English for specific purposes by students at a university in Saudi Arabia. 64 students participated in this mixed mode experimental study. One group of students were tutored using social-media groups while the other were taught in the traditional classroom. The two groups underwent pre-and post-tests to measure their vocabulary learning. They were also interviewed. Findings showed that there were no significant differences between the two groups.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. This study explores the relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and use of vocabulary. According to Rahmat (2018), learning language requires suitable environment. In the world of social media, language learners are turning social media; particularly Tik Tok, as a platform to practice their vocabulary use. This study is rooted from the concept of Tik Tok motivation by Omar and Dequan (2020) who found that Tik Tok user use this platform to interact with their audience. Language users often need motivation to use new vocabulary (Rahmat & Mohandas ,2020) and social media is a great platform to do so. According to Nation (2001), when learners use vocabulary, they focus on the grammar aspects and also the collocation. They are also sometimes hindered by some constraints such as where, how or even when a word can be used.

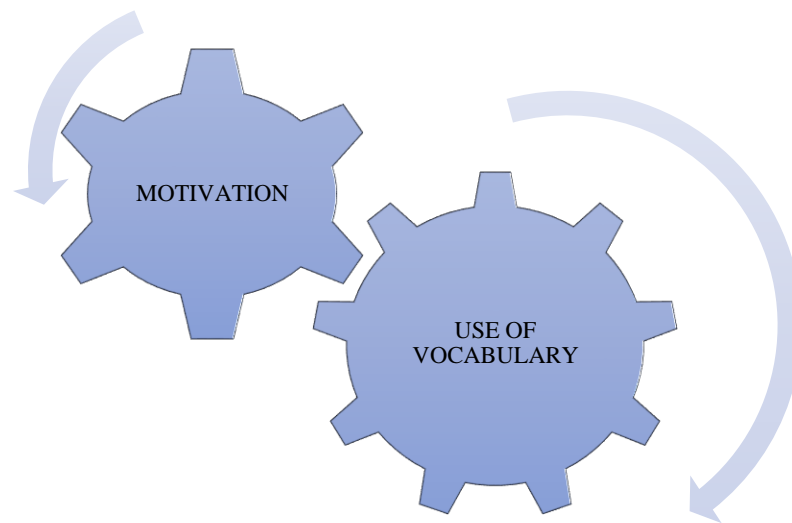


Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study-
 Is there a relationship between Motivation to use Tik Tok and Vocabulary Use?

Methodology

This quantitative study is done to explore the motivation for the use of Tik Tok and vocabulary use among undergraduates. A purposive sample of 129 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5 Likert-scale survey and is rooted from Omar and Dequan (2020) for motivation to use Tik Tok and also Nation (2001) for vocabulary use to reveal the variables in table 1 below. The survey has 4 sections. Section A has items on demographic profile. Section B has 7 items on Tik Tok motivation while section C has 8 items on vocabulary use.

Table 1
 Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECTION	HEADING	NO OF ITEMS
B	TikTok Motivation	7
C	Vocabulary Use	8
	Total number of Items	15

Table 2
 Reliability of Survey

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.881	15

Table 2 shows the reliability of the survey. The analysis shows a Cronbach alpha of 881, thus, revealing a good reliability of the instrument chosen/used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

Findings

Findings for Demographic Profile

This section presents data for the demographic profile.

Q1 Gender

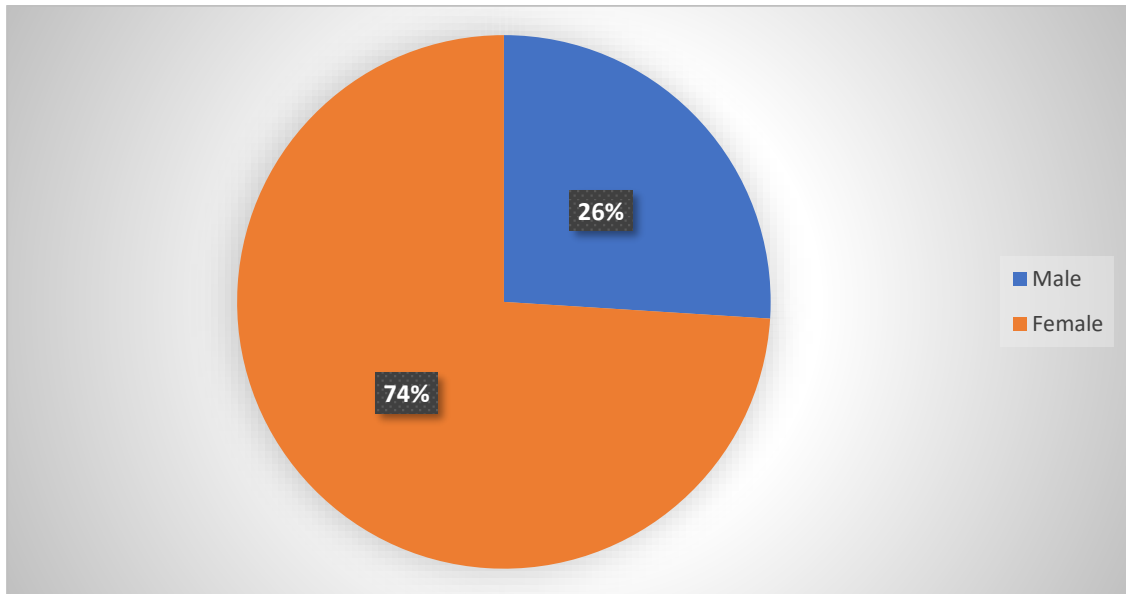


Figure 2- Percentage for Gender

Figure 2 shows the percentage for gender. 26% of the respondents are male. Female respondents made up 74%.

Q2 Age

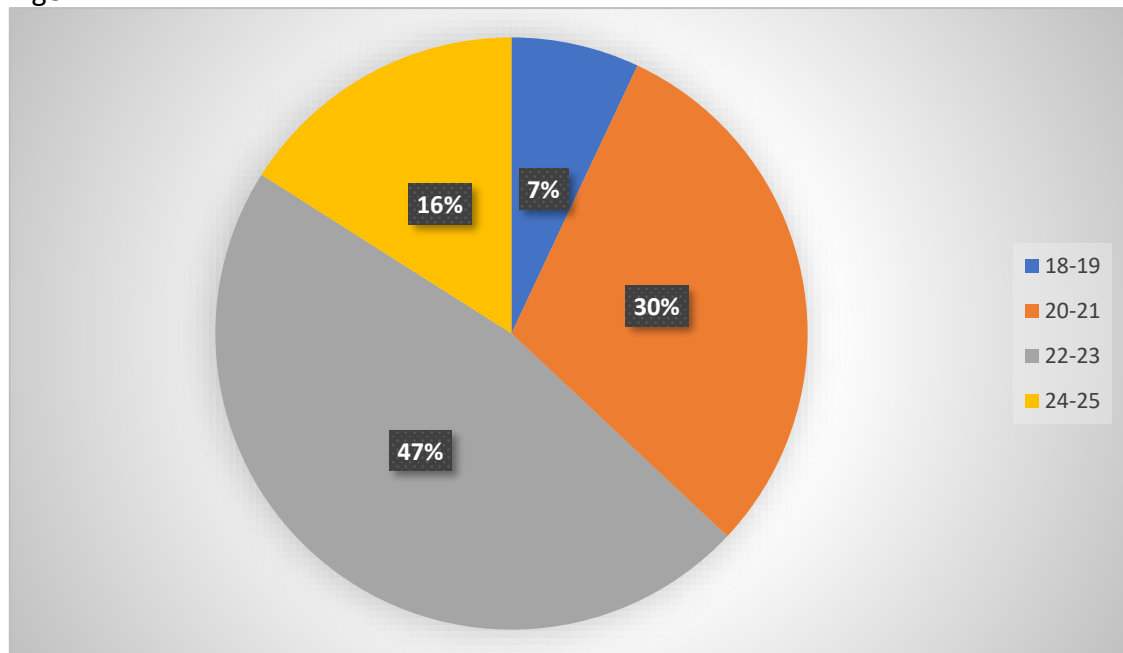


Figure 3- Percentage for Age

Figure 3 shows the percentage for age group of the respondents. 7% are aged from 18-19. Next, 30% are 20-21 years old. 47% are aged 22-23 while 16% are aged 24-25 years old.

Q3 Fields of Study

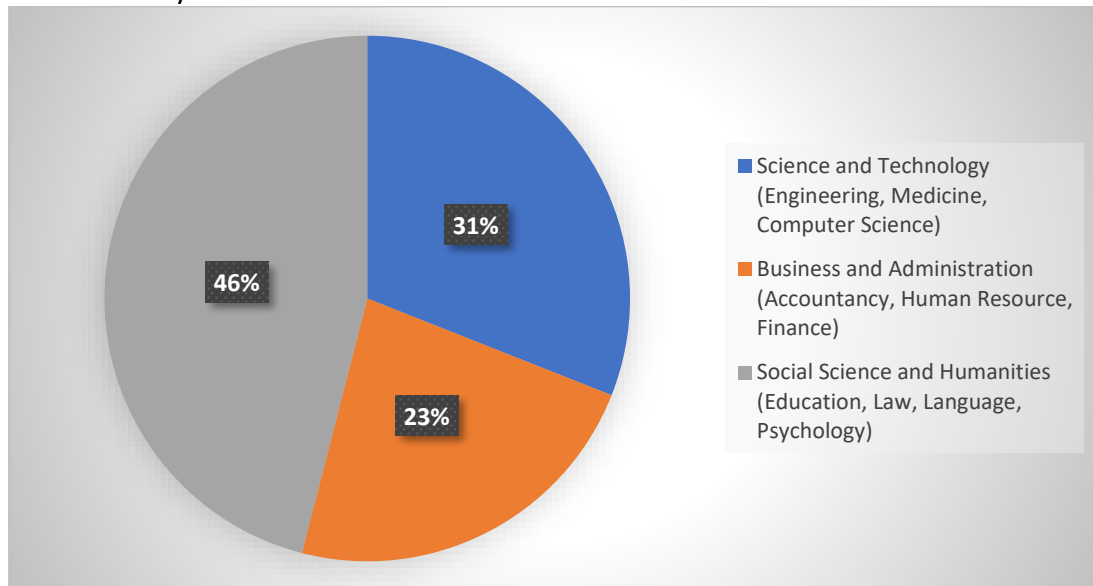


Figure 4- Percentage for Fields of Study

Figure 4 shows the percentage for fields of study. 31% of the respondents are from the field of science and technology cluster (Engineering, medicine and Computer science). Next, 23% are from the business and administration cluster (Accountancy, Human Resource and Finance. Finally, 46% are from the social science and humanities (education, law, Language and Psychology).

Q4 Semester

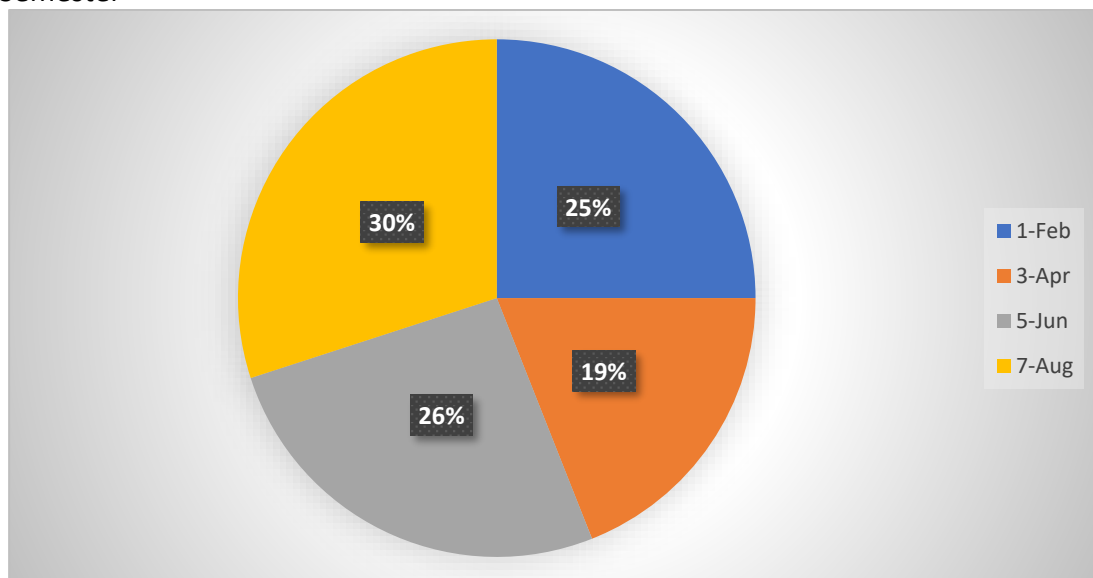


Figure 5- Percentage for Semester

Figure 4 shows the semester of the respondents. 25% are in their 1-2 semester. Next, 19% are in their 2-4 semester. 26% are from 5-6 semester while 30% are studying in 7-8 semester.

Q5 TikTok Usage Frequency

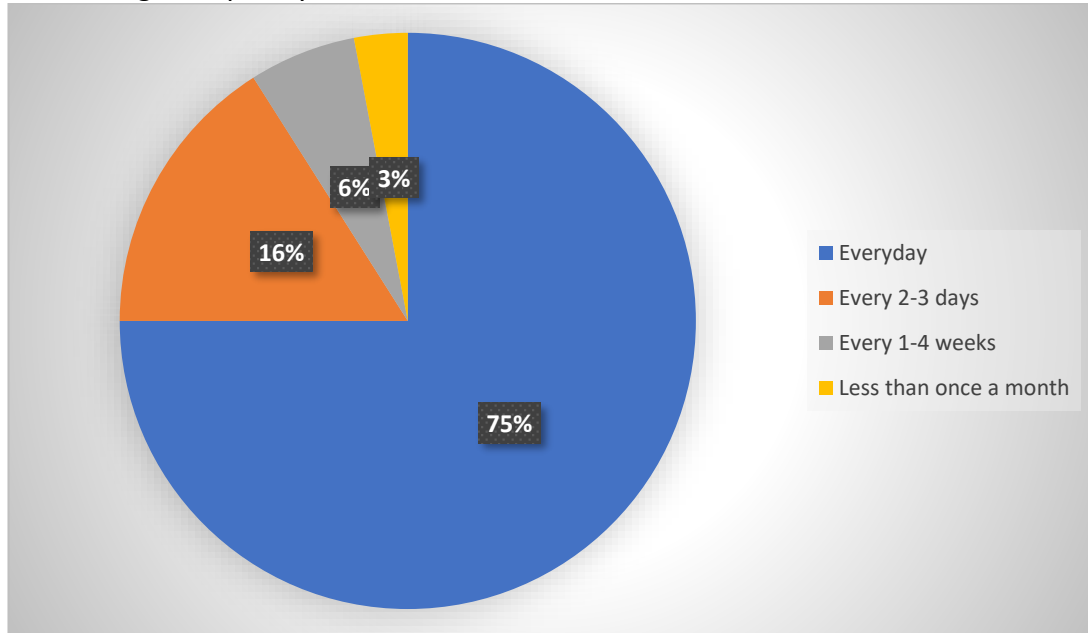


Figure 6- Percentage for Tik Tok Usage

Figure 6 shows the percentage for Tik Tok usage frequency. The categories were replicated from (Cuesta-Valino, 2022). 75% claimed they used Tik Tok every day. 16% reported they used Tik Tok every 2-3 days. Next, 6% said they used Tik Tok every 1-4 weeks while 3% said they used Tik Tok less than once a month.

Q6 TikTok Usage Time

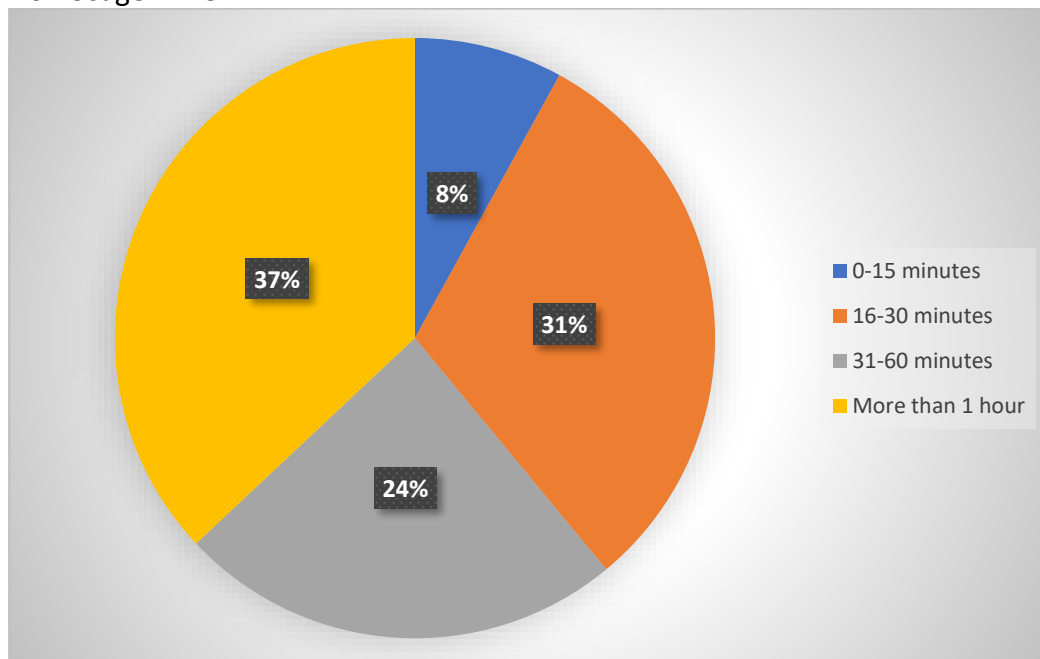


Figure 7- Percentage for Duration of Tik Tok Usage

Figure 7 shows the percentage for duration of Tik Tok usage. For this, Cuesta-Valino (2022) categorised the duration into four categories. 8% reported they used between 0-15 minutes. Next, 31% said they used between 16-30 minutes. 24% said they used between 31-60 minutes and 37% said they used more than one hour at any one time.

Findings for Motivation to Use Tik Tok

This section presents data to answer research question 1- How do learners perceive their motivation to use Tik Tok?

Users' Motivation in Using TikTok

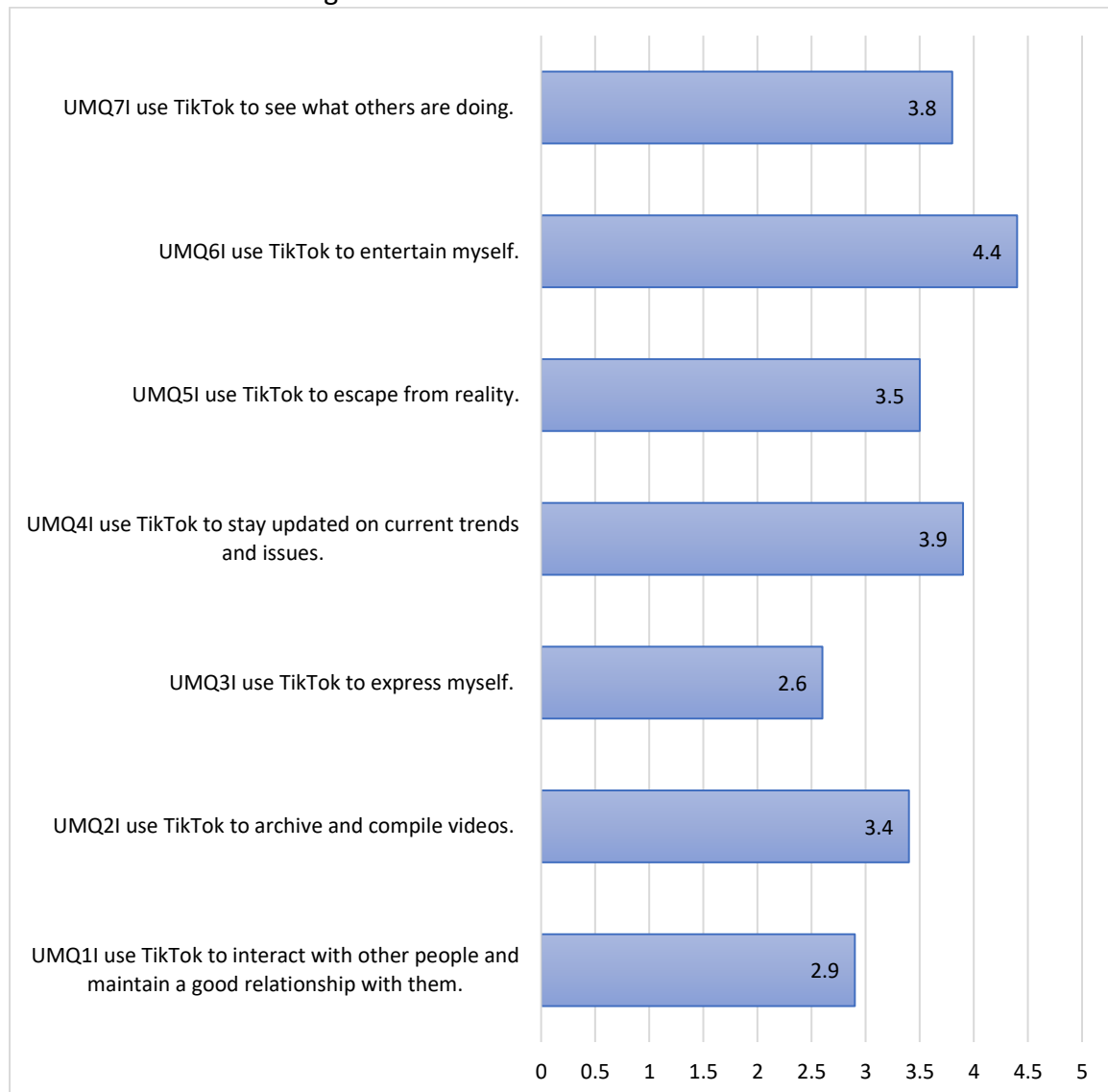


Figure 8- Mean for Motivation in Using Tik Tok

Figure 8 shows the mean for users' motivation in using Tik Tok. The highest mean is 4.4 for the item "use TikTok to entertain myself.". This is followed by the mean of 3.9 for the item "use TikTok to stay updated on current trends and issues". The item "use TikTok to see what others are doing" had a mean of 3.8. The lowest mean is 2.6 for the item "use TikTok to archive and compile videos".

Findings for Vocabulary Use

This section presents data to answer research question 2- How do learners perceive their vocabulary use in language learning?

Use of Vocabulary

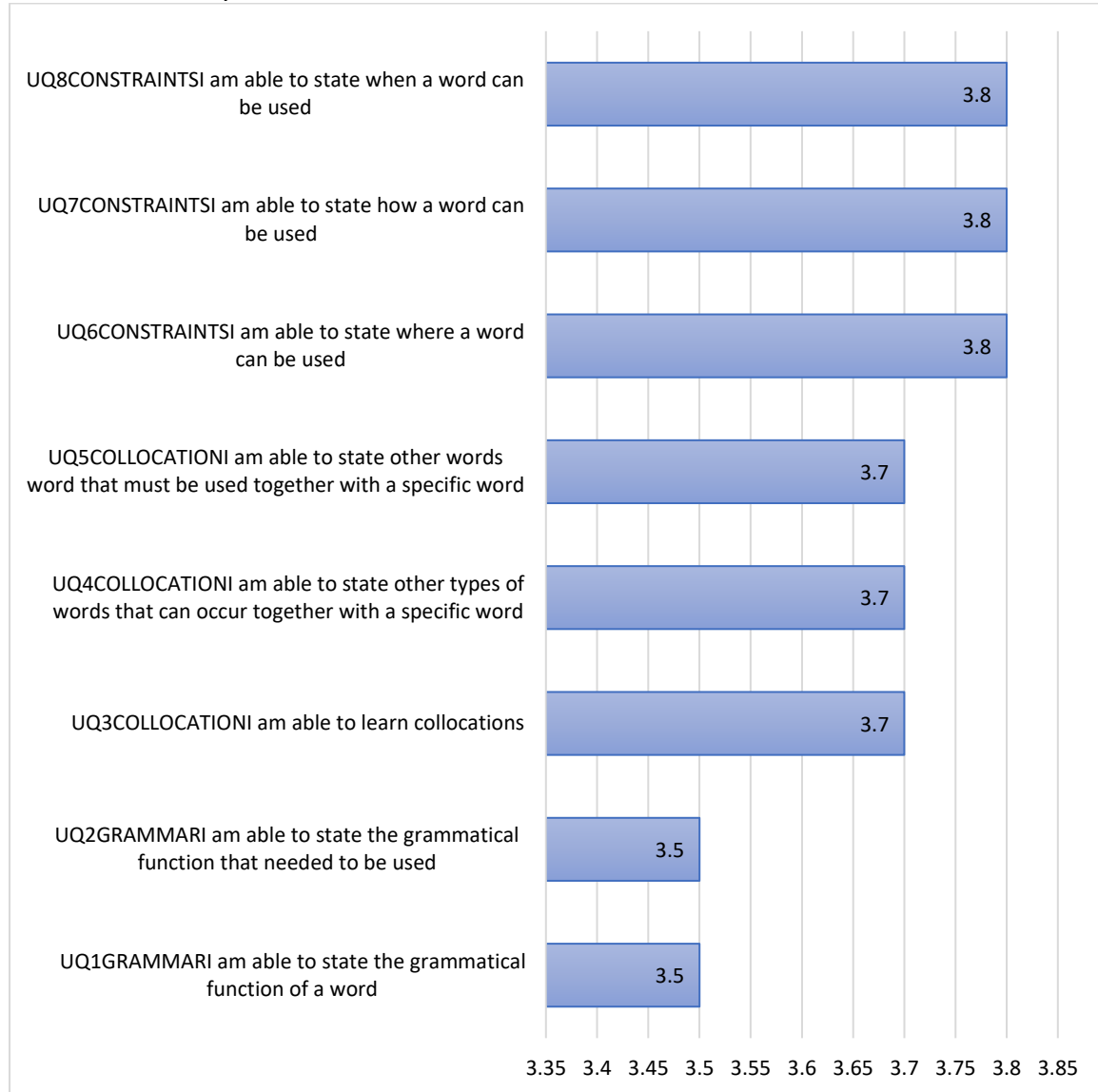


Figure 9- Mean for Vocabulary Use

Figure 9 shows the mean for vocabulary use. Three items share the highest mean of 3.8 and they are “am able to state where a word can be used”, “am able to state how a word can be used” and “am able to state when a word can be used”. Next, three items had a mean of 3.7 and they are “am able to learn collocations”, “able to state other types of words that can occur together with a specific word” and also “able to state other words word that must be used together with a specific word”.

Findings for Relationship between Motivation and Vocabulary Use

This section presents data to answer research question 3- Is there a relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users? To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary

use among language users data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3

Correlation between Motivation and Use

Correlations

		TOTALMOTIVATION	TOTALUSE
TOTALMOTIVATION	Pearson Correlation	1	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	129	129
TOTALUSE	Pearson Correlation	.391**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	129	129

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows there is an association between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users. Correlation analysis shows that there is a moderate significant association between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users ($r=.391^{**}$) and ($p=.000$). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a moderate positive relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings and Discussions

To sum up, there is also a moderate positive relationship between motivation to use Tik Tok and vocabulary use among language users. This means users of TikTok do gain positive influence in their vocabulary usage. This is interesting because although respondents agreed that their motivation to use TikTok was to have fun while keeping up with current trends of trend and issues around them, they improve on their vocabulary use. In addition to that, the summary of findings also showed that using TikTok allows users to observe what, and how words are used in the context. Based on the data analysis, this study finds that TikTok has an influence on the usage of word. This finding can be acknowledged by other researchers as several studies reported similar findings.

Firstly, this study agrees with Lialikhova's (2014) statement that videos motivate students to learn English and later utilise their language knowledge in real-life context. According to Yang (2020), language learners use TikTok to learn grammar as grammar can be improved by watching educational videos posted by TikTok's creators. In accordance with a study by Rahmawati and Anwar (2022), students had a positive attitude in learning English through TikTok as it encourages them to use the words and phrases they learnt in their daily lives. Alghameeti (2022) confirms that through TikTok learners are able to practice their newly learnt words and apply them while playing online games in order to communicate with

fellow gamers. A study done by Zuleta (2022) shows that TikTok enhances the students' lexical and grammatical knowledge. Overall, the above findings show that TikTok does have an influence on the usage of word.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The use of social media has a place in the language learning. With the guidance of language instructors, the use of TikTok can be used as a catalyst to make learning fun in the language classrooms. Technology had changed the way learners communicate and it has also changed the way learners learn. Future researchers could explore others language aspects that users of Tik Tok can benefit from.

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