

**A Case Study of Public Administration Students' Policy Communication
Readiness via Tiktok in Blitar**

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Abstract

In today's world of transparent budgeting, English proficiency is essential for students pursuing a degree in Public Administration. This study investigates students' perspectives about the efficiency of TikTok as a medium for learning English as a Second or Additional Language (ESL). A total of twelve students enrolled in the Public Administration program at the University of Islam Balitar participated in the study. The study employed a qualitative case approach. Data is collected through in-depth interviews and classroom observations. It is then analyzed thematically. TikTok has been found to be an effective tool for enhancing vocabulary and pronunciation skills related to APBD, as well as for increasing motivation to learn through interactive micro-learning content. However, it should be noted that this approach may also result in distractions and difficulties in distinguishing between educational content and personal opinions without the guidance of a faculty member. According to this study, TikTok has the potential to be a beneficial learning tool for students studying administration, but it must be paired with increasing digital literacy and providing proper direction to avoid any potential adverse effects.

Keywords: Speaking English, Using TikTok, Public Administration, Communication Policy

Introduction

Speaking skills are necessary for English students with specific purposes, especially Public Administration students at Balitar Islamic University, because they are very important for the professional landscape. Before speaking, they should practice particular terms relating to their major and seek help from their teacher (Szyszka, 2017). Such skills enable public administration students to convey public sector budget information, such as the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget, transparently to the public, thereby enhancing the credibility of the government and public participation in budget oversight, as emphasized in studies on the importance of public communication for budget transparency in Indonesia. In order to persuade the reader, the speaker must be prepared to address unique student needs (Waniek-Klimczak (2011), as cited in, Szyszka (2017).

The speaking skill is crucial not only for professional administration but also for socialization. In public administration, this skill facilitates the socialization of public sector budgets such as the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget to the wider community, builds trust, and prevents conflicts through the appropriate choice of words in public communication, according to research on community participation in local budgeting in Indonesia. This tendency is known as productive skills, such as speaking and writing (Winke & Gass, 2019). Additionally, teachers will assist their students with basic vocabulary relating to their needs; this is known as the cognitive process (Cui & Wang, 2024). When giving a speech, students are required to avoid conflict and start the speech off correctly. And this is their goal when they communicate professionally.

However, they faced obstacles when taking English speaking classes to support their academic grades. Based on the results of interviews in preliminary research, they are feeling embarrassed and lack the specific vocabulary to explain public sector budgets, such as the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget transparently, which leads to poor performance in conveying budget information to the public. According to Grabe (2009), cited in Winke & Gass (2019), vocabulary acquisition affects English

comprehension through keywords while reading, causing confusion and low performance. The best option is to implement vocabulary-learning strategies during lectures, as per Winke and Gass (2019).

TikTok has become a useful educational tool to help students overcome problems related to speaking. This is because currently it is used not only for entertainment but also for teaching purposes, especially in speaking English. This application, which functions as a social network, has the potential to impact students' academic performance ((Boruzie et al., 2024). TikTok provides short videos for speaking practice, as there are many videos on examples of transparent implementation of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget in accordance with the textbook that is applied in class. This will certainly boost the confidence of public administration students in conveying budget information to the public through interactive content. Mobile learning technology can affect the outcome of language learning (Quraishi et al., 2024).

Based on previous studies, the use of TikTok has been widely reviewed in the context of English language skills, particularly in terms of pronunciation (Adityo & Novitasari, 2023; Fitria, 2023) and general speaking skills improvement (Hongsa et al., 2023; Suripto et al., 2023). In addition, studies on students' perceptions of using TikTok as a means of independent speaking practice have also been conducted in the context of Vietnamese students (Ngo, 2024). However, most of these studies focus on general students or regular English classes, and have not touched on the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), especially for Public Administration students. Hence, there is a research gap regarding how TikTok can be integrated into English speaking learning that is oriented towards academic and professional needs in the field of public administration. Therefore, the novelty of this particular study lies in the use of TikTok as an innovative medium to improve the speaking skills of ESP Public Administration students at Balitar Islamic University, using a qualitative case study approach. The purpose of this study is to explore in depth the experiences, perceptions, and learning processes of students in

utilizing TikTok as a means of developing English speaking skills relevant to the field of Public Administration.

Method

Research design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to deeply explore how students in the Public Administration program understood and communicate issues related to the public sector budget, particularly the principle of budget transparency to the wider community. The case study design was chosen based on the views of Cohen et al. (2018) and Lahman (2025), who argued that this approach allows researchers to explore complex phenomena in real contexts. In this case, the focus was on the public communication practices of students who would later play a role in governance. Case studies also allowed for an in-depth exploration of the unique experiences of a small group of participants with specific characteristics, as Yin (2018) emphasizes.

Participant

The research participants consisted of twelve students from Class A of the Public Administration Study Program at Balitar Islamic University who were selected using purposive sampling. The candidates would be evaluated based on three criteria. First, they had completion of foundational courses related to public policy and budgeting. They were actively engaged in class discussions on budget transparency. And the final one was that they wanted to share their proven experience or special interest in the topic of public information with others. This particular selection of participants was designed to enhance the credibility of the data, as articulated by Etikan et al. (2016) as referenced in Buys and Oberholzer (2023).

Data collection

The data gathering process was carried out using two main instruments. In order to investigate students' perspectives, understanding, and difficulties in explaining public sector finances to the public, semi-structured interviews were first created. This interview format offered a high degree of flexibility for participants to articulate their experiences in

depth, aligning with the approach employed by Nguyen and Tran (2024) in the domain of language learning. However, in the present study, this format was adapted to prioritize budget literacy and public communication. Secondly, classroom observations were conducted during discussion sessions on the regional budget (APBD) and budget transparency. These observations referred to the observation proposal by Saginor (2008). They were used to complement the interview data with the context of real interactions in an academic environment.

To maintain validity and reliability, the researchers applied the principles proposed by Yin (2018). Two experienced Public Administration lecturers reviewed the data collection instruments and analysis process to ensure construct validity. In addition, a careful analysis of the causes and effects in the findings was conducted to strengthen internal validity.

Data analysis

The data analysis followed the procedure outlined by Yin (2018), which involved examining, categorizing, tabulating, and recombining the evidence obtained. The data from the interviews and observations were coded according to the following main themes. First, the participants' conceptual understanding of budget transparency. Second, the strategies for communicating the budget to the public. And finally, the obstacles to explaining the APBD transparently. This process did not aim for statistical generalization; rather, it sought to identify meaningful patterns that emerge from the specific context of this case study. Thus, the case study design allowed researchers to not only document how students understand the principle of budget transparency, but also how they envision their role as future public administrators in conveying budget information to the public, which is essential in realizing accountable and participatory governance.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

To facilitate comprehension among readers of the study's findings, the study's primary conclusions were presented in tabular form. This table offered a concise overview of TikTok's contributions to the field of Public Administration, encompassing aspects such as performance evaluation, learning motivation, contextual relevance to Public Administration, and the identified limitations in its application.

Tabel 1. Public Administration Students' perception using TikTok in ESP class

No.	Findings	Description
1	Speaking skill	It helped the participants to master the vocabulary and pronunciation which were needed in ESP class, especially about APBD technical terms
2	Motivation	Short and interactive video enhanced the motivation and courage to speak in front of others
3	The content of Public Administration	It gave additional practicum information on budgeting transparency that was relevant to the students' needs.
4	Disadvantages of TikTok	It caused distraction to mastery the budgeting material

As demonstrated in the preceding table, TikTok had been shown to be effective in enhancing English language proficiency, particularly in the domains of technical vocabulary and pronunciation of specialized terms related to the transparency of regional budgets (APBD). The implementation of micro-content, voice-over, and duet features enables independent, straightforward, and engaging self-learning. This quality fostered heightened self-assurance, which in turn manifested in heightened confidence during classroom discussions and academic presentations.

This study diverged from previous studies in its emphasized-on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly within the context of Administration Public. A previous study, for instance, that of Adityo and Novitasari (2023) and Fitria (2023), centered on the enhancement of pronunciation through the medium of TikTok. Conversely, the research conducted by Hongsa et al. (2023) and Suropto et al. (2023) focused more broadly on the improvement of spoken English proficiency in the EFL context, without emphasizing any specific field. In addition, Ngo (2024) conducted a study on the perception of Vietnamese students regarding the use of TikTok as a medium for independent learning, while maintaining a broader perspective on the use of technology in education. The present study introduced an innovative perspective by integrating TikTok into the measurement of public speaking skills that were pertinent to academic and professional fields, particularly in the context of local government budgetary processes.

Despite the difference in context, the findings of this study were consistent with previous studies in indicating the efficacy of TikTok as a medium for learning English. In accordance with the findings of Adityo and Novitasari (2023) and Fitria (2023), this study emphasized the role of TikTok in the enhancement of pronunciation skills. The present study further substantiated the efficacy of this application in facilitating the mastery of proper pronunciation. This study corroborated the conclusions of Hongsa et al. (2023) and Suropto et al. (2023) that TikTok had the capacity to enhance the skills and motivation of its users by providing concise, engaging, and easily accessible content. In addition, a congruence with the research conducted by Ngo (2024) was evident in the finding that TikTok provided an opportunity for students to engage in independent speech training and to overcome psychological barriers. The present study offered empirical evidence that substantiates the notion that TikTok was a pioneering medium that was remarkably effective, particularly in the context of ESP within the domain of Public Administration.

Discussion

1. Enhancing English Skill

Originally designed as an entertainment platform, it has evolved into a relevant tool for learning, especially for Public Administration students. It helps students communicate budget information to the public.

Student 1: "I learn a lot of vocabulary using this app"

Student 3: "I focus on pronunciation so I can be professional speaker"

According to the first point, TikTok is beneficial for enhancing speaking skills since it offers particular, relevant micro-content. Public administration students at Balitar Islamic University use TikTok's search and recommendation functions to identify videos in English discussing public budgeting, transparency, fiscal accountability, and citizen participation. These videos are often created by public policy practitioners or international institutions. They use relevant technical terms and include visual explanations and concrete examples. This application has the potential to serve as both a social network and an educational tool" (Maulana et al., 2024). This allows students to naturally and repeatedly enrich their professional vocabulary, making it easier to remember and use in class discussions and public presentations. To achieve progress in technology and knowledge, it is essential for students to leverage the opportunities provided by Industry 4.0 (Savitri & Sukoyo, 2023).

According to the second statement, which is taken from the interview part, TikTok has also been shown to help students improve their pronunciation in addition to helping them grow their vocabulary, especially when it comes to technical words relate with budgeting. A significant number of content creators on TikTok, including public policy academics, government auditors, and transparency activists, employ standard pronunciation (American English) when elucidating concepts for example "budget allocation". Then, students can listen to and imitate these pronunciations repeatedly, even

slowing down the video speed to accurately capture the phonetic sounds. The incorporation of a duet and voice-over features enables the subjects to record themselves while emulating the original speech model. To achieve progress in technology and knowledge, it is essential for students to leverage the opportunities provided by Industry 4.0 (Savitri & Sukoyo, 2023). This pedagogical approach has been shown to enhance phonological awareness and foster confidence in speaking. It has been demonstrated that there are numerous elements within the educational curriculum that have the capacity to facilitate students in attaining superior academic performance (Maulana et al., 2024).

Accurate pronunciation and technical vocabulary proficiency have been shown to directly improve students' speaking abilities in professional settings. In the contemporary era, social media has emerged as an effective medium for interpersonal communication (Hongsa et al., 2023). The subjects have demonstrated an increased degree of confidence in their ability to articulate the principles of APBD budget transparency in English. This enhancement in their proficiency has been observed in both simulated public discussions and academic presentations. Duraipandi and A. Murugan (2024) posit that the utilization of real-time platforms enables the cultivation of skills in speaking and listening, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge concerning authentic concepts. A review of classroom observations indicates that students generally concur that this application provides a cost-effective and enjoyable language learning experience that is accessible at any time and in any location. Furthermore, they have demonstrated an ability to pronounce common conjunctions, such as "and," with clarity and fluency which contributes to more fluid and communicative speech.

2. Motivation

In the context of public administration education, English language proficiency, particularly speaking skills, is crucial when students are required to explain public sector budgeting principles to the general public. This requires them not only to understand technical budgeting concepts, but also to be able to communicate them clearly in English.

Student 4: "it is a complete package, entertainment and language learning"

Student 8: "this application help me a lot to cover my weakness in speaking"

As indicated in the initial interview script, the student has the opportunity to engage with captivating songs while acquiring competencies in "budget allocation" through the medium of English. Asio et al. (2023) posits that video clips have the capacity to disseminate information regarding dance and music. The song has been shown to have a motivational effect on students, encouraging them to explore the full range of vocabulary required for public speaking in an academic setting. It has also been observed that students who utilize this application report a reduction in feelings of intimidation during the learning process. Based on observations of classroom usage, the application has the capacity to recommend additional videos based on topics that have been found to be of interest to the user, as well as recent videos that have been viewed. Students have their own learning strategies, such as saving and sharing content on TikTok (Bernard, 2021). The program has been demonstrated to facilitate the acquisition of the vocabulary necessary for effective communication in an academic setting. Jaeger (2021) states in Nguyen and Tran (2024) that interesting and simple content can stimulate oral expression among students. Furthermore, it has been shown to assist students in identifying technical terms relevant to the "budget allocation" theme.

The second transcript indicates that, in addition to enhancing motivation, TikTok assists students in overcoming psychological barriers associated with the pronunciation of technical terms related to budgeting. Preliminary findings from classroom observations suggest that students often experience a sense of apprehension when confronted with the task of articulating concepts such as "budget allocation" or "fiscal accountability" in a classroom setting. According to Moetia and Adani (2024), students with a tendency towards shyness must engage in activities that require public speaking. However, the advent of TikTok has engendered a paradigm shift, offering users the opportunity to hone

their pronunciation skills in an independent and self-directed manner. This novel platform enables users to engage in repetitive listening and imitation exercises, allowing them to refine their pronunciation skills without the apprehension of being subjected to external evaluation. Mobile technology can impact language learning (Quraishi et al., 2024). Students have the opportunity to learn at their own pace, correct mistakes in a private setting, and develop confidence prior to participating in formal forums. Preparing for formal meetings with a strategy for verbal expression can reduce language-related anxiety (Szyszka, 2017).

The combination of heightened motivation and mitigated psychological pressure exerts a direct and positive influence on students' speaking skills. It is observed that the students become more active in class discussions, more confident in expressing their opinions, and able to explain the concept of APBD in English more fluently and coherently. The short videos actually put less pressure on learners than long English learning videos (Hongsa et al., 2023). Class observations show that all students agree that this application greatly motivates shy learners, especially those who previously did not understand the concept of APBD because TikTok content is straightforward and to the point. In addition, short videos actually provide less pressure than long English learning videos, so students feel more comfortable and focused. This allows them to develop their speaking skills gradually, relevantly, and in line with professional needs in the field of public administration. The utilization of real-time platforms enables the enhancement of speaking and listening skills (Duraipandi & A. Murugan, 2024). Participants' articulation skills are much improved when they learn from particular TikTok influencers (Adityo & Novitasari, 2023).

3. Language focus: Public Administration

English in this context is not merely a communication tool, but a means of building accountability and public trust. Therefore, developing accurate, clear, and confident speaking skills is an integral part of public administration education that is relevant to the needs of the workplace and social responsibilities in the 21st century.

Student 9: “the short videos show how the government budget transparency in real life”

Student 12: “the application shows the latest video of my recent searching”

Student 9 elucidates the necessity of budget transparency for the public. The subject of discussion encompasses the origins of the tax, the remuneration provided to civil servants, the privileges accorded to them in their capacity as civil servants, and the enhancement of employment opportunities. Moreover, this finding indicates that students acquire English proficiency while engaging with the direct practice of budget transparency and various policies that utilize funds from the state or regional budget. They acknowledge that they frequently encounter confusion when confronted with novel terminology; however, they are capable of comprehending vocabulary pertinent to public budgeting, citizen participation in budgeting, and fiscal transparency. This will also be a topic for discussion in language classes with relevant lecturers. This pedagogical approach, facilitated by the TikTok application, is a prime example of contextual learning in action, particularly in the context of public administration education. As stated by de la Peña and Chaves-Yuste (2024), social media has the capacity to shape the public's perception of individuals and their lives. The integration of mobile technology into the educational environment has been demonstrated to enhance student engagement (Zhao & Zhao, 2024).

Based on class observation, students presented videos of various regional officials who exhibited signs of nervousness during their statements concerning the regional budget. Given the evident nervousness exhibited by these officials, it is reasonable to conclude that guidance on preparation for public speaking and an understanding of public administration would be beneficial. Specifically, ten students indicate that this application facilitated the identification of pertinent information regarding transparency in the budget of the public sector. Communication technology provides the most engaging and effective

way to learn English (Duraipandi & A Murugan, 2024). This information is subsequently employed as a resource in the development of presentations and discussions. Prior knowledge interaction is the basis of knowledge, so educators need to interact with students regarding prior information (Vygotsky (1978) in Alshaye et al., 2024). The remaining students do not experience a significant improvement in their academic performance; however, they did not report any significant difficulties. This may be attributed to their reliance on conventional academic resources, such as textbooks on public administration. It impacts learning outcomes, so lecturers need to use and adapt it (Alam & Forhad, 2023). In brief, TikTok has been demonstrated to be a valuable supplement in establishing the contextual foundation necessary for effective English communication in the domain of public administration.

4. Drawback of TikTok

Although TikTok offers a variety of educational content, the platform also has substantial weaknesses that have the potential to disrupt the focus of students majoring in Administration. One of the primary concerns is the tendency to spend extended periods of time without awareness, potentially leading to the neglect of essential responsibilities. This includes the study and analysis of the Local Budget and Expenditure Plan (APBD), which is intended to be presented in a transparent manner to the public.

Student 7: "this app lock me for hours. I mean, I forgot to finish the assignments "

Student 11: "it is hard for me to differentiate opinion and education in this app"

According to the initial data gathered from interviews, the student indicates that he and his friends frequently engaged in extended periods of use on the TikTok platform. This app takes up a lot of my time (Putri, 2022). This is particularly evident in the case of entertainment content, such as viral challenges or comedy videos, which directly reduced

the time that should have been allocated to understanding and compiling explanations about the APBD. Students spend more time enjoying content than focusing on the subject matter (Nguyen & Tran, 2024). This demonstrates that when students dedicate excessive time to irrelevant content, they miss out on opportunities to engage with the principles of budget transparency, analyze APBD documents, and practice articulating budget items in English. This phenomenon is referred to as pleasurable but distracting (Boruzie et al., 2024). Consequently, their ability to convey budget information to the public in a responsible manner is hindered, despite this being a fundamental aspect of the competencies expected of public administration graduates.

In addition to time management issues, the second student (number 11) also experienced difficulties in distinguishing credible educational content from entertainment or subjective opinion content on TikTok. Many accounts use technical terms such as "transparency" solely to attract attention, without providing accurate information or information based on official policies. You cannot use comments on TikTok videos or interesting presentation videos as references because they may contain inaccurate information (Putri, 2022). He further elaborates that students who rely on unreliable sources may develop an inaccurate or superficial understanding of APBD transparency. Students must improve the credibility and trustworthiness of videos (Sharma, 2024). This raises concerns about the potential dissemination of inaccurate budget information to the public and contradicts the principle of transparency that should be upheld.

The uncontrolled use of TikTok, particularly due to excessive engagement with entertainment content, has led to a decline in the quality of students' academic preparation in explaining the regional budget. This shift in their academic routine often results in a decline in their readiness to engage in class discussions, public presentations, or community engagement simulations. As stated by Putri (2022), the application in question presents a selection of comedic content, popular trends, and musical selections that have the capacity to capture the user's attention. The transition towards passive video viewing activities, which may be a more convenient option, has the potential to adversely

impact their ability to effectively participate in these activities. Social pressure stems from constantly exploring irrelevant videos (Nguyen & Tran, 2024). This approach may, over time, compromise their effectiveness as future public administrators, entrusted with the responsibility of conveying budget information with transparency and accountability.

The challenge of differentiating between educational and entertainment content on TikTok engenders the potential for the propagation of inaccurate or misleading information regarding the budget. Sharma (2024) has found that users are more aware of inaccurate info on platforms. Students may unconsciously adopt biased, unsubstantiated, or even conspiratorial narratives about the regional budget, subsequently presenting these as facts in academic and public forums. This practice not only undermines their personal credibility but also erodes public trust in the principle of budget transparency that they are mandated to uphold. As Afzal et al. (2023) point out, the limited availability of digital literacy leaves students vulnerable to disinformation. It is essential to guide students in selecting relevant content (Alshaye et al., 2024).

A review of classroom observations suggests that students encounter two primary impacts from the unguided use of TikTok. First, it has been observed that students frequently encounter difficulties in meeting deadlines for assignments related to APBD analysis due to their excessive engagement with entertainment content. Secondly, two students have presented arguments regarding budget transparency that are not supported by reliable sources and have been obtained from unreliable sources on TikTok. Despite their enthusiasm for this platform, their limited digital literacy leaves them susceptible to distractions and misinformation. As Boruzie et al. (2024) point out, "malicious software" is a persistent concern, with new instances emerging regularly. The teacher's guide is very important to make sure that TikTok is useful (Alshaye et al., 2024). This underscores the necessity for faculty guidance in assisting students in selecting pertinent content and in managing their social media usage judiciously.

Conclusion

A comprehensive analysis of the study's findings reveals four key insights concerning the utilization of TikTok. This app has been shown to improve Public Administration students' speaking skills, especially their use of technical vocabulary and clarity in discussing regional budget transparency (APBD). Features such as voice-over and duets facilitate students' self-directed vocabulary enrichment and pronunciation practice, thereby enhancing their confidence in class discussions and public presentations. Furthermore, the platform's incorporation of short, interactive, and engaging content has been demonstrated to enhance learning motivation, thereby reducing psychological pressure. This, in turn, has been observed to promote increased student participation in discussions, greater boldness in expressing opinions, and enhanced fluency in articulating APBD concepts in English. Furthermore, the application enables contextual learning by presenting real-life practices of budget transparency, thereby strengthening language skills and cultivating professional awareness among future public officials. However, the platform's design also presents certain challenges, including the potential for distractions and the difficulty in differentiating educational content from entertainment or subjective opinions. To ensure that the use of TikTok remains beneficial and focused, guidance from instructors and the development of adequate digital literacy skills are essential.

It is recommended that subsequent research be directed towards researchers specializing in ESP classes, such as those specializing in agrotechnology. The utilization of quantitative data will facilitate a more profound comprehension of the efficacy of TikTok in enhancing English-speaking abilities.

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