

The Effect of *Tiktok* As A Teaching Medium on Fifth-Grade Students' Learning Interest at Sdn 81 Parepare

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe fifth-grade students' interest in learning Indonesian before *Tiktok* was used as a teaching medium and to determine the effect of *Tiktok* content on that interest at SDN 81 Parepare. A quantitative, pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was applied to 21 students selected through saturated sampling. Data were collected with a Likert-scale questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk normality tests, and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Mean interest rose from 23.33 (pretest) to 48.62 (posttest) out of 50, and all students improved ($Z = -4.016$, $p < .001$, $r = .88$). Interest thus differed significantly before and after *Tiktok* use; without a control group, causal inference remains limited.

INTRODUCTION

Students' interest in learning is widely regarded as a precondition for effective instruction. Interested learners attend more closely, persist longer when tasks become difficult, and take a more active part in classroom activities (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Slameto, 2010). Where lessons rely mainly on teacher explanation and printed texts, sustaining the attention of young learners can be difficult, which is why teachers are expected to use media that stimulate students' thoughts, feelings, and attention (Sadiman et al., 2020). The question is especially pertinent for the Indonesian-language subject. Under the Merdeka Curriculum, the subject develops listening, reading and viewing, speaking and presenting, and writing (Kemendikbudristek, 2022), and progress in each of these skills depends on students being willing to attend, participate, and keep trying.

Short-video platforms have become part of many children's everyday media environment, and *Tiktok* is among the most visible. Its brief, audio-visual format is consistent with the cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which holds that people learn more deeply when words are combined with pictures and narration in well-designed instruction (Mayer, 2021). Evidence from higher education suggests that this format can be used productively. In a quasi-experimental study of 231 students, Ding et al. (2022) found that students who studied short instructional videos outperformed those who followed teacher-led online instruction, and Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021) reported on the integration of *Tiktok* into a sport-sciences course with 65 students. The evidence is not uniformly favourable, however. Ye et al. (2022) found that short-video addiction was associated with lower intrinsic and extrinsic learning motivation among vocational college students and concluded that teachers and parents should guide students towards self-controlled use.

Studies in Indonesian primary schools point in a similar, but more fragmented, direction. Bujuri et al. (2023) reported positive effects of *Tiktok* use on primary students' learning motivation but also warned of physical and mental health risks from excessive use. Kusumandaru and Rahmawati (2022) examined *Tiktok* as a means of strengthening literary literacy in thematic learning, and Zhahira et al. (2024) reported that interactive *Tiktok* content engaged students in literacy learning. Kurnia (2022) targeted Grade V learning outcomes on Indonesian cultural diversity, Anisa et al. (2022) developed *Tiktok* media for social-studies lessons, and Isnainingrum et al. (2026) recently reported a large pretest-posttest gain in Grade III science and social-science outcomes after lessons using educational *Tiktok* videos. Most of these studies address learning outcomes, literacy skills, or motivation in other subjects. To our knowledge, quantitative evidence on students' interest in the Indonesian-language subject as a whole, measured before and after *Tiktok*-supported lessons, remains limited.

This study therefore examines the interest of fifth-grade students in learning Indonesian at SDN 81 Parepare, South Sulawesi, a school where *Tiktok* had not previously been used as a teaching medium. It describes students' interest before and after lessons supported by teacher-selected *Tiktok* content and tests whether the difference is statistically significant. The study contributes a small-sample but fully reported estimate of change in learning interest in an

under-documented setting, together with an explicit account of the design limitations that qualify how far the result can be generalised.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning interest

Interest combines focused attention and positive feeling towards an object or activity with a disposition to engage with it again. Hidi and Renninger (2006) describe interest as developing through four phases: triggered situational interest, maintained situational interest, emerging individual interest, and well-developed individual interest. Classroom materials and activities are most likely to influence the earlier, situational phases, which may later consolidate into more enduring interest when learners continue to find the content meaningful. In the Indonesian literature, learning interest is usually identified through observable indicators such as pleasure in learning, attraction to the material, attention, and active involvement (Djaali, 2007; Djamarah, 2011; Slameto, 2010). Drawing on these sources, the present study operationalises learning interest through five indicators: attention to the lesson, persistence in learning, active participation, enjoyment of learning, and self-initiated learning.

Learning media and multimedia learning

Learning media are the means by which a message is channelled from teacher to learner so that learners' thoughts, feelings, and attention are stimulated (Sadiman et al., 2020). Mayer's (2021) cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which summarises principles derived from more than 200 experimental studies, explains why carefully combined words, images, and narration can support learning more effectively than words alone. Short educational videos combine visual, textual, and auditory channels in a compact format and are therefore compatible with these principles, although their instructional value depends on content quality, clarity of audio, and teacher guidance.

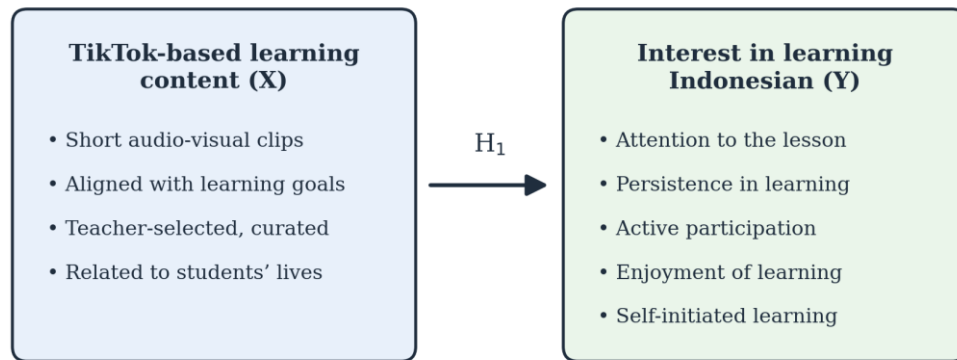
Tiktok as a learning medium

Tiktok is a social-media platform built around short videos that users can watch, create, and share. Its educational potential rests on short duration, rich audio-visual presentation, wide topical variety, and ease of access, and the studies reviewed above suggest that it can raise engagement and motivation when content is aligned with learning goals (Bujuri et al., 2023; Ding et al., 2022; Zhahira et al., 2024). The same studies, together with Ye et al. (2022), indicate that the benefits are conditional: they depend on content selection, supervision, and limits on use. For primary students, teacher-curated viewing within a structured lesson is therefore a more defensible model than unguided use of the platform. Building on the pretest-posttest gains reported by Isnainigrum et al. (2026) and the motivational effects reported by Bujuri et al. (2023), the following hypotheses were tested.

H0: There is no significant difference in fifth-grade students' interest in learning Indonesian before and after lessons that use *Tiktok* content.

H1: There is a significant difference in fifth-grade students' interest in learning Indonesian before and after lessons that use *Tiktok* content.

Figure 1 summarises the conceptual framework. *Tiktok*-based learning content (independent variable) is expected to influence students' interest in learning Indonesian (dependent variable), which is observed through five indicators and compared across the pretest and posttest occasions.



Design: $O_1 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O_2$ (one-group pretest-posttest)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This quantitative study used a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design ($O_1 X O_2$): a single group is measured on the dependent variable before the treatment (O_1), receives the treatment (X), and is measured again afterwards (O_2) (Shadish et al., 2002; Sugiyono, 2022). The design was chosen because *Tiktok* had not previously been used in the school's lessons and the study was conducted with one intact class. It allows change to be observed but, in the absence of a comparison group, does not rule out alternative explanations (Shadish et al., 2002); this limitation is addressed in the Discussion.

Participants

The population comprised all fifth-grade students of SDN 81 Parepare in the 2025/2026 academic year ($N = 21$). Because the population was small, saturated (total) sampling was applied, so that the sample equalled the population ($n = 21$) (Sugiyono, 2022). Research permission was obtained from the school before data collection.

Treatment

The treatment was a short sequence of Indonesian-language lessons taken from the Merdeka Curriculum, Phase C, Chapter VI, "Cinta Indonesia" (Love for Indonesia), built around a museum theme. The lesson plan was developed by the first author and combined project-based learning with teacher-selected educational *Tiktok* videos. In the lessons, students watched short museum-themed clips and related them to their own experiences, read an informational

text about a visit to a historic building, practised the use of capital letters and numerals, identified invitations, hopes, and prohibitions in everyday signs, scanned a museum brochure for key information, wrote an announcement, and produced a “mini museum” corner with descriptive posters. Videos were chosen for their alignment with the learning objectives, clarity of audio, and relevance to students’ everyday experience, and they were displayed by the teacher on a device rather than assigned for independent viewing. Structured classroom observation (a four-point rating sheet covering attention, participation in discussion, and responsiveness) documented students’ behaviour during the lessons; these data served only as supporting evidence.

Instrument

Learning interest was measured with a questionnaire of ten positively worded statements on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), with two items for each of five indicators: attention (e.g., “I concentrate on the teacher’s explanation during the lesson”), persistence, active participation, enjoyment (e.g., “I enjoy learning without feeling forced”), and self-initiated learning (e.g., “I look for additional learning sources such as books, the internet, or other media”). Total scores therefore range from 10 to 50. The questionnaire was reviewed by expert validators before use and was administered in identical form as the pretest and the posttest. The original research instrument also contained ten items on the perceived quality of the *Tiktok* content; these are not part of the present analysis.

Data analysis

Data were analysed with SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, standard deviation, variance, and range) summarised each measurement occasion. Total scores were converted to a percentage of the maximum score (50) and classified into five categories following Riduwan (2016) (Table 1). Normality was examined with the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test with Lilliefors correction and the Shapiro–Wilk test, the two tests that SPSS provides for samples smaller than 50 (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012), at $\alpha = .05$. The paired-samples *t*-test assumes approximately normally distributed difference scores; where this assumption was not met, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (Wilcoxon, 1945) was used as the primary test of H1, with the paired *t*-test reported for comparison. The effect size for the Wilcoxon test was computed as (Fritz et al., 2012):

$$r = Z / \sqrt{N} \quad (1)$$

where *Z* is the standardised test statistic and *N* is the number of paired observations. Values of about .10, .30, and .50 are conventionally interpreted as small, medium, and large effects. For the paired *t*-test, the statistic is:

$$t = \bar{d} / (S_d / \sqrt{n}) \quad (2)$$

where $\bar{d}$ is the mean difference, S_d is its standard deviation, and n is the number of pairs.

Table 1. Interpretation of learning-interest categories

Percentage of maximum score	Raw score (maximum = 50)	Category
81–100%	40.01–50.00	Very high
61–80%	30.01–40.00	High
41–60%	20.01–30.00	Moderate
21–40%	10.01–20.00	Low
0–20%	≤ 10.00	Very low

Note. Adapted from Riduwan (2016).

RESEARCH RESULT

Descriptive statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the pretest and the posttest. Before the intervention, the mean interest score was 23.33 (46.7% of the maximum score), the median and mode were both 20.00, and scores ranged from 20 to 41. The mean lies above the median because a few students scored well above the rest (40 and 41). After the intervention, the mean rose to 48.62 (97.2% of the maximum), with a median of 49.00 and a narrow range of 46 to 50. The mean difference was 25.29 points, an increase of 108.4% relative to the pretest mean, and the dispersion of scores fell from $SD = 6.560$ to $SD = 1.117$.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of learning-interest scores (N = 21)

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	23.33	48.62
Mean as % of maximum score	46.7	97.2
Standard error of mean	1.432	0.244
Median	20.00	49.00
Mode	20	49
Standard deviation	6.560	1.117
Variance	43.033	1.248
Range	21	4
Minimum	20	46
Maximum	41	50
Sum	490	1,021

Note. Maximum possible score = 50 (10 items $\times$ 5). Source: SPSS output of the research data.

Table 3 and Figure 2 show how students were classified. At the pretest, 15 of 21 students (71.43%) were in the low category, three (14.29%) in the moderate category, two (9.52%) in the high category, and one (4.76%) in the very high category; none was in the very low category. At the posttest, all 21 students (100%) were in the very high category. Thus, although the pretest mean fell in the moderate range, the typical student's interest was low at baseline, as the median shows.

Table 3. Distribution of learning-interest categories

Category	Pretest f	Pretest %	Posttest f	Posttest %
Very high	1	4.76	21	100.00
High	2	9.52	0	0.00
Moderate	3	14.29	0	0.00
Low	15	71.43	0	0.00
Very low	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	21	100.00	21	100.00

Note. f = frequency. Categories follow Table 1.

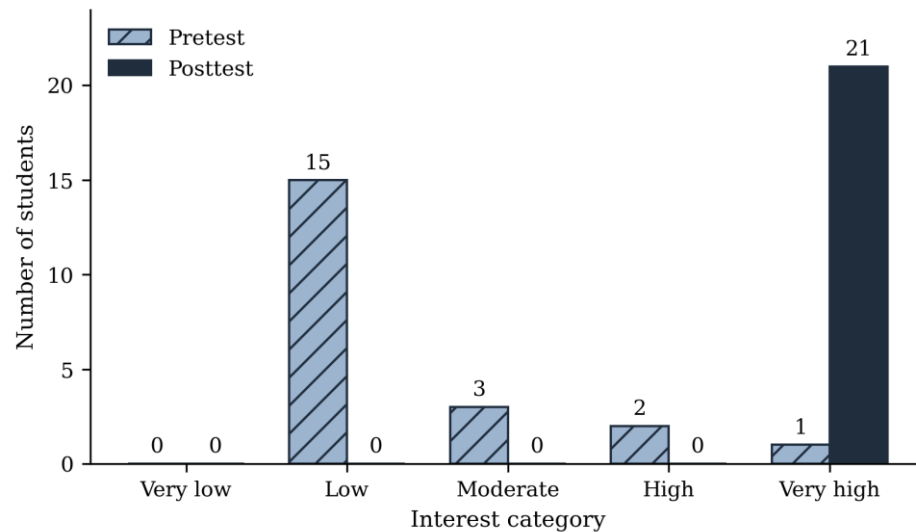


Figure 2. Number of students in each learning-interest category at the pretest and the posttest

Normality test

Table 4 shows that pretest scores departed significantly from a normal distribution on both tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov = .405, $p < .001$; Shapiro-Wilk = .564, $p < .001$), whereas posttest scores did not (Kolmogorov-Smirnov = .111, $p = .200$; Shapiro-Wilk = .957, $p = .467$). The Shapiro-Wilk test on the difference scores also indicated non-normality ($p < .001$). Given this violation and the small sample, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was adopted as the primary test of the hypothesis.

Table 4. Results of the normality tests

Variable	K-S statistic	df	Sig.	S-W statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.405	21	< .001	.564	21	< .001
Posttest	.111	21	.200*	.957	21	.467

Note. K-S = Kolmogorov-Smirnov with Lilliefors significance correction; S-W = Shapiro-Wilk. * This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Hypothesis testing

Table 5 summarises the hypothesis tests. All 21 students had higher posttest than pretest scores (21 positive ranks, no negative ranks, no ties; mean rank =

11.00; sum of ranks = 231.00). The Wilcoxon test was significant ($Z = -4.016$, $p < .001$), so H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted. The effect size was large ($r = .88$). The paired-samples t -test, reported for comparison, led to the same conclusion: the mean difference (pretest – posttest) was -25.286 ($SD = 6.528$; 95% CI $[-28.257, -22.314]$), $t(20) = -17.750$, $p < .001$, which corresponds to a standardised paired difference of $d_z = 3.87$. The correlation between pretest and posttest scores was weak and non-significant ($r = .114$, $p = .624$).

Table 5. Results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test and the paired-samples t -test

Test	Statistic	Value
Wilcoxon signed-rank	Negative ranks (n)	0
	Positive ranks (n; mean rank; sum of ranks)	21; 11.00; 231.00
	Ties (n)	0
	Z	-4.016
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	< .001
	Effect size r	.88
Paired-samples t -test (for comparison)	Mean difference (pretest – posttest)	-25.286
	SD of difference	6.528
	95% CI of the difference	-28.257, -22.314
	t (df = 20)	-17.750
	Sig. (2-tailed)	< .001

Note. Z is based on negative ranks (posttest – pretest); the t -test difference is pretest – posttest.

DISCUSSION

Interest before the intervention

The baseline results show that interest in learning Indonesian was low for most students before the intervention: 15 of 21 students were in the low category, and the median score (20.00) coincided with the lowest observed score, so the median described the typical student better than the mean (23.33). This matter because interest is closely tied to attention and participation (Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Slameto, 2010); a class in which most students report little interest has limited room for the active engagement that language skills require. The wide room for improvement at baseline should also be kept in mind when reading the size of the posttest gain.

Change in interest after Tiktok-supported lessons

After the *Tiktok*-supported lessons, mean interest rose from 23.33 to 48.62 and every student improved. The magnitude of the change ($r = .88$; $d_z = 3.87$) is large by conventional benchmarks and agrees in direction with earlier primary-school studies. Isnainingrum et al. (2026), using the same one-group pretest-posttest logic and a Wilcoxon test, reported a rise in Grade III learning outcomes from 44.19 to 92.58; Bujuri et al. (2023) reported positive motivational effects of *Tiktok* among primary students; and Zhahira et al. (2024) reported higher engagement in literacy learning. The present study extends this body of work by

showing a comparable pattern for interest in the Indonesian-language subject, although the studies differ in outcome, grade level, and design and are not directly comparable.

Several mechanisms may explain the change. First, short, colourful, and familiar videos are likely to have triggered situational interest, the first phase in Hidi and Renninger's (2006) model, by presenting museum content in a format close to students' daily media. Second, the combination of image, text, and narration in the videos is consistent with the multimedia principles described by Mayer (2021) and may have made the material easier to follow. Third, the videos were embedded in activities in which students read, discussed, wrote, and built a mini museum. Structured observation during the lessons noted that students appeared more attentive while the videos were played, were less often engaged in off-task talk, looked more enthusiastic, and asked questions and offered opinions more readily. These observations are consistent with the questionnaire indicators of attention, enjoyment, and participation, although they are descriptive and cannot by themselves establish cause.

Alternative explanations

These interpretations must be tempered. Because the lessons combined *Tiktok* content with project-based activities and a new topic, the observed change cannot be attributed to *Tiktok* alone. In a one-group design, history, maturation, testing, and instrumentation effects cannot be separated from the effect of the treatment (Shadish et al., 2002). Novelty may also have contributed: a medium that had never been used in the class may be attractive precisely because it is new, and triggered interest of this kind does not necessarily persist (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Because the posttest followed the lessons immediately, the study cannot show whether the interest was maintained.

Measurement considerations

Measurement features also qualify the size of the gain. All ten questionnaire items were positively worded, which makes agreement-biased responding and socially desirable answers more likely when a questionnaire is completed in the teacher's presence. Posttest scores were clustered between 46 and 50, close to the ceiling, which compresses variance ($SD = 1.117$) and probably contributes to the weak pretest-posttest correlation ($r = .114$): when nearly all students score near the maximum, baseline position carries little information about posttest position. The pattern should therefore be read as a general upward shift, not as proof that the effect was uniform across students or would be equally large with a less lenient instrument. The contrast between a non-normal pretest and a normal posttest distribution also supported the use of the non-parametric test, even though the paired *t*-test reached the same conclusion.

Implications for practice

For practice, the results suggest that short *Tiktok* videos can be a practical way to open lessons and to anchor reading, writing, and presentation tasks in the Indonesian-language classroom, provided that teachers act as curators. Content

should match the learning objectives, have clear audio, and relate to students' experience, and viewing should be structured and time-limited rather than open-ended, because uncontrolled use of short-video platforms has been linked to weaker learning motivation (Ye et al., 2022) and to health concerns among primary students (Bujuri et al., 2023). Teacher-led display in class, as used in this study, also avoids relying on students' independent use of the platform.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Interest in learning Indonesian among the fifth-grade students of SDN 81 Parepare was low for most students before the intervention (mean = 23.33; median = 20.00) and very high after lessons supported by *Tiktok* content (mean = 48.62 out of a maximum of 50). All 21 students improved, and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed that the difference was statistically significant with a large effect ($Z = -4.016$, $p < .001$, $r = .88$), so the null hypothesis was rejected. Because the study used a single group without a control condition and combined *Tiktok* with project-based activities, the result should be read as a large and significant increase in interest observed after *Tiktok*-supported lessons, not as proof that *Tiktok* alone caused the increase.

Teachers are encouraged to use *Tiktok* content selectively as a lesson opener and as a stimulus for language tasks, choosing videos that fit the learning objectives, have clear sound, and relate to students' lives. Schools can support this by providing devices and short training in preparing and curating digital learning content, and by agreeing on guidelines for classroom use that limit viewing time and ensure supervision. Researchers should treat the present figures as preliminary evidence to be tested with stronger designs.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has several limitations. It involved one class of 21 students in one school, used a one-group design without a control or comparison group, and measured interest only once after a short intervention, so neither causal effects nor the persistence of interest can be established. The questionnaire relied on self-report, used only positively worded items, and produced near-ceiling posttest scores. Future research should use quasi-experimental designs with a nonequivalent control group or random assignment of classes, larger samples from several schools, delayed posttests to examine whether interest is maintained, instruments that include negatively worded items and report internal consistency, and mixed methods that combine questionnaires with systematic classroom observation and student interviews. Studies might also separate the contribution of *Tiktok* content from that of project-based activities and examine possible costs such as distraction and screen time.

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