



USING VIDEOS ON TIKTOK TO ENHANCE ENGLISH MAJORS' PRONUNCIATION AT A UNIVERSITY IN THAI NGUYEN PROVINCE

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of using the TikTok app, particularly its Duet feature, to enhance English pronunciation among second-year English major students at the School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University. The focus is on improving two key aspects of pronunciation: ending sounds and word stress. A group of 32 students participated in the study over a 12-week period, during which they engaged in weekly pronunciation activities by creating TikTok Duet videos based on model recordings provided by the instructor. Feedback from both peers and the instructor was given through the app's comment feature. To evaluate the impact of this approach, data were collected through pre- and post-tests, weekly error tracking records, and semi-structured interviews. The findings suggest that TikTok not only supports measurable improvements in pronunciation accuracy but also promotes learner engagement, motivation, and autonomy. Moreover, the use of a familiar and interactive platform like TikTok is expected to reduce learner anxiety and encourage more consistent practice outside the classroom. Based on these outcomes, the study has offered practical implications for integrating social media into English pronunciation instruction in similar educational contexts.

Keywords: TikTok; duet feature; pronunciation; student engagement; word stress

1. Introduction

Pronunciation has long been recognized as one of the most fundamental yet challenging aspects of second language acquisition. Among the four essential language skills, it directly affects learners' intelligibility and communicative success. In the Vietnamese

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context, students often struggle with final consonants and word stress due to phonological differences between English and Vietnamese, compounded by limited exposure to authentic input and insufficient opportunities for corrective feedback. These persistent challenges may lead to fossilized errors that hinder communicative competence.

The rapid growth of digital platforms has created new opportunities for language learning beyond traditional classrooms. TikTok, with its short-video format and widespread popularity among Generation Z, offers an interactive and flexible environment for self-directed practice. Its Duet feature, in particular, enables learners to record side-by-side videos with a model speaker, review their output, and refine pronunciation through repeated practice. Prior studies (e.g., Lin et al., 2021; Zhao & Zhou, 2021) suggest that such features enhance motivation, reduce anxiety, and foster peer interaction, thereby transforming pronunciation practice into an engaging activity.

Within this context, the present study was designed as an action research project to evaluate the effectiveness of TikTok's Duet feature in supporting pronunciation learning for second-year English majors at Thai Nguyen University. The focus was placed on two key aspects of intelligibility—final consonant sounds and word stress—and on students' motivation toward pronunciation practice. By combining traditional classroom instruction with digital supplementation, the study sought to provide evidence of how social media can enrich pronunciation instructions.

The overall aim was to investigate whether TikTok Duet could improve pronunciation accuracy and enhance learner engagement. Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent did the use of TikTok enhance students' English pronunciation, specifically in ending sounds and word stress?
- 2) How does TikTok influence students' engagement in pronunciation practice?

The scope of the study was limited to 32 second-year English majors at the School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University, over a twelve-week intervention. The research concentrated on measurable linguistic outcomes as well as motivational factors, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods for triangulation.

This study is significant in both theoretical and practical terms. Theoretically, it contributes to the growing body of research on mobile-assisted language learning by examining TikTok's role in pronunciation pedagogy. Practically, it provides educators with insights into how social media can be integrated into higher education to supplement traditional instruction, foster learner autonomy, and encourage sustained pronunciation practice.

2. Literature Review

Pronunciation is a fundamental component of communicative competence because it directly influences intelligibility and confidence in communication (Derwing & Munro, 2015). For Vietnamese learners, persistent challenges with final consonants and word

stress arise from phonological differences between English and Vietnamese, which lack complex coda consonants and use tonal rather than stress-based distinctions (Nguyen & Ingram, 2018; Pham, 2022). Scholars have emphasized that pronunciation instruction should focus on *intelligibility*—that is, clear and comprehensible speech—rather than on achieving native-like accent (Couper, 2019; Kang & Ginther, 2022). Explicit modeling, repetitive practice, and timely feedback are essential to help learners overcome fossilized pronunciation habits (Foote & Trofimovich, 2018; Saito, 2021).

The emergence of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) has expanded opportunities for flexible and autonomous pronunciation practice beyond the classroom. Studies have shown that mobile and computer-based tools allow learners to record, replay, and compare their speech with model input, leading to greater self-awareness and improvement in both segmental and suprasegmental features (Lee & Zhang, 2019; Fouz-González, 2020). Saito (2021) and Kormos & Csizér (2018) further noted that digital feedback supports learners' metacognitive reflection and long-term retention. Similarly, Miqawati (2020) and Anggraini (2022) demonstrated that pronunciation applications such as ELSA Speak and ORAI not only improved learners' accuracy but also enhanced motivation and confidence. These findings collectively affirm that digital tools can complement traditional instruction by fostering repeated, feedback-rich, and low-anxiety practice.

Recent attention has turned to social media platforms, which combine entertainment and education to sustain learner engagement. Platforms like TikTok offer multimodal, interactive, and authentic contexts for language learning that align well with Generation Z students' digital habits (Lin et al., 2021; Zhang, 2020). In particular, TikTok's Duet feature enables learners to record side-by-side videos with a model speaker, rehearse multiple times, and receive instant peer or teacher feedback (Tran & Nguyen, 2021; Li, 2023). Such interactive shadowing promotes self-correction, autonomy, and collaboration—key principles of Engagement Theory (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1998). Studies have also reported that using TikTok for pronunciation practice reduces speaking anxiety and increases willingness to communicate (Ali & Hassan, 2023; Han & Wang, 2022). However, systematic evidence on TikTok's pedagogical effectiveness—especially in improving final consonants and stress accuracy among Vietnamese university students—remains limited. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates how TikTok's Duet feature can enhance both pronunciation accuracy and learner engagement in an EFL context.

3. Material and Methods

This study employed a twelve-week action research design to examine whether TikTok's Duet feature could improve the pronunciation of final consonants and word stress and enhance learners' motivation. The research was conducted with 32 second-year English majors (19–21 years old; 20 females, 12 males) at the School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University. All participants had completed foundational phonetics courses and

reported persistent difficulties with final consonants and lexical stress. The intervention blended classroom instruction (explicit modeling, structured drills, corrective feedback) with weekly Duet tasks completed outside class. In each task, students recorded side-by-side videos with a model speaker, rehearsed until satisfied, and uploaded their clips to a private group to receive peer and teacher feedback.

Data collection combined quantitative and qualitative instruments. A pronunciation test administered pre- and post-intervention assessed (a) final-consonant realization and (b) word-stress placement at word, sentence, and short-passage levels. Recordings were scored by two independent raters using a 4-point rubric; inter-rater reliability was calculated prior to analysis. Weekly error-tracking sheets logged recurring errors (e.g., omission of /t/, /d/, /s/) and their reduction over time. A post-cycle questionnaire (5-point Likert scale) measured motivation, confidence, perceived usefulness of TikTok, and willingness to practice. Qualitative evidence comprised weekly reflective journals, peer comments attached to Duet posts, and semi-structured interviews with a subset of participants, focusing on strategy use, anxiety reduction, and willingness to communicate.

Procedurally, the twelve weeks followed the cyclical stages of planning–acting–observing–reflecting. Week 1 oriented students, obtained consent, trained Duet use, and administered the pre-test. Weeks 2–5 alternated focused practice on final consonants and stress with targeted feedback and self-assessment. Weeks 6–10 integrated features in longer utterances and promoted collaborative Duets to intensify peer interaction. Weeks 11–12 consolidated practice and completed the post-test and interviews.

Statistical analysis used descriptive statistics and paired-sample t-tests to compare pre- and post-test scores; error-tracking data were summarized longitudinally to visualize trend reductions. Qualitative data (journals, comments, interviews) underwent thematic analysis to identify recurrent patterns (e.g., increased self-monitoring, reduced anxiety, greater persistence).

Triangulation-linked score gains and error declines with reported changes in confidence and engagement, yielding a comprehensive evaluation of the intervention.

Ethical safeguards included informed consent, voluntary participation in video sharing within a private group, anonymized reporting, and restricted use of recordings for research purposes only.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

This section presents the results of the twelve-week action research project that integrated TikTok's Duet feature into pronunciation practice. The analysis addressed the two research questions by examining whether students improved their pronunciation of ending sounds and word stress, and whether their motivation toward pronunciation practice increased. Quantitative and qualitative evidence are summarized in the following tables and figures.

4.1.1. Enhancement of Students' Pronunciation

The post-test mean scores were consistently higher than the pre-test across all pronunciation features, indicating measurable improvement after the twelve-week intervention. As shown in Figure 4.1, students' pronunciation of ending sounds and word stress improved notably, reflecting the positive impact of repeated recording, peer feedback, and self-monitoring through TikTok's Duet feature.

Figure 4.1: Students' Improvement in Final Consonants

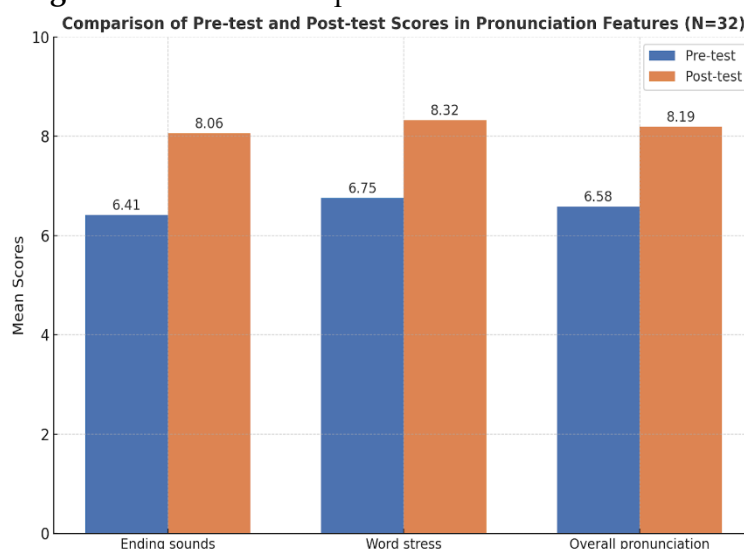


Table 4.1 shows that average scores increased from 6.41 to 8.06 for ending sounds and from 6.75 to 8.32 for word stress. The overall pronunciation mean rose by 1.61 points. All differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming that students achieved higher accuracy after sustained Duet practice. These results support previous findings that technology-mediated repetition and feedback enhance pronunciation learning (Saito, 2020; Ali & Hassan, 2023).

Table 4.1: Pronunciation outcomes (N = 32)

Features	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Mean Δ	t	p
Ending sounds	6.41 (1.14)	8.06 (0.97)	+1.65	7.28	< .001
Word stress	6.75 (1.09)	8.32 (0.84)	+1.57	6.91	< .001
Overall	6.58 (1.11)	8.19 (0.91)	+1.61	7.09	< .001

Error-tracking data (Table 4.2) revealed a steady decline in pronunciation mistakes—from 8.2 to 2.1 in final consonants and from 7.5 to 1.9 in word stress—confirming that repeated Duet practice and feedback fostered sustained improvement (Wang & Lee, 2021). The sharpest progress occurred between weeks 4–8, when students engaged most actively.

Table 4.2: Average Weekly Errors in Ending Sounds and Word Stress (N = 32)

Week	Ending Sound Errors (Mean)	Word Stress Errors (Mean)
1	8.2	7.5
4	5.9	5.2
8	3.8	3.1
12	2.1	1.9

A correlation analysis (Table 4.3) showed a significant relationship between practice frequency and improvement ($r = 0.63$, $p = 0.002$), consistent with deliberate-practice theory (Ericsson, 2019). Students who practiced more frequently achieved greater gains.

Table 4.3: Correlation Between Frequency of TikTok Use and Pronunciation Gains (N = 32)

Variable	r	p-value
Frequency of TikTok Use (hours/week) vs. Pronunciation Improvement	.63	0.002

The positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$) indicated a moderate to strong relationship: students who practiced more frequently on TikTok achieved greater improvements. This finding aligned with the principle of deliberate practice (Ericsson, 2019), which emphasized the cumulative benefits of sustained, focused engagement. Such evidence underscored that consistent integration of short-form video practice into learners' routines not only accelerated technical improvement but also served as a catalyst for broader engagement, a theme further reflected in the qualitative findings presented in the next section.

Qualitative data corroborated these findings: learners' journals and interviews indicated higher awareness of articulation, rhythm, and stress placement. Many reported that self-recording reduced anxiety and built confidence. These outcomes align with prior evidence that digital practice complements classroom instruction and enhances engagement (Nguyen, 2021; Tran & Pham, 2020).

As indicated in Table 4.5, survey results showed that students perceived TikTok practice as enjoyable and motivating. A majority of responses fell into the "agree" or "strongly agree" categories when asked whether Duet activities increased their interest and persistence in learning pronunciation. This suggested that the tool had a positive influence on learner engagement.

Table 4.5: Students' Perceptions of Learner Autonomy and Motivation (N = 32)

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Interpretation
I became more responsible for my own pronunciation learning.	0	2	5	18	7	3.97	Agree
I felt motivated to practice regularly during the program.	0	1	4	19	8	4.06	Agree
Using TikTok made pronunciation practice enjoyable.	0	1	3	17	11	4.19	Strongly Agree
I practiced pronunciation more often than in previous courses.	1	2	4	16	9	3.94	Agree

Table 4.6 summarized students' reflections and perceptions of peer feedback. Many learners noted that watching peers' videos helped them recognize their own errors, while feedback received from classmates encouraged further correction. Journals also documented a growing sense of responsibility in managing their own practice. These reflections highlighted the value of collaborative learning, where peer support functioned as both a mirror for self-awareness and a source of motivation for sustained improvement.

Table 4.6: Perceptions of Peer Feedback and Social Interaction (N = 32)

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Interpretation
Peer comments helped me recognize my mistakes.	0	2	6	17	7	3.91	Agree
Watching others' Duet videos improved my awareness of pronunciation.	0	1	4	20	7	4.03	Agree
Sharing videos publicly motivated me to practice more carefully.	1	2	5	15	9	3.91	Agree

The intervention also appeared to increase students' confidence and awareness of their own pronunciation. The act of recording and re-watching their videos was frequently described as transformative. Reflective journals revealed that learners became more conscious of specific problem areas, such as final consonant deletion or misplaced stress. One participant explained: *"When I compared my recording with the teacher's model, I noticed*

I often dropped the /t/ sound. Watching myself helped me correct it in the next Duet." Another wrote: *"I used to be nervous in class, but on TikTok, I could repeat until I felt confident. That made me less anxious when speaking with classmates."* These insights correspond with Saito (2020), who demonstrated that self-monitoring supported by digital recording tools enhances phonological awareness and improves intelligibility.

Despite overall positive experiences, some students reported challenges. Internet instability occasionally disrupted recordings, while a few expressed discomfort about their videos being accessible beyond the classroom. Two interviewees suggested that using private accounts mitigated this concern, but the issue highlights the need for clearer institutional policies when integrating social media into instruction. Motivational consistency was another challenge. A small number of students admitted that initial enthusiasm waned after several weeks, requiring deliberate reminders to stay engaged. As one student stated: *"At first, I was excited, but later I had to push myself to keep recording. The teacher's weekly feedback helped me continue."* These challenges mirror observations by Ali and Hassan (2023), who argued that while mobile learning tools enhance engagement, sustained motivation requires structured guidance from instructors.

In addition to the survey and journal data, interview responses provided direct answers to four guiding questions. The following excerpts illustrate students' perspectives. With regard to the first question, students consistently reported that the most helpful aspect of TikTok practice was the ability to record and re-watch their own performance. They felt this gave them more control and confidence compared to in-class activities. One participant remarked: *"When I rewatched my Duet, I realized I often missed the final /t/. It was easier to notice and fix when I could repeat several times at home."*

In terms of difficulties, learners mentioned two main challenges. Some experienced technical issues, such as unstable internet connections that disrupted recording and uploading. Others expressed concern about privacy, worrying that their videos might be viewed outside the classroom. As one student explained: *"I felt nervous knowing other people online could see my video, so I preferred using a private account."*

When asked about peer and teacher feedback, participants expressed positive attitudes. Peer comments were seen as supportive and motivating, while teacher feedback gave them confidence and direction. One learner shared: *"My classmates pointed out mistakes I didn't realize, and the teacher's corrections made me sure about how to fix them."*

Finally, students suggested several improvements for future use of TikTok in pronunciation practice. They proposed setting weekly themes or pronunciation targets to sustain interest, ensuring clearer privacy policies, and linking Duet activities more directly to classroom assessment. A participant noted: *"If each week focused on a different sound, I would stay more motivated. Also, it would be better if our Duet scores counted in class."* In addition to the quantitative results, the interview data provided direct answers to the four guiding questions. With regard to the most helpful aspects of TikTok practice, learners repeatedly emphasized the opportunity to record and re-watch their videos at their own pace. They noted that this process reduced classroom anxiety, improved their

awareness of final consonants and word stress, and allowed them to track their progress over time.

When asked about difficulties, students identified two main issues. Technical barriers, such as unstable internet connections, sometimes hinder recording and uploading. In addition, some learners expressed concerns about the visibility of their videos beyond the classroom. Although private accounts partly addressed this, the comments indicated a need for clearer privacy guidance when social media is integrated into teaching.

In terms of feedback, participants valued peer and teacher comments in complementary ways. Peer responses were described as constructive and encouraging, often pointing out errors learners had not noticed themselves. Teacher feedback, meanwhile, was seen as authoritative and confidence-building, particularly in sustaining engagement when motivation declined in later weeks.

Finally, students suggested several ways to improve this type of activity. They recommended introducing weekly pronunciation themes to keep practice structured, ensuring institutional policies on privacy, and integrating Duet assignments more closely with classroom assessment. These suggestions reflected learners' desire for both autonomy and guidance, confirming that TikTok Duet can be most effective when blended systematically with traditional instruction.

4.2 Discussion

The study investigated how integrating TikTok's Duet feature influenced students' pronunciation improvement and motivation. Results from pre- and post-tests, supported by paired-sample *t*-tests, revealed significant gains in pronouncing final consonants and applying correct word stress. The steady decline in weekly errors confirmed that repeated, technology-supported practice enhanced both segmental and suprasegmental accuracy. These findings align with Saito (2020), Lin and Lin (2022), and Derwing and Munro (2005), who emphasize that focused, feedback-rich rehearsal improves intelligibility. The intervention extended classroom instruction by providing flexible, self-paced opportunities for continued practice and reflection, which in turn fostered greater confidence in spoken English.

A positive correlation between practice frequency and progress reflected the principle of deliberate practice (Ericsson, 2019), showing that consistent engagement led to greater improvement. The use of TikTok Duet enabled learners to record multiple takes, compare performance with models, and integrate peer feedback—an approach consistent with Fouz-González (2020), who highlighted the value of interactive digital environments for pronunciation learning.

Regarding motivation and engagement, survey and journal data indicated that students found TikTok practice enjoyable, autonomous, and low in anxiety. The familiar, creative nature of the platform encouraged sustained participation and reduced pronunciation-related apprehension (Zhang, 2020; Zhao & Zhou, 2021; Han & Wang, 2022). Learners also valued the supportive peer feedback facilitated by Duet interactions,

which mirrored findings from Tran and Pham (2021) on collaborative learning in online contexts.

Overall, the action research demonstrated that TikTok Duet significantly improved pronunciation accuracy, confidence, and learner autonomy. It served as an effective complement to traditional classroom instruction—bridging formal and informal learning—and confirmed that social media platforms, when purposefully integrated, can meaningfully enhance pronunciation pedagogy.

5. Recommendations

The findings of this study suggest both theoretical and practical implications for language teaching and future research. From a theoretical perspective, the results confirm that short-form video platforms such as TikTok can be integrated effectively into Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, not only improving the accuracy of final consonants and word stress but also enhancing learners' confidence and motivation. In practice, teachers are encouraged to embed TikTok Duet tasks into regular pronunciation instruction, ensuring that classroom modeling and feedback are complemented by extended digital practice in private groups where students feel secure. Privacy safeguards and clear guidelines should be established to address concerns about online sharing, while moderate practice three to five times per week appears to be both feasible and effective for sustaining progress. Future research should explore the long-term effects of such interventions, test their impact across different learner populations and proficiency levels, and investigate how other features of social media platforms may contribute to pronunciation development. Institutions may also consider developing policies and training programs that guide the pedagogical use of social media, ensuring that innovation aligns with curricular objectives while safeguarding student well-being. Overall, the integration of TikTok Duet demonstrates how traditional instruction and digital tools can be blended to create more engaging, effective, and sustainable approaches to pronunciation learning.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the integration of TikTok's Duet feature into pronunciation training for Vietnamese English majors, focusing on the persistent challenges of final consonant articulation and word stress. Findings from the twelve-week action research cycle confirmed that students demonstrated statistically significant improvements in both areas, supported by consistent error reduction and positive correlations between practice frequency and progress. Learners also reported enhanced motivation, confidence, and autonomy, emphasizing the value of self-recording, peer feedback, and repeated rehearsal in a low-pressure environment. Importantly, the results demonstrated that TikTok Duet functioned most effectively as a supplementary tool, extending the benefits of classroom-based instruction rather than replacing it. By combining teacher-led

modeling and corrective feedback with digital practice, the intervention fostered both linguistic accuracy and learner engagement. These outcomes highlight the potential of blending traditional methods with social media platforms to address enduring pronunciation difficulties, while also offering a practical model for incorporating familiar digital tools into formal language education.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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