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Analysis of The Use of TikTok Application as a Medium of Learning Chinese Culture and History Case Studies on @Chinese_server Account

Ong Peter Leonardo[1*], Amelia Solemnis[2]
[1]School of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Chinese Language and Literature, Wuhan University, China
[2]Chinese Education, Faculty of Letters & Language Education Widya Kartika University, Indonesia
*Corresponding Author, e-mail: 1185641324@qq.com

Abstract: *The outbreak of COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019) has conquered various countries all over the world. This condition has penetrated the world of education. Since then, all teaching and learning activities in Indonesia which were originally done offline are now being conducted online. Therefore, they are now using an e-learning system as an educational support, as well as social media. Social media can make it easier for educators to convey information to students, encourage students to explore more about the learning materials during their learning process and allow students to have close relationships with educators and other students. Seeing the development of learning media today, learning media in the digital era must be harmonized with technological developments. Learning media must be interesting and close to students. The widespread use of social media application such as TikTok among the public, especially teenagers, has made this application a very popular social media lately. Educational content is one of the most popular contents, it's no wonder that many people, especially educators, use TikTok as a learning medium. TikTok as an interactive learning media is expected to help students understand and accept the learning process carried out by educators. Through TikTok, educators can easily create interactive learning, so that it can be adapted to the environment, situation, and condition of students. Not only a few TikTok users take advantage of this platform, one of which is the owner of @Chinese_ server account -- a content creator who is involved in teaching Chinese culture and history on his TikTok account.This makes the author wants to know more about the use of the TikTok application as a medium for learning Chinese culture and history by @Chinese_server account. The research method that the author uses is qualitative with a case study approach. The author will conduct interviews by asking questions to the informant to provide answers to these questions.*

Keywords: *Usage; TikTok Application; Learning Media; Chinese Culture and History*

Introduction

In early 2020, the world was shocked by the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease-19). The impact caused by COVID-19 is very large and affects daily activities, especially in the world of education around the world, one of them in Indonesia. This indirectly changes the learning system in Indonesia which was originally done

face-to-face into an online learning system. Along with the development of information and communication technology causes changes in people's lives. Especially with the growing need for the internet as a means for the exchange and dissemination of information. When viewed from the results of the APJIII survey, internet users in Indonesia 2019-2020 amounted to 73.7%, up from 64.8% from 2018 (Republika.co.id). The number of internet users in Indonesia is relatively high, as well as social media. There are many popular social media applications and each application has different facilities and criteria, one of which is TikTok social media. TikTok is a Chinese social network and music video platform launched in September 2016.

TikTok application is made by Chinese company ByteDance can empower creative thinking, in creating for online content creators around the world, especially Indonesia as one of the largest internet users in the world (ekspose.id). The rampant use of TikTok application among the public, especially teenagers make this application as a very popular social media lately. As stated from the research results of the Sensor Tower application, which named TikTok as the best-selling application with a total download of more than 63.3 million on iOS and Android devices. According to Sensor Tower, the country that downloads the most of this app is Indonesia which accounts for 11% of TikTok's total downloads (kompas.com).

TikTok is a potential platform as a learning medium in Indonesia. Moreover, the government is currently implementing a Distance Learning system (PJJ) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore TikTok has the opportunity as a means of education that is very wide open. In fact, TikTok itself has collaborated with the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in advancing the intelligence of the Indonesian nation through the #SamaSamaBelajar program(minews.id). This led to many who ended up admiring TikTok videos, especially educational videos, one of which was uploaded by Randy Zanuar, one of the content creators who create educational content about Chinese culture and history on his TikTok account. We can see that the character of Indonesian people who are social and happy to share, then social media becomes a very representative medium of communication. Based on the background above, the author is interested in researching the use of the TikTok application as a medium of learning Chinese culture and history by @Chinese_server account, especially in cultural and historical learning that is usually less desirable by learners because it is considered difficult and boring. According to the author, the TikTok application can be used as an educational medium. Learners are able to learn the material with an interesting short duration of audiovisual presentation. When providing learning materials, educators convey with fun videos and combined with learning materials so as to create a work that can help in the learning process.

Research Methods

The authors conducted the study from November 2020 to July 2021. The subject of the author's research is Randy Zanuar, a content creator who has more than a hundred thousand followers, where the video uploaded is about Chinese culture and history on his TikTok account, @Chinese_server. The authors use interview data collection techniques and documentation. This research uses research instruments in the form of interview guidelines, because in the process of collecting data emphasizes in-depth interviews with sources through Zoom Meetings and collects other supporting data such as images through the TikTok application. In this study, researchers used Qualitative Methods with a Case Study approach. Qualitative research is aresearch that intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, action,and so on holistically, and by way of description in the form of words and lan-

Vol.3 No.3 2022
https://doi.org/10.37420/j.cer.2022.027

guage, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods (Moleong, 2014: 6). The research focused on a particular case of how TikTok was being used as a medium of learning Chinese culture and history by @Chinese_server account. In this case study, researchers also collected data on the study subjects. Researchers conduct case studies with the basis of theory as a reference when going to explore something related to the subject.

Result and Discussions

Profile of Research Subjects

Name: Randy Zanuar
Place, date of birth: Jakarta, January 18, 1994
Religion: Islam
Age: 27 years old
Gender: Male
Education: Padjadjaran University, Bandung
Home address: Bekasi
Source of information: Subject

The Origin of The Use of TikTok Application as a Medium of Learning Chinese Culture and History

Randy's use of TikTok is a new thing in the middle of 2020, which is in April 2020. Randy chose TikTok as a content creator because as a TikTok user, especially content creators can more easily get exposure compared to other applications, because the video distribution has been regulated by TikTok algorithm. There is also a luck factor for content creators in getting a large number of audiences, so users can get the opportunity to get views, followers, likes, and comments in a short time. Randy chose the topic of Chinese culture and history because it is felt that there are still very few people who discuss about Chinese culture and history, therefore Randy wants to help spread useful things for society, namely the knowledge he has, of course also becomes a pride and happiness for himself to be able to help many people.

Use of TikTok Features

Randy usually uses the Special Effects feature "My Background" which displays the person talking as well as the selected image as the background.

Special effects "My Background" is used to explain content with images that support the topic without eliminating videos of people talking, of course this will clarify and make it easier for content creators to explain the material at once to attract the attention of the audience.

Video Creation

Randy has no special preparation in uploading a video, usually done spontaneously. Sometimes Randy chooses interesting comments to discuss, which can invite the audience's interest, then use the reply feature through the video and saved into the draft first for the editing stage, as well as collecting sources of information and images that support the content. Before recording the video, Randy usually also recalls the information he wants to convey in his video. Randy spent approximately 1 to 2 hours to make a video that lasted approximately 40 to 60 seconds.

What Distinguishes Randy's Content from Other Content Creators

To make the learning video more interesting, Randy added an element of humor to his video. With the humor element, it can be a hallmark of Randy's video so that it is different from other content creators. Randy also uses interesting images, sometimes making gimmicks, and choosing unique topics so that it can attract the attention of the audience. Randy's way of delivering material is not like a lecture and does not shrink to a particular religion only. The information discussed by Randy is about general information, while many other content creators discuss religion.

Use of Hashtags

The use of hashtags is one of the content creator strategies to increase engagement with their followers. As in the BigCommerce.com that engagement strategies and campaigns in social media are one of the use of popular hashtags. Here are the TikTok hashtags Randy usually uses in every one of his videos: #lapakmandarin, #Mandarin, #Chinese, #China, #Culture, #Budaya, #History, #Sejarah, and #fyp.

Audience Response

Most of the response from Randy's video audience was positive. We can know that Randy's video invites the enthusiasm of the audience as evidenced by the number of views and positive comments of the audience in the comment section. Many of Randy's viewers feel motivated and benefited by watching the video because they gained knowledge that has never been previously gained about Chinese culture and history.

Audience Characteristics

Randy himself knows some of the characteristics of his audience and mentions that the viewers of @Chinese_server account are divided into four, namely:

1.Viewers who are happy with the content, tends to give positive comments.
2.Ordinary viewers or other content creators who straighten Randy's explanation or provide additional insight into the topics discussed.
3.Spectators who tend to deviate, deliberately want to bring down others or usually called haters.
4.An audience that doesn't connect with the discussion.

Vol.3 No.3 2022
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Followers dan Engagement

Randy defines followers. Followers are people who follow someone because they like the content and according to their interests. Followers certainly play an important role in Randy's success, although it is not the main benchmark to be able to enter the main homepage of TikTok or commonly called fyp (for you page), the main benchmark is engagement

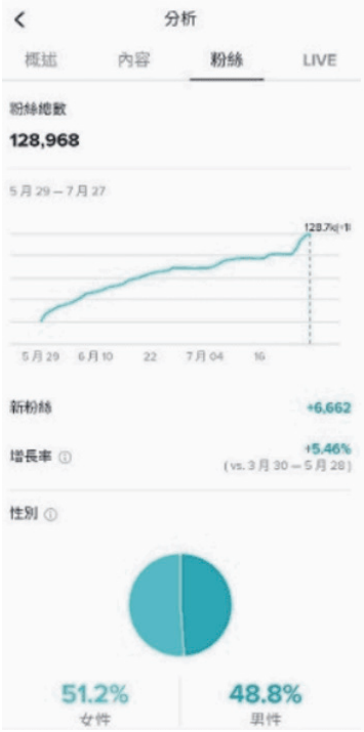

Figure 1. Screenshot of @Chinese_server TikTok Account Analytics

It can be seen that the number of Randy followers on May 29, 2021 to July 27, 2021 increased by 5.46% from the previous, March 30, 2021 to May 28, 2021.

Randy's followers increased by 6,662 followers. This shows that not a few people who admire Randy's content and fans of topics about Chinese culture and history are now increasing. Engagement with the audience also has a role that is no less important. The more followers and engagement we have, the more chances our video will be watched, liked, commented, and also shared by other users. If you have many followers, the promotional reach of a business or account will certainly be wider and will be considered an influential person for the audience. In addition, the number of followers is also a badge of honor for a content creator, although there is no correlation with the number of views. According to Randy, accounts that have many followers but few viewers can be considered flops, namely failure, if followers and views are balanced then it can be said that the account is successful.

Challenge

One of the challenges that are often faced by a content creator like Randy is to get a small number of views

even though they have consistently created content, but in some videos, the number of viewers obtained does not also increase. This is because Chinese culture enthusiasts are still relatively low, so it takes a long time to be able to gather fans and create a fanbase. In addition, there are also rules and restrictions on content by TikTok, so content creators need to be more careful in making videos. Content creators must be careful in uploading videos, in terms of content, speech language, and others so as not to be considered a violation.

Advantages and Disadvantages of TikTok

Randy explains the advantages and disadvantages of TikTok. It's easier for content creators to get exposure from TikTok by going to the fyp page because the video distribution system has been set up by TikTok's own algorithm.
The facilities provided are very easy for users to be creative, there are also many interesting features that can be used. However, within TikTok, there is no incentive for content creators. Meanwhile, the income earned on TikTok can be endorsements from brands. With a short video duration, viewers can understand enough of the material, but it already includes all the information, compared to long-duration videos that tend to be boring. Do not rule out the possibility for the audience to find out more about the information you want to explore.

Things to Consider as a Content Creator

Randy explained that if you want to be someone who is influential to others, for example being a TikTok content creator, of course, you will often face a challenge or difficulty. Therefore, we must have a mental of steel. Everything that is shared into social media will be very easily spread and understood as a new insight. Therefore, it is important for video creators to present positive and creative content that educates and inspires as a reference for many people. Teaching especially on the TikTok is not a source of money. As a content creator, you must make sure that the source channeled is true and reliable because as an educator must be able to account for what has been said. Educators and learners not only use Tiktok, but can also be supported with other applications. TikTok is one of the good platforms to increase popularity first to be better known by many people.

From the explanation above, we can conclude that TikTok is one of the applications that make it easier for users to be creative. TikTok videos can be saved and downloaded by other users as long as the video uploader opens access

for everyone to download them. Daryanto (2016:7) said that the function of the medium of learning in general is the first, to strengthen the ability of fiction. Second, to strengthen manipulative abilities. Videos in TikTok can be watched back, saved, and downloaded by users. Therefore, users can play back videos as needed. Third, to strengthen distributive capabilities. Videos in TikTok are able to reach a large number of viewers because the distribution of videos has been arranged by TikTok itself and if lucky, videos that have previously been uploaded can be re-appeared on fyp so that it can reach a greater number of views. This is an advantage for every content creator because that's where followers and viewers will increase.

Vol.3 No.3 2022
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Conclusion

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that TikTok is one of the most popular social media applications by the people of Indonesia, especially for generation Z. Randy Zanuar, owner of @Chinese_server account is one of the content creators who use TikTok as a learning medium, especially in Chinese cultural and historical learning. Randy chose TikTok because it can more easily get exposure and there is a lucky factor in getting a large number of viewers. Randy's goal in discussing Chinese culture and history is to promote Chinese language, culture, and history in Indonesia. To make the learning video more interesting, Randy adds an element of humor and uses interesting images, sometimes making gimmicks, and choosing unique topics so that it can attract the attention of the audience, as well as using features from TikTok such as music, special effects and others. Hashtags that are commonly used are #lapakmandarin, #Mandarin, #Chinese, #China, #Culture, #Budaya, #History, #Sejarah, and #fyp. The way Randy delivered the material is not like a lecture and does not shrink to a particular religion only. Because of his unique and interesting videos, Randy's video invites the enthusiasm of the audience as evidenced by the large number of followers, views, and positive response of the audience in the comments field. Followers and engagement have an important role for the success of content creators like Randy, because if you have many followers then the promotional reach of a business or account will certainly be wider and of course will be considered an influential person for the audience. The higher the engagement we have, the higher the chance that our video will enter fyp.

As a content creator, of course, must have a mental of steel, because there are many challenges and risks that must be faced. Following TikTok's community guidelines is also important so as not to be exposed to violations. Therefore, it is important for video creators to present positive and creative content that educates and inspires. Teaching especially in TikTok is not a source of money, because there is no incentive for content creators except in the form of endorsements from brands. As a content creator, you must make sure that the source channeled is true and reliable. Judging from the results of Randy's follower analytics, it can be known that actually the interest in Chinese culture and history is now increasing, it is known from the results of the increase in the number of followers of @Chinese_server account from May 29, 2021 to July 27, 2021, which is 5.46%.

A follower in the Oxford Learners Dictionaries is someone who supports and admires a particular person or set of ideas, is very interested in the activity and follows the latest thing, who does something after someone else has done it first, and who chooses to regularly receive someone's message using social media services.
Teaching Chinese culture and history using TikTok is fun because TikTok's facilities are very varied and can be selected according to the user's wishes. TikTok can also stimulate educators' ideas and increase educator creativity in the teaching and learning process, so that learning becomes more engaging and increases students' positive stimulation to learn. With it, TikTok can be a place for anyone to learn, create, and increase popularity.

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