

## EVALUATING TIKTOK AS A DIGITAL ELT RESOURCE: A COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY AND PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE BETWEEN LOCAL AND NATIVE SPEAKER CREATORS

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Informasi	Abstract
Volume : 3 Nomor : 6 Bulan : Juni Tahun : 2026 E-ISSN : 3062-9624	<p><i>Short-form video platforms, particularly TikTok, have emerged as significant informal English language learning environments, yet the instructional quality and pragmatic competence coverage of creator-produced ELT content remain largely unexamined. This study conducts a qualitative comparative content analysis of twenty TikTok videos (ten produced by an Indonesian local creator, @gurukumrd, and ten by a native speaker creator, @englishwithlucy to evaluate and compare their instructional approaches across two analytical dimensions: instructional quality and pragmatic competence coverage. Drawing on Mayer's (2009) cognitive theory of multimedia learning, Searle's (1969) speech act theory, and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, the analysis reveals two pedagogically distinct but complementary content profiles. @gurukumrd demonstrates consistent contrastive pragmatic scaffolding, dialogic scenario construction, and explicit orientation toward the L1 interference patterns of Indonesian learners. @englishwithlucy demonstrates high production clarity, lexical depth, and authentic cultural modeling, delivered through a monologic format that prioritizes definitional accuracy over social contextualization. Neither approach is pedagogically superior; rather, the findings suggest that local and native speaker ELT creators offer complementary instructional affordances that, when considered together, more comprehensively address the pragmatic competence needs of Indonesian EFL learners. Implications are discussed for EFL educators, content creators, and researchers in digital language learning.</i></p> <p><b>Keyword:</b> TikTok, ELT content, pragmatic competence, instructional quality, content analysis, MALL, Indonesian EFL</p> <p><b>Abstrak</b> <i>Platform video berdurasi pendek, khususnya TikTok, telah muncul sebagai lingkungan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris informal yang signifikan. Meskipun demikian, kualitas instruksional dan cakupan kompetensi pragmatik dari konten ELT (English Language Teaching) yang diproduksi oleh para kreator masih sangat jarang diteliti. Penelitian ini melakukan analisis konten komparatif kualitatif terhadap dua puluh video TikTok (sepuluh diproduksi oleh kreator lokal Indonesia, @gurukumrd, dan sepuluh oleh kreator penutur asli, @englishwithlucy untuk mengevaluasi dan membandingkan pendekatan instruksional mereka melalui dua dimensi analitis: kualitas instruksional dan cakupan kompetensi pragmatik. Dengan mengacu pada teori kognitif pembelajaran multimedia dari Mayer (2009), teori tindak tutur Searle (1969), dan teori kesantunan Brown dan Levinson (1987), analisis ini mengungkapkan dua profil konten yang berbeda secara pedagogis namun saling melengkapi. @gurukumrd menunjukkan penggunaan perancah pragmatik (pragmatic scaffolding) kontrasif yang konsisten, konstruksi skenario dialogis, dan orientasi eksplisit terhadap pola interferensi bahasa pertama (L1) dari pembelajar Indonesia. Di sisi lain, @englishwithlucy menunjukkan kejelasan produksi yang tinggi, kedalaman leksikal, dan pemodelan budaya yang disampaikan melalui format</i></p>

*monolog yang lebih memprioritaskan keakuratan definisi daripada kontekstualisasi sosial. Tidak ada pendekatan yang secara pedagogis lebih unggul. Sebaliknya, temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kreator ELT lokal dan penutur asli menawarkan manfaat instruksional yang saling melengkapi. Jika dimanfaatkan bersama-sama, kedua pendekatan tersebut mampu memenuhi kebutuhan kompetensi pragmatik pembelajar EFL Indonesia secara lebih komprehensif. Implikasi dari penelitian ini dibahas secara lebih lanjut bagi para pendidik EFL, kreator konten, dan peneliti di bidang pembelajaran bahasa digital.*

**Kata Kunci:** TikTok, konten ELT, kompetensi pragmatik, kualitas instruksional, analisis konten, MALL, EFL Indonesia

## A. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of smartphones and high-speed mobile internet has fundamentally reshaped how language learners engage with instructional content outside the classroom. Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has, over the past decade, evolved from a supplementary pedagogical tool into a primary mode of informal English acquisition for millions of learners worldwide (Chengli et al., 2025; Kukulska-Hulme, 2021). Within this broader shift, short-form video platforms, most notably TikTok, have emerged as a distinct and underexplored domain of micro-learning, where instructional content is compressed into fifteen-second to three-minute sequences and distributed algorithmically to audiences who never actively sought formal instruction. Research on emerging image-based social media has demonstrated that learners actively repurpose platform features not originally designed for language learning including video-editing tools, hashtag systems, and co-production affordances as resources for informal language acquisition (Lee, 2023). As of 2025, TikTok hosts a substantial and growing ecosystem of English language teaching content, ranging from pronunciation drills to discourse-level explanations of social registers, produced by educators, language coaches, and enthusiasts with widely varying pedagogical backgrounds (Yang et al., 2025; Rosita & Rohimajaya, 2026). Scholarship on informal digital learning of English has grown substantially in the past decade, documenting how learners leverage digital platforms as autonomous spaces for language exposure and practice (Guo & Lee, 2023; Chengli et al., 2025). This organic, creator-driven ecology raises a question that applied linguistics scholarship has only begun to take seriously: does the instructional quality of TikTok-based ELT content vary systematically between different types of creators, and if so, what are the implications for learners who rely on it?

For Indonesian EFL learners specifically, this question carries considerable weight. Indonesia's English education landscape is characterized by high classroom-to-student ratios, limited authentic target-language exposure, and a longstanding emphasis on grammatical

accuracy over communicative function, conditions that make informal digital platforms an increasingly significant supplement to formal instruction (Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2026; Rosita & Rohimajaya, 2026; Bardovi-Harlig, 2020). In this context, learners increasingly turn to social media as an informal channel for exposure to naturalistic English use (Fauziah & Diana, 2023). Yet the gap between grammatical knowledge and communicative competence, broadly understood as the ability to deploy language appropriately across varied social contexts, remains one of the most persistent challenges facing Indonesian EFL learners at secondary and tertiary levels. At the heart of this gap lies pragmatic competence: the capacity to interpret and produce utterances that are not only grammatically correct but socially appropriate, contextually sensitive, and culturally coherent. Research on Indonesian university students confirms that even without formal pragmatics instruction, learners struggle to produce speech acts that are socially appropriate in English, frequently defaulting to L1 politeness norms that do not translate directly into English interactional conventions (Cahyaningrum et al., 2025). This phenomenon, commonly referred to as pragmatic transfer, is particularly acute in the domain of politeness, where expectations around indirectness, face-saving, and relational positioning vary considerably between Indonesian and English communicative cultures.

Two foundational frameworks anchor the theoretical basis of pragmatic competence in applied linguistics. Searle's (1969) speech act theory established that utterances perform social functions, such as requesting, apologizing, refusing, and complimenting, that cannot be adequately understood through propositional content alone. An utterance such as *"Could you possibly close the window?"* is not, in any meaningful interactional sense, a query about physical ability; it is a polite request whose force derives from the social conventions surrounding indirectness in English. For EFL learners accustomed to more direct L1 interactional styles, recognizing and producing these illocutionary acts with appropriate force and form presents a significant acquisition challenge. Indonesian learners, in particular, have been shown to favor conventionally indirect request strategies shaped by considerations of social distance and cultural deference, yet these same norms can produce pragmatic misalignment when transferred unreflectively into English communicative contexts (Cahyaningrum et al., 2025). Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory further articulates how speakers negotiate face, defined as the socially-situated desire to be approved of and to maintain autonomy, through strategies that are highly culture-specific and context-dependent. Together, these frameworks provide a principled lens for evaluating whether

instructional content on TikTok actually teaches pragmatic function, or merely presents decontextualized phrases whose social meaning remains opaque to the learner. The question of how consistently and accurately ELT creators on TikTok operationalize these concepts, whether implicitly through authentic modeling or explicitly through metalinguistic commentary, is central to the present study (Taguchi, 2019).

Alongside pragmatic instruction, the quality of digital pedagogical design deserves equal attention. Mayer's (2009) cognitive theory of multimedia learning established that instructional content integrating verbal explanations with complementary visual information, an approach commonly described as visual scaffolding, reduces cognitive load and enhances retention more effectively than single-modality input: a finding that has been replicated and extended in subsequent meta-analytic work (Noetel et al., 2022). In the context of short-form video, this translates into specific choices: the use of on-screen captions, illustrative scenario dramatization, annotated text overlays, and context-cued example sequences. These design elements are not merely aesthetic; they constitute pedagogical decisions that reflect the creator's understanding of how language acquisition works under the constraints of attention and time that define short-form video. Research on instructor-designed video content confirms that the application of multimedia principles, including synchronization of verbal and visual elements, has measurable effects on learner engagement and comprehension outcomes in EFL contexts (Shen et al., 2024). Several studies examining video-based ELT content have noted that instructional quality varies considerably even among high-subscription channels, with some creators demonstrating sophisticated scaffolding while others rely primarily on charismatic delivery without a systematic explanatory structure, a variation also observed in broader short-form video analyses (Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2026; Yang et al., 2025). TikTok, with its even shorter format and culture of informal performativity, arguably places greater pressure on creators to make rapid, high-stakes pedagogical choices within seconds of each video's opening.

Despite the volume of scholarship addressing MALL and digital language learning broadly, the literature has not yet produced a systematic comparative analysis of how instructional quality and pragmatic content differ between local, non-native speaker ELT creators and native speaker creators operating on the same platform. This is a meaningful gap. Local creators bring a pedagogically relevant form of content knowledge, including an insider understanding of the specific errors, misconceptions, and L1 interference patterns that their learners carry. A creator who has navigated Indonesian-to-English pragmatic

transfer as a learner in their own right may be better positioned to anticipate where learners will struggle and to address those exact points explicitly. Native speaker creators, by contrast, offer what might be called authentic cultural capital, providing naturalistic exposure to the cultural scripts, register conventions, and contextual norms that underpin native-like politeness and social fluency. Neither orientation is inherently superior, but their respective strengths suggest that the content they produce may be qualitatively different in ways that matter for curriculum design and learner guidance. Research on native and non-native English speaker teachers has consistently shown that the two groups bring different beliefs and instructional strengths to their practice (Deng et al., 2023). Existing studies on TikTok and language learning have tended to focus on platform affordances and learner agency in repurposing technological features for informal learning (Lee, 2023), learner perception, engagement metrics, or broad categorizations of content type rather than systematic analysis of instructional design (Rosita & Rohimajaya, 2026; Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2026), and the specific intersection of pragmatic competence and creator identity in short-form ELT video remains entirely unexamined. The present study addresses this gap directly.

This study therefore sets out to evaluate TikTok as a digital ELT resource by conducting a qualitative comparative content analysis of twenty instructional videos focused on everyday conversation and politeness, with ten produced by a prominent Indonesian local creator (@gurukumrd) and ten by a native speaker creator (@englishwithlucy). Specifically, the study aims to: (1) assess and compare the instructional quality of videos from both creators, with reference to multimedia design and pedagogical clarity; and (2) analyze and compare how each creator addresses pragmatic competence, particularly in terms of politeness strategies, speech act instruction, and socially contextualized language use. By examining these two dimensions in parallel, the study seeks to generate comparative insights that may inform both content creators and EFL educators in evaluating and selecting TikTok-based resources for instructional purposes.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis design to examine the instructional characteristics of TikTok-based ELT content. Content analysis is well-suited to this inquiry because it enables systematic, replicable examination of communicative content within its mediated context, allowing the researcher to move beyond surface-level description toward interpretive claims about pedagogical intent and design logic (Krippendorff, 2019). The

comparative dimension of the design is essential here; rather than evaluating a single creator's output in isolation, the study positions two distinct creator profiles against each other to surface contrasts in pedagogical orientation and pragmatic framing that would otherwise remain implicit. A qualitative rather than quantitative approach is justified by the nature of the constructs under examination. Instructional quality and pragmatic competence cannot be adequately captured through counts or binary presence/absence codes; they require interpretive judgment grounded in theoretical frameworks. This design is consistent with recent qualitative work in digital language learning research, including content analyses of TikTok and Instagram that have examined how learners and creators make use of platform affordances for language-related purposes (Lee, 2023; Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2026; Cahyaningrum et al., 2025).

The data for this study were drawn from two TikTok accounts selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling strategy in which units are chosen based on their capacity to provide information-rich cases relevant to the research questions (Patton, 2015). The first account, *@gurukumrd*, represents the local Indonesian ELT creator category, signifying a creator who identifies as a non-native English speaker, produces content in a bilingual Indonesian-English mode, and demonstrably orients their instruction toward Indonesian learners' known difficulties. The second account, *@englishwithlucy*, represents the native speaker ELT creator category, focusing on a widely followed British English creator whose content foregrounds natural speech patterns, cultural context, and native-like register use. These two accounts were selected not as exhaustive representatives of their respective categories, but as theoretically productive contrasting cases, a selection logic consistent with comparative case study methodology (Yin, 2018). Ten videos were sampled from each account, yielding a corpus of twenty videos in total. Videos were included in the sample on the basis of the following criteria: the video's primary topic concerned everyday conversational English, practical communication, or politeness and social appropriateness; the video was addressed to EFL or general English learners rather than serving as entertainment or lifestyle content; and the video did not focus exclusively on decontextualized grammar explanation without any communicative or social framing. Videos focused on isolated grammar rules, such as tense conjugation or clause-level syntactic explanation, were excluded, as these do not directly engage the pragmatic and interactional dimensions central to the study's analytical focus.

Data were analyzed using a researcher-constructed coding scheme, developed through

an iterative process of theoretical grounding and pilot coding. The coding scheme comprised two principal dimensions, each operationalized through a set of sub-categories derived from the theoretical frameworks reviewed in the Introduction. The first dimension, Instructional Quality, was coded with reference to Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning principles and drew on established criteria for pedagogical clarity in digital content, including the presence and alignment of visual scaffolding elements such as on-screen text, captioning, and illustrated scenarios, the coherence and sequencing of explanatory content, the use of example-driven versus rule-driven instruction, and the degree to which the creator made learning objectives explicit or implicit within the video's structure. The second dimension, Pragmatic Competence Coverage, was coded with reference to Searle's (1969) taxonomy of speech acts and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, and examined whether and how each video contextualized language within specific social scenarios, whether politeness-relevant distinctions were made explicit, and whether the creator addressed the social or cultural conditions that make particular utterances appropriate or inappropriate. Each video was first transcribed verbatim, including all on-screen text, and then subjected to close analytical reading prior to coding, following the principle that content analysis of multimodal texts should account for all meaning-bearing channels simultaneously.

Following initial coding, data were processed through a three-stage analytical procedure. In the reduction stage, coded segments across both corpora were organized thematically, grouping observations under each dimension and sub-category to identify patterns within each creator's output. In the display stage, these patterns were rendered in comparative form by aligning equivalent coding categories across both accounts to make structural similarities and divergences visible. Finally, in the contrastive comparison stage, the researcher drew analytical conclusions about the qualitative differences in how each creator approaches instructional design and pragmatic instruction, interpreting these differences in light of the theoretical frameworks and the specific pedagogical contexts each creator operates within. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the analysis, the researcher maintained a reflexivity log throughout the coding process, and selected coded segments were subjected to peer-checking with a colleague in the ELT field, consistent with credibility-enhancing practices recommended in qualitative inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the findings of the comparative content analysis conducted on twenty TikTok videos, ten produced by the Indonesian local creator (@gurukumrd) and ten by the native speaker creator (@englishwithlucy). The findings are organized according to the two analytical dimensions established in the coding scheme: Instructional Quality and Pragmatic Competence Coverage. Within each dimension, the two creators are examined in parallel to foreground comparative patterns.

### **Instructional Quality**

The following section addresses the first research question by examining how each creator's videos perform across the instructional quality dimension, with particular attention to multimedia design choices, visual scaffolding, and pedagogical sequencing.

Across the ten videos analyzed, @gurukumrd demonstrates a consistently multimodal instructional approach that aligns with several core principles of multimedia learning. Visual scaffolding is present in all ten videos, with on-screen text, keyword overlays, and captioned dialogue serving as consistent design features. Rather than relying on verbal explanation alone, the creator systematically pairs spoken content with written reinforcement, a design choice that reduces cognitive load and supports comprehension particularly for learners who may struggle to process rapid spoken English. In one representative video, the creator presents a grammatical error in large, legible on-screen text before delivering a corrective explanation, making the target form visually prominent before it is verbally addressed.

A defining feature of @gurukumrd's instructional approach is its consistent use of roleplay and dramatized dialogue as a primary delivery mechanism. Nine out of ten videos feature at least one interlocutor, typically a character positioned as an Indonesian learner, engaging in a scripted conversational exchange with the creator. This format serves a dual pedagogical function: it models target language use within a realistic communicative scenario while simultaneously representing the learner's own anticipated position within that scenario. The presence of an Indonesian interlocutor is particularly significant, as it creates a point of cultural and linguistic identification that is absent from most ELT content produced for general audiences. Across a substantial portion of the corpus, this dialogic format is sustained across the full duration of the video, with the exchange structured to surface a common error or misconception before the creator provides a contextualized correction.

The creator's content demonstrates a consistent preference for example-driven over rule-driven instruction. Rather than opening with an abstract grammatical principle, @gurukumrd typically begins with a communicative scenario or a problematic utterance

drawn from everyday Indonesian English use, and derives the instructional point from that scenario. This inductive approach is evident across the corpus, as illustrated in one video where the creator introduces the distinction between “*Do you like sports?*”, and “*Do you play any sports?*” through a simulated social exchange before explaining the underlying pragmatic distinction. Learning objectives, while not stated explicitly at the opening of each video, are nonetheless rendered clear through the scenario-first structure, which implicitly signals the communicative problem the video will address.

*@englishwithlucy's* instructional approach is characterized by a markedly different design logic. All ten videos adopt a talking-head format in which the creator addresses the camera directly without the presence of a second interlocutor or dramatized scenario. Visual scaffolding remains consistently present; on-screen text, image prompts, and fill-in-the-blank sentence frames appear across the corpus, but the modality is deployed differently from *@gurukumrd's* approach. Rather than illustrating social scenarios, visual elements in this corpus primarily serve to display lexical items, present quiz-style prompts, or highlight orthographic distinctions, where images or sentence frames invite the viewer to guess an answer before the creator provides it.

The instructional sequencing across *@englishwithlucy's* videos reflects a deductive orientation: the creator typically introduces a linguistic category or distinction, presents examples, and then explains the underlying rule or pattern. This approach foregrounds definitional clarity and lexical precision. In one video, for example, the creator addresses the counterintuitive behavior of certain English prefixes by presenting the target vocabulary items and explaining their semantic logic in sequence. Similarly, several videos expand learners' lexical range by presenting sets of synonyms organized around a semantic field, with each item explained through its contextual usage and register implications.

Audio-visual production quality is uniformly high across all ten *@englishwithlucy* videos. The creator's speech is consistently clear and carefully paced, on-screen text is legible and well-designed, and background conditions are controlled and professional. This production consistency contrasts with *@gurukumrd's* corpus, where one video was noted as having audio interference that mildly affected the viewing experience. The overall production polish of *@englishwithlucy's* videos reflects the affordances available to a professional content creator operating at scale, and may contribute to learner confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the content presented.

### **Pragmatic Competence Coverage**

The following section addresses the second research question by examining how each creator's videos handle pragmatic competence, focusing on the contextualization of language within social scenarios, explicit politeness instruction, and corrective attention to L1-influenced pragmatic transfer.

The analysis reveals that *@gurukumrd's* content addresses pragmatic competence with notable depth and consistency. Contextualization of language within specific social scenarios is present across all ten videos, making it the most consistent pragmatic design feature in this corpus. Every video positions the target language item (whether a lexical phrase, grammatical structure, or idiomatic expression) within a communicative situation that specifies the relationship between interlocutors, the social stakes of the exchange, and the cultural context in which the expression would be used. This is most evident in a series of videos built around song lyrics, where the creator extracts phrases from authentic English-language texts and recontextualizes them within scenarios drawn from Indonesian daily life, explicitly bridging the cultural gap between the source text and the learner's experiential frame of reference.

Explicit attention to politeness and social appropriateness is present in seven of the ten videos, representing the highest proportion of politeness-focused content in either corpus. Importantly, the treatment of politeness in *@gurukumrd's* videos is not limited to surface-level formulaic instruction. The creator situates politeness choices within scenarios that make the social reasoning behind them visible. In one video, the expression "*What's the catch?*" is explained not only semantically but pragmatically, with the creator distinguishing its connotational valence in English from a superficially similar Indonesian idiom. This contrastive pragmatic move, drawing on the learner's L1 frame to highlight a cross-cultural difference in implicature, represents a sophisticated form of pragmatic scaffolding that is unique to this corpus.

Corrective attention to pragmatic transfer is present in eight of the ten videos, which is particularly significant given the research gap identified in the Introduction. *@gurukumrd* consistently anticipates the specific errors and literal translations that Indonesian learners are likely to produce, and explicitly corrects them within a social context. In one representative example, the creator identifies a pragmatic mismatch in which Indonesian learners respond to "*Do you like sports?*" by naming a specific sport they play, demonstrating that the Indonesian interpretation of the question differs from its English pragmatic function. The correction is delivered not as a grammar rule but as a social clarification, explaining what the question actually communicates and when a different formulation would be more

appropriate. This form of contrastive pragmatic instruction directly addresses the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer documented in the literature on Indonesian EFL learners (Cahyaningrum et al., 2025).

@*englishwithlucy*'s treatment of pragmatic competence presents a different profile. Contextualization of language within social scenarios is present in eight of the ten videos, making it the strongest pragmatic dimension in this corpus. However, the nature of this contextualization differs systematically from @*gurukumrd*'s approach. The creator's contextual explanations tend to specify the communicative register or social function of a word or phrase; explaining, for example, that "*Chomp*" implies large, energetic biting, or that "*In the wee hours*" refers specifically to the period immediately after midnight; rather than embedding the language item within a dramatized social scenario involving specific interlocutors. The contextual information provided is semantically and pragmatically accurate, but it is delivered as propositional explanation rather than as embodied social modeling.

Attention to politeness and socially appropriate language use is present in four of the ten videos. The most sustained example of pragmatic instruction in this corpus occurs in a video where the creator explicitly addresses the social inappropriateness of the formulaic response "*Fine, thanks*" to the question "*How are you?*", and provides a range of alternative responses differentiated by register and affective meaning. This video demonstrates that @*englishwithlucy* is capable of sustained pragmatic commentary when the topic invites it, and the explanation of social nuance; including distinctions between expressions that signal mild positivity, resignation, and genuine well-being; is delivered with cultural authenticity and precision. Nevertheless, this depth of pragmatic engagement is not sustained across the corpus; the majority of videos focus on lexical expansion or orthographic accuracy without explicitly addressing the social conditions governing language choice.

Corrective attention to pragmatic transfer from L1 is absent across all ten @*englishwithlucy* videos. This is consistent with the creator's positioning as a native speaker producing content for a general international audience rather than a specific learner community. Without orientation toward the particular L1 backgrounds of her audience, the creator does not anticipate the pragmatic errors or literal translation tendencies that might characterize Indonesian learners. This is not a limitation of the creator's pedagogical competence but rather a structural consequence of the general-audience model within which native speaker ELT content is typically produced.

**Comparative Summary**

The analysis reveals two pedagogically distinct approaches to ELT content on TikTok, each reflecting the creator's positional knowledge and instructional orientation. @gurukumrd's content is characterized by dialogic scenario construction, explicit contrastive pragmatic scaffolding, and consistent orientation toward the specific communicative vulnerabilities of Indonesian learners. @englishwithlucy's content is characterized by production clarity, lexical depth, and authentic cultural modeling, delivered through a monologic format that prioritizes definitional accuracy over social contextualization. The distribution of coding indicators across both corpora is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Distribution of Coding Indicators Across Both Corpora*

<b>Coding Dimension</b>	<b>@gurukumrd (n=10)</b>	<b>@englishwithlucy (n=10)</b>
Visual scaffolding (text/caption)	10/10	10/10
Roleplay/dramatized dialogue	9/10	0/10
Contextualization of language	10/10	8/10
Explicit politeness instruction	7/10	4/10
Corrective pragmatic transfer	8/10	0/10

**DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study illuminate two pedagogically complementary but structurally distinct approaches to ELT content production on TikTok, and their implications for pragmatic competence development among Indonesian EFL learners warrant careful consideration in relation to the theoretical frameworks and prior literature.

The most consequential finding concerns the dimension of contrastive pragmatic scaffolding. @gurukumrd's consistent practice of identifying, demonstrating, and correcting L1-influenced pragmatic errors present in eight of ten videos represents a form of pedagogical content knowledge that is structurally unavailable to creators who produce content for general international audiences. This finding aligns with Cahyaningrum et al.'s (2025) documentation of how Indonesian EFL learner default to L1 politeness norms in English interactions, producing utterances that are grammatically accurate but pragmatically misaligned. The creator's approach directly addresses this pattern by making the cross-cultural mismatch visible and explicable within the video's communicative scenario. In Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, the creator is teaching learners not merely what to say, but how face-threatening acts are differently negotiated across cultural contexts, a distinction that cannot be inferred from exposure to authentic native speaker content alone.

This finding has a significant implication for how we conceptualize the value of local ELT creators in the digital language learning ecosystem. Prior scholarship on TikTok and language learning has tended to evaluate creator content primarily through the lens of engagement, entertainment value, or general learner perception (Rosita & Rohimajaya, 2026; Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2026). The present study suggests that local creators contribute a distinct and undervalued pedagogical resource: insider pragmatic knowledge that is systematically relevant to the specific learner community they serve. This form of knowledge cannot be replicated by increasing production quality or expanding lexical range; it derives from the creator's own experience of navigating the same L1-to-L2 pragmatic terrain that their learners face. This finding is consistent with broader research on native and non-native English speaker teachers, which has documented that non-native speaker teachers often bring a distinct pedagogical advantage in anticipating and addressing learner difficulties rooted in L1 transfer (Deng et al., 2023).

The complementary finding, that *@englishwithlucy* provides authentic cultural modeling that *@gurukumrd's* content does not replicate, is equally significant. The native speaker creator's explanations of register variation, idiomatic expression, and culturally situated meaning demonstrate what Mayer (2009) would recognize as efficient multimedia design: information is presented clearly, examples are well-chosen, and the learner is guided systematically through increasingly nuanced semantic territory. However, without social scenario contextualization or L1-contrastive framing, the pragmatic implications of the language items presented remain implicit. A learner who understands that "*Mustn't grumble*" signals mild contentment has acquired a lexical item; a learner who understands when and to whom that expression would be socially appropriate, and how it differs from what they might say in Indonesian in the equivalent social moment, has acquired pragmatic competence. The data suggest that *@englishwithlucy's* content consistently delivers the former and only occasionally the latter.

Taken together, these findings support a complementarity thesis: the pedagogical strengths of local and native speaker ELT creators are not redundant but additive. Local creators address the specific pragmatic vulnerabilities of their learner community through contrastive scaffolding and cultural bridging; native speaker creators provide authentic exposure to the register richness and cultural scripts of the target language. Neither corpus alone provides a comprehensive foundation for pragmatic competence development, but together they address dimensions of communicative learning that neither could address

individually. This finding extends Yang et al.'s (2025) systematic review of TikTok in higher education, which noted the platform's effectiveness in language learning contexts without examining the differential contributions of creator identity and orientation. It also contributes to Chengli et al.'s (2025) framework of MALL as a learner-centered and context-sensitive practice by demonstrating that creator positionality. Specifically, whether the creator shares the learner's L1 background constitutes a meaningful variable in the pedagogical quality of informal digital ELT content. The complementarity thesis is further supported by scholarship on technology-mediated approaches to L2 pragmatic development, which emphasizes the importance of socially situated and contextualized language tasks as a foundation for pragmatic competence gains (González-Lloret, 2022).

One further observation merits discussion. The format differences between the two corpora, dialogic scenario construction versus talking-head monologue, are not merely stylistic; they reflect fundamentally different theories of how language learning happens. *@gurukumrd's* approach is grounded in an implicitly interactional model of language acquisition, in which learners develop competence by observing and processing language use within social situations. *@englishwithlucy's* approach reflects a more transmission-oriented model, in which accurate information delivered clearly by a knowledgeable source constitutes sufficient input for acquisition. Both models have theoretical and empirical support, but their respective limitations are precisely what each creator's corpus exposes: social modeling without definitional accuracy risks pragmatic overgeneralization, while definitional accuracy without social modeling risks pragmatic underspecification.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This study set out to evaluate TikTok as a digital ELT resource by comparing the instructional quality and pragmatic competence coverage of content produced by a local Indonesian creator and a native speaker creator. The findings reveal that the two corpora are characterized by complementary pedagogical strengths rather than by a straightforward hierarchy of quality. *@gurukumrd's* content demonstrates systematic contrastive pragmatic scaffolding, consistent social scenario construction, and explicit orientation toward the L1 interference patterns of Indonesian learners. *@englishwithlucy's* content demonstrates high production quality, lexical depth, and authentic cultural modeling within a monologic format that prioritizes clarity and accuracy.

These findings carry several practical implications. For EFL educators in Indonesian contexts, the study suggests that TikTok-based ELT content should not be evaluated or recommended as a monolithic category. The pedagogical value of a given creator's content depends substantially on whether that content addresses the specific pragmatic vulnerabilities of the target learner community, a criterion on which local creators have a structural advantage. Educators who incorporate TikTok content into their blended or flipped classroom designs may benefit from deliberately combining content from both creator types: local creator content to scaffold awareness of pragmatic transfer, and native speaker content to provide authentic target language exposure. This combination strategy represents a more principled approach to informal digital resource selection than reliance on subscriber counts or production quality alone.

For content creators, the findings highlight the distinct and complementary value of different creator positionalities. Local creators are encouraged to recognize the pedagogical significance of their insider pragmatic knowledge and to make it more systematically explicit in their content design. Native speaker creators who wish to serve specific learner communities may benefit from incorporating more scenario-based content that contextualizes language items within social situations, rather than relying exclusively on definitional explanation.

For researchers, this study identifies a productive direction for future inquiry. The complementarity thesis proposed here, namely that local and native speaker ELT creators offer additive rather than substitutable pedagogical affordances, requires empirical testing at the level of learner outcomes. A longitudinal or experimental study examining whether learners who consume a structured combination of both content types demonstrate superior pragmatic competence gains compared to those who consume either type alone would provide critical evidence for curriculum design decisions. Additionally, the present study's scope is limited to two creators and twenty videos; future research should extend the corpus to include a wider range of local and native speaker creators across different learner communities and target languages.

This study contributes to a growing body of research on creator-produced ELT content in digital environments by demonstrating that creator identity, specifically the creator's relationship to the learner's L1, is a pedagogically meaningful variable that has been undertheorized in the MALL literature. As short-form video platforms continue to expand as informal language learning environments, frameworks for evaluating the instructional quality

of creator-produced content must account not only for production design and engagement metrics, but for the pragmatic knowledge that different types of creators bring to their instructional practice.

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