



# Who Defines “Correct English”? A Critical Discourse Analysis of English-Learning Content on TikTok

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| Article Info                                                                                                                                                       | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <b>Keywords:</b><br>Critical Discourse Analysis;<br>English-learning content;<br>Native-speakerism;<br>Standard Language<br>ideology; TikTok                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>DOI:</b><br>10.24256/ideasv14i1.10966                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Corresponding Author:</b><br>Nusaibah Al Mashuunah<br>Abdullah<br>nusaibahalmaa@gmail.com<br>English Education,<br>Universitas Ibn Khaldun<br>Bogor, Jawa Barat | <i>Despite the growing popularity of TikTok as a platform for English language learning, limited attention has been given to how language ideologies are embedded in its instructional content. This study investigates how “correct” English is represented in English-learning content on TikTok, particularly in relation to Standard Language Ideology and Native-speakerism. Using a qualitative design, this study analyzes Fairclough’s Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis to twenty-four videos produced by Antonio Parlati. The data consist of spoken utterances, captions, and on-screen texts that contain explicit and implicit evaluations of English usage. Fairclough’s Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse analysis framework is employed to examine the data at the textual, discursive-practice, and sosial-practice levels. The findings reveal that “correct English” is constructed through three main patterns: native-like English as a preferred model, natural or real-life English as a marker of appropriate usage, and explicit correction as a mechanism for distinguishing preferred forms from non-preferred forms. These patterns show that correctness is not represented only as grammatical accuracy, but native-speaker authority. The study concludes that TikTok English-learning content functions both as a source of practical language instruction and a digital space where dominant ideologies about English correctness are reproduced and circulated. These findings highlight the need for English teachers, learners, and content creators to critically engage with and evaluate the ideological assumptions embedded in social media-based language instruction.</i> |

## 1. Introduction

Short-form video platforms have increasingly shaped the ways people access and interpret language-learning materials. In contemporary English language learning, learners no longer rely exclusively on classroom or textbooks. Instead, they frequently turn to social media platforms to obtain quick explanations, pronunciation models, vocabulary alternatives, and conversational expressions that appear relevant to everyday communication. Among these platforms, TikTok has gained particular prominence because of its brief video format, algorithmic visibility, multimodal features, and high level of user participation.

Previous studies have shown that TikTok can support English vocabulary development, speaking skills, learner engagement, and informal learning practices (Alghameeti, 2022; Dwipa et al., 2024; Y. J. Lee, 2023; Y.-J. Lee, 2025; Nur Aziz & Hemas Sabella, 2021; Rasyid et al., 2023). Collectively, these studies position TikTok as an effective and accessible learning platform. However, they tend to emphasize pedagogical benefits and learner outcomes, while paying limited attention to how English itself is represented and evaluated within the content. As a result, the ideological dimensions of English-learning videos remain underexplored.

Social media discourse is not neutral because it involves the selection of words, images, sounds, captions, gestures, and platform-specific formats that shape how knowledge is presented and interpreted (Bouvier, 2016; Izotova et al., 2021; Mordecai, 2023; Page et al., 2022). In TikTok's video-based environment, these elements shape how knowledge is presented and interpreted, including assumptions about what counts as appropriate or desirable language use. In English-learning content, such representations are important because they often include explicit and implicit judgements about correctness, naturalness, and legitimacy.

These judgments are closely related to language ideology. Standard Language Ideology assumes that there is a socially preferred and legitimate form of language that learners should follow (Davila, 2016; McLelland, 2021). This perspective is closely intertwined with Native-speakerism, which positions native speakers as ideal models of authenticity and competence in English (De Costa, 2016; Liu, 2021; Matsuda, 2018). Together, these ideologies reinforce the idea that "correct English" is aligned with native-speaker norms, potentially marginalizing alternative forms of English.

This issue becomes visible in English-learning content on TikTok, including videos produced by creators such as Antonio Parlati. His content frequently uses expressions such as "*don't say this*," "*say instead*," "*this sounds wrong*," "*real English*," and "*natural English*." While these expressions may offer practical guidance, they can also construct hierarchical distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable forms of English, implicitly promoting native-like usage as the standard.

Despite the growing body of research on TikTok language learning, it remains unclear how short-form English-learning videos construct and normalize ideas of "correct English". This gap is significant because learners may treat such content as authoritative, shaping their understanding of language legitimacy.

To address this gap, this study examines how "correct English" is represented in TikTok English-learning content using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis Framework. This approach enables analysis at the level of textual features, discursive practices, and broader social practices. This study addresses the following research questions: (1) How is "correct English" represented in English-learning content on TikTok? (2) What forms of Standard Language Ideology and Native-speakerism are reflected in these representations?

This study contributes to research on English language teaching, digital discourse, and language ideology in several ways. First, it extends previous studies on TikTok-based language learning by shifting the focus from learning benefits to ideological construction. Second, it contributes to CDA research by examining English-learning content as an everyday digital discourse that constructs assumptions about correctness and legitimacy. Third, it provides a critical perspective on how social media-based language learning may shape learners' understanding of English beyond grammatical accuracy, particularly through the repeated association of correctness with native-speaker usage, naturalness, and explicit correction.

## 2. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to examine how the idea of "correct English" is represented in English-learning content on TikTok. A qualitative design was used to focus on meanings, language choices, evaluative expressions, and ideological assumptions embedded in digital discourse rather than on numerical measurement. Qualitative inquiry enables researchers to interpret social meanings within their contexts and to examine how participants, texts, and practices construct particular understandings of reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The study was guided by Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis framework, which examines discourse through textual practice, discursive practice, and social practice (Fairclough, 1992, 2010). The framework was used to investigate how linguistic expressions such as "*don't say*," "*say instead*," "*real English*," "*natural English*," and "*native speaker*" construct particular assumptions about correctness, legitimacy, and authority in English language learning.

The data were obtained from English-learning videos uploaded by Antonio Parlati on TikTok. His content was selected because it consistently presents English through explicit corrective and evaluative formats, making it an information-rich case for examining how "correct English" is discursively constructed in short-form

digital contexts. This study does not aim to generalize findings but to provide in-depth analytical insight within a specific context.

The dataset consists of twenty-four TikTok videos published between September 2020 and May 2026. The videos were selected using purposive sampling based on their relevance to the research focus. The main criterion was the presence of explicit or implicit representations of “correct English,” including references to correctness, naturalness, native-like speech, and language mistakes. The selected videos contain spoken explanations, captions, and on-screen texts relevant to discourse analysis. Each video was coded from V1 to V24 and organized into a structured dataset.

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

*Table 1. Selection Criteria for the TikTok Video Dataset*

| <b>Criteria</b>      | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Content type         | TikTok videos containing English-learning material                                                                    |
| Main topic           | Pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or everyday English expressions                                                   |
| Discursive relevance | Videos containing references to correctness, naturalness, native-like speech, real-life English, or language mistakes |
| Textual elements     | Videos containing spoken words, captions, or on-screen text relevant to the research questions                        |
| Accessibility        | Publicly available TikTok videos that could be watched repeatedly and documented                                      |

Videos were excluded if they did not contain evaluative language, did not focus on English learning, or did not provide sufficient spoken or written text for discourse analysis.

Data were collected through documentation. Each video was repeatedly watched to identify relevant elements, followed by transcription of spoken utterances and documentation of captions and on-screen texts. Both spoken and written elements were analyzed together, as digital discourse involves multiple semiotic resources (Page et al., 2022). The collected data were compiled into a dataset consisting of video codes, transcripts, captions, and analytical notes.

The data were analyzed through two stages: qualitative coding and Critical Discourse Analysis. Coding was used to identify and organize recurring patterns, which were then interpreted using Fairclough’s framework.

The coding process combined data-driven and theory-informed approaches. In the initial stage, words and expressions related to correctness, naturalness, native-speaker authority, real-life English, and explicit correction were identified across the dataset. The process was iterative, with repeated review to refine codes and ensure consistency across videos. In the second stage, related codes were grouped into broader themes following Saldaña (2022).

This process resulted in three major themes: native-like English as a preferred way of speaking, naturalness and real-life English, and correctness through explicit language evaluation. These themes formed the basis for further interpretation within Fairclough's framework to examine how discourse constructs and reinforces language ideologies.

After the coding process, the data were analyzed using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA framework. The analysis was conducted as follows:

*Table 2. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Framework and Analytical Focus*

| <b>Fairclough's Dimension</b> | <b>Analytical Focus in This Study</b>                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Textual practice              | Lexical choices, evaluative expressions, correction patterns, captions, and on-screen texts                             |
| Discursive practice           | How English-learning content is produced, formatted, circulated, and consumed through TikTok                            |
| Social practice               | Broader ideologies of language correctness, Standard Language Ideology, Native-speakerism, legitimacy, and authenticity |

The table above summarizes how each dimension of Fairclough's framework is applied in this study.

To ensure trustworthiness, expert validation was conducted through consultation with a lecturer specializing in Critical Discourse Analysis. The coding process and interpretive findings were reviewed to ensure credibility, consistency, and analytical rigor. Feedback was used to refine coding and strengthen the analysis.

### 3. Result

The data consisted of spoken utterances, captions, and on-screen texts that contained explicit or implicit evaluations of English usage. Through initial coding and pattern coding, three major themes emerged: native-like English as a preferred model, naturalness and real-life English as markers of appropriate usage, and explicit correction as a mechanism for constructing correctness. These themes show that "correct English" in the analyzed content is not represented only as grammatical accuracy, but also as a matter of native-speaker authority, naturalness, and linguistic legitimacy.

#### *Overview of the Dataset*

The twenty-four selected videos were grouped into four initial categories based on their dominant focus. The categories were used to organize the corpus before the data were analyzed through Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis framework.

Table 3. Overview of the Dataset

| Category                          | Number of Videos | Main Analytical Focus                                                            |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Native-speaker usage              | 7                | References to native speakers, native-like pronunciation, and spoken fluency     |
| Naturalness and real-life English | 6                | Comparisons between textbook forms and everyday spoken English                   |
| Explicit language correction      | 11               | Corrective expressions such as “don’t say,” “say instead,” and “common mistakes” |
| Total                             | 24               |                                                                                  |

The classification indicates that explicit correction was the most dominant category in the dataset. However, references to native-speaker usage and naturalness also appeared consistently across the videos, particularly in pronunciation and conversational English content. This indicates that the representation of “correct English” was constructed through overlapping discursive patterns rather than through a single form of evaluation.

### ***Native-like English as a Preferred Model***

The first major theme concerns the repeated positioning of native-like English as a preferred model of speaking. In several videos, native-speaker usage was presented as a reference point for pronunciation, fluency, and everyday spoken communication. Phrases such as “*sounds a bit more like a native speaker*,” “*if you wanna sound a bit more native-like*,” “*sound a little more native*,” and “*How to speak like a native speaker*” appeared as evaluative markers that associated better English with native-like performance.

Table 4. Representative Data on Native-Speaker Usage

| Video Code | Representative Expression                          | Textual Feature                    | Initial Interpretation                                             |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| V23        | <i>“How to speak like a native speaker”</i>        | Direct reference to native speaker | Native speakers are positioned as an ideal model of English speech |
| V7         | <i>“If you wanna sound a bit more native-like”</i> | Evaluative phrase “native-like”    | Native-like pronunciation is framed as a desirable learning target |
| V4/V10     | <i>“Sound a little more native”</i>                | Comparative expression             | Learners are encouraged to move closer to native-speaker norms     |
| V5         | References to connected                            | Pronunciation                      | Everyday                                                           |

|                                               |                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| speech in expressions modelling               | pronunciation is                       |
| such as <i>this year</i> and <i>last year</i> | explained through native-speaker usage |

Across the dataset, correctness is frequently constructed through references to native-speaker usage, positioning it as an implicit linguistic authority. This pattern is evident in expressions such as “*If you wanna sound a bit more native-like*” (V7) and “*This sounds a bit more like a native speaker*” (V5), where the evaluative focus is not on grammatical rules per se, but on alignment with native norms.

Rather than explicitly defining correctness, these formulations shift attention toward resemblance, indicating that linguistic validity is achieved through approximation. The emphasis on sounding “more native” operates as a textual cue that frames correctness as a matter of degree rather than a fixed standard.

From a discursive perspective, this pattern reflects a recurring strategy in TikTok-based instructional content. Content creators position themselves as guides who translate native-speaker norms into accessible forms, presenting these norms as practical targets for learners. In doing so, correctness is constructed through exposure to and imitation of these modeled forms.

**Naturalness and Real-Life English as Markers of Appropriate Usage**

Another recurring pattern in the dataset is the use of “naturalness” and “real-life English” as reference points for evaluating appropriate language use. Rather than relying solely on formal grammatical correctness, content creators frequently orient their explanations toward how English is used in everyday interaction.

Table 5. Naturalness in Textbook English and Real-Life English in the Dataset

| Video Code | “Less Natural”/Textbook Form | “More Natural”/Real-Life Form | Discursive Marker               | Analytical Meaning                                       |
|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| V9         | <i>Do you want to</i>        | <i>Djuona</i>                 | “Textbook vs Real-life English” | Naturalness is associated with reduced, connected speech |
| V9         | <i>I am going to</i>         | <i>Im’na</i>                  | Side-by-side comparison         | Informal spoken forms are framed as more realistic       |
| V9         | <i>What are you</i>          | <i>Watcha</i>                 | Visual contrast                 | Everyday pronunciation is constructed as authentic       |
| V8         | <i>I’m going to/I’m</i>      | <i>Imuna</i>                  | “You can also                   | More reduced                                             |



|    |                            |                          |                                           |                                                  |
|----|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
|    | <i>gonna</i>               |                          | <i>say..."</i>                            | forms are positioned as advanced/natural         |
| V5 | <i>This year/Last year</i> | <i>thiSHear/lasCHear</i> | <i>"This is natural connected speech"</i> | Sound blending is framed as normal and desirable |
| V5 | Full pronunciation         | Reduced connected speech | <i>"It's not wrong...but natural"</i>     | Correctness shifts from accuracy to naturalness  |

Phrases such as *"this is what people in real-life actually say"* (V9) or *"It's not wrong, but naturally they say"* (V5) shift the basis of evaluation from rule-based accuracy to contextual usage. In these instances, appropriateness is constructed through alignment with informal, socially situated communication practices. The distinction between what is "grammatically correct" and what is "naturally used" becomes a key organizing principle in the explanations.

This orientation introduces a contrast between textbook English and lived language use. Forms that are technically correct may be repositioned as less preferred, while alternative expressions gain legitimacy through their association with everyday speech. As a result, appropriateness is not treated as a fixed standard, but as something dependent on context, frequency, and perceived authenticity on real-world interaction.

Within this pattern, content creators function as mediators who bridge formal knowledge and practical usage. By foregrounding examples from "real life," they frame language learning as the ability to navigate socially recognizable forms rather than simply applying grammatical rules. This reinforces a usage-based understanding of English, where acceptability is tied to how language is actually performed in context.

### ***Explicit Correction as a Mechanism for Constructing Correctness***

A prominent feature across the dataset is the use of explicit correction as a structured way of presenting language evaluation. Many videos organize their content through clear contrasts between non-preferred and preferred forms, often introduced through expressions such as *"don't say," "say instead," "which one is correct?"*, and *"common mistakes."*

Table 6. Examples of Explicit Language Correction in the Dataset

| Video Code | Non-Preferred Form  | Preferred Form      | Type of Correction | Discursive Function       |
|------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| V11        | <i>Did you saw?</i> | <i>Did you see?</i> | Grammar correction | Constructs clear boundary |



|     |                                        |                                        |                          |                                                    |
|-----|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
|     |                                        |                                        |                          | between correct and incorrect forms                |
| V16 | <i>Explain me</i>                      | <i>Explain it to me</i>                | Verb pattern             | Delegitimizes simplified learner forms             |
| V17 | <i>Thanks God</i>                      | <i>Thank God</i>                       | Expression correction    | Establishes fixed acceptable expressions           |
| V13 | <i>/seid/</i>                          | <i>/sed/</i>                           | Pronunciation correction | Defines correct pronunciation as fixed standard    |
| V18 | <i>I don't know where is your coat</i> | <i>I don't know where your coat is</i> | Syntax correction        | Frames incorrect forms as highly noticeable errors |

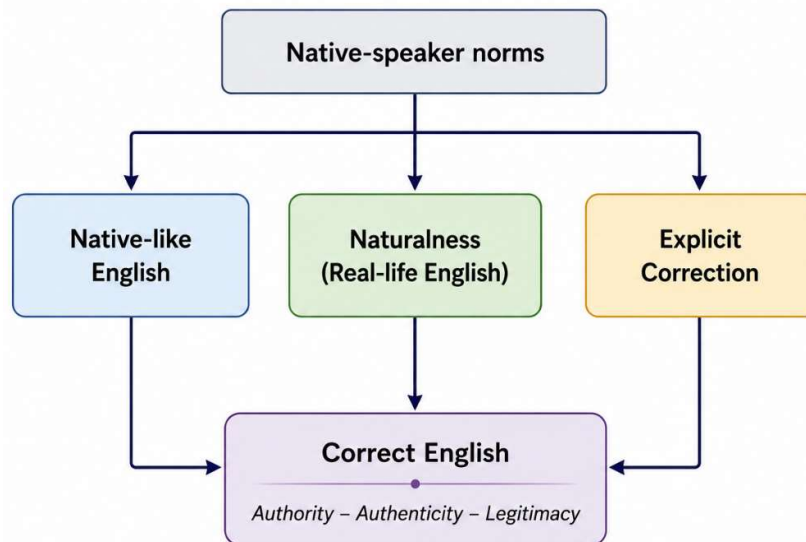
These corrective sequences typically follow a predictable format: an initial form is presented, immediately evaluated, and then replaced with an alternative. For example, constructions like “*Did you saw?*” are directly followed by “*Did you see?*” (V11), while expressions such as “*Explain me*” are reformulated as “*Explain it to me.*” (V16). This side-by-side arrangement creates a visible distinction between forms that are treated as unacceptable and those that are presented as appropriate.

The consistency of this format extends across different linguistic levels, including grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fixed expressions. Despite the variation in content, the structure of correction remains stable, relying on short, directive statements and immediate reformulation. This recurring pattern allows viewers to quickly identify contrasts and associate particular forms with either acceptability or error.

In this way, explicit correction operates not only as instructional content but also as an organizing pattern within the videos. The repeated pairing of forms and their replacements establishes a clear and recognizable structure through which correctness is presented and reinforced across the dataset.

Across the three themes, the findings show that “correct English” is constructed through the interaction of native-speaker norms, perceived naturalness, and explicit correction. Native-speaker usage provides the underlying authority, naturalness defines appropriateness in communication, and explicit correction enforces boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable forms. Together, these patterns indicate that correctness in the analyzed TikTok content extends beyond grammar is associated with authority, naturalness, and evaluative practices, all of which are closely tied to native-speaker norms. A visual summary of these relationships could further illustrate how the three themes interact in constructing the concept of “correct English.”

Figure 1. Conceptual Representation of “Correct English” in TikTok Content



#### 4. Discussion

The results show that “correct English” in TikTok English-learning content is constructed through three interrelated patterns: native-like English as a preferred model, naturalness and real-life English as markers of appropriate usage, and explicit correction as a mechanism for separating preferred forms from non-preferred forms. Together, these patterns indicate that language instruction on TikTok does not operate as a neutral pedagogical activity, but also circulates assumptions about authority, legitimacy, and authenticity in English use.

The first finding highlights the persistent positioning of native-like English as an aspirational model. Expressions such as “*speak like a native speaker*” and “*sound more native*” frame native-speaker usage as a desirable endpoint of learning. This supports earlier discussions of Native-speakerism, where native speakers are constructed as idealized models of competence and authenticity (De Costa, 2016; Liu, 2021; Matsuda, 2018). More recent work (Hiratsuka, 2025) further confirms that such assumptions continue to shape perceptions of legitimacy in English language education.

However, the data also reveal a more subtle mechanism. Some videos acknowledge alternative forms as acceptable, yet still privilege native-like pronunciation as more fluent or natural. This indicates that ideological positioning does not rely solely on explicit exclusion, but can emerge through repeated preference and comparison. As a result, learners may internalize the idea that successful communication requires approximation to native norms, even in contexts where multiple English varieties are equally effective.

The second finding shows that naturalness and "real-life English" function as key evaluative criteria. The contrast between "Textbook English" with "Real-Life English" positions everyday spoken forms as more authentic and useful than formal classroom-based forms. While the distinction helps explain informal usage, it also creates a hierarchy in which certain forms are implicitly valued over others. This reflects on Standard Language Ideology, where judgments about correctness are shaped by socially constructed norms rather than purely linguistic criteria (Cushing, 2021).

Importantly, this pattern extends beyond formal educational settings. While previous research has focused on institutional discourse, the present study demonstrates that similar processes occur in informal digital environments. TikTok's affordances for short, engaging, and practical content do not only facilitate language learning; they also shape how learners interpret what counts as appropriate, natural, and legitimate English.

The third finding identifies explicit correction as the most visible mechanism for constructing correctness. Phrases such as "*don't say*," and "*say instead*" create clear distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable forms. This aligns with the pedagogical need for clarity in short-form content. However, the analysis shows that these corrective practices are often linked to broader claims about native-like usage, naturalness, and "*real English*." The issue, therefore, is not correction itself, but how correction participates in a wider discourse that defines linguistic value.

From Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis, this pattern can be understood across three levels. At the textual level, evaluative and imperative expressions assign value to specific forms. At the level of discursive practice, TikTok's format encourages rapid, binary distinctions that simplify language use into correct versus incorrect categories. At the level of social practice, these repeated patterns contribute to stabilizing particular norms as legitimate while marginalizing others. This supports Fairclough's argument that discourse actively shapes social meaning rather than merely reflecting it.

These findings also resonate with research showing that language teaching materials often carry implicit ideological assumptions (Babai & Sheikhi, 2018). In this case, TikTok videos function as informal pedagogical resources that not only provide input, but also guide learners' perceptions of correctness, acceptability, and linguistic authority.

From an English as an International Language (EIL) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) perspective, these findings are particularly significant. Both EIL and ELF emphasize the legitimacy of diverse English varieties and prioritize communicative effectiveness over native-like norms. The patterns identified in this study suggest a tension between these perspectives and the dominant representations found in TikTok content. While communication in global contexts often involves flexible and plural forms of English, the analyzed videos tend to

reinforce narrower models based on native-speaker usage and perceived naturalness.

### ***Practical Implications***

The findings highlight the need for greater critical awareness in engaging with digital language-learning content. For learners, TikTok can provide accessible and useful input, but it should not be treated as an unquestioned source of linguistic authority. Developing digital literacy skills is essential so that learners can distinguish between helpful correction, contextual variation, and ideological positioning.

For teachers, these results suggest the importance of integrating critical language awareness into classroom practice. Teacher education programs can incorporate discussions on Native-speakerism, Standard Language Ideology, and the diversity of English use. By doing so, teachers can help learners understand that correctness is context-dependent and that multiple English varieties are valid in global communication.

For content creators, the findings indicate a need for more reflexive approaches to language instruction. While expressions such as “*don’t say*” or “*real English*” are effective for engagement, they may unintentionally reinforce narrow definitions of correctness. Presenting language as a set of context-dependent choices rather than fixed rules could promote a more inclusive understanding of English.

Overall, the study suggests that TikTok is not only a platform for language learning, but also a site where dominant language ideologies are reproduced and normalized. Recognizing this dual function is essential for developing more critical, inclusive, and context-sensitive approaches to English language education in digital spaces.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study shows that “correct English” in TikTok English-learning content is constructed through three main patterns: native-like English, natural or real-life English, and explicit language correction. Based on the analysis of twenty-four videos by Antonio Parlati, correctness is not represented only as grammatical accuracy, but also as a matter of how English sounds, how naturally it is used, and how closely it follows forms presented as acceptable or preferable. The analyzed videos frequently position native-speaker usage as a desirable model, particularly in pronunciation and spoken communication.

Expressions such as “*native speaker*,” “*native-like*,” and “*sound more native*” suggest that ideal English is often associated with native-speaker norms. At the same time, the contrast between “*Textbook English*” and “*Real-Life English*” shows that naturalness and everyday usage are also treated as important markers of appropriate English. The findings also reveal that explicit correction plays a central

role in constructing correctness. Phrases such as "don't say," "say instead," and "common mistakes" separate preferred forms from non-preferred forms and make certain expressions appear more legitimate than others. Through these repeated evaluations, TikTok English-learning content functions not only as a practical learning resource but also as a digital space where ideas about language authority, authenticity, and legitimacy are reproduced.

The study indicates that representations of "correct English" in TikTok content reflect elements of Native-speakerism and Standard Language Ideology. Native-speaker norms are repeatedly treated as desirable, while certain forms of English are framed as more natural, correct, or legitimate. Therefore, learners and teachers need to engage with English-learning content on social media critically, especially when such content presents native-like English as the main standard of successful language learning.

This study was limited to the analysis of twenty-four videos produced by a single TikTok content creator. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within the context of the selected dataset and cannot be generalized to all English-learning content on TikTok. Future research may examine a larger corpus of videos from multiple content creators and platforms, as well as explore how learners interpret and respond to representations of English correctness in digital learning environments.

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