

THE USE OF YOUTUBE FOR EF STUDENTS AS A PLATFORM TO IMPROVE L2

Kamelia Sari¹
Dion Tira Erlangga²
English Literature
English Education

kameliasri@gmail.com

Abstract

The way EFL students learn and improve their English skills has changed as YouTube usage has grown and changed. The purpose of this study was to investigate how EFL students use YouTube to improve their L2 skills. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how EFL students' use of YouTube helped them improve their L2 skills. The current study focused on the perspectives of EFL students at one of Lampung's private universities. The researchers carried out the research by employed the qualitative, descriptive approach as the method. The questions were taken from a Hayet (2016) article titled "The Importance of YouTube Videos in Enhancing EFL Learners' Vocabulary," in which the researchers only included pertinent questions that were necessary for this study. The researchers conducted interviews with four English Literature students to gather the data. Two male and two female college students made up the group of four. The use of YouTube by EFL students to improve their L2 was divided into three discussions: the advantages of using YouTube to improve L2 by EFL students, the challenges of using YouTube to improve L2 by EFL students, and the findings. According to the findings of this study, EFL students have positive perceptions of YouTube, with the majority of them stating that YouTube greatly assisted them in improving their English skills. This study may provide fresh perspectives on the education field; In addition, it may serve as a point of reference or direction for other researchers interested in conducting research on the same subject.

Key words: Benefit, EFL students, L2, obstacles, YouTube

INTRODUCTION

The use of the internet is on the rise (Al Falaq et al., 2021), (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020b), particularly in the education sector (Oktaviani & Mandasari, 2019), (Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020), as technology has advanced rapidly (Putri & Aminatun, 2021), (Suprayogi et al., 2021). Nowadays, individuals can learn without meeting in person with teachers or material providers by using the internet (Oktaviani et al., 2020), (Kuswanto et al., 2020), (Afrianto & Restika, 2018). Any kind of media can be used by students to learn without being difficult to access (Abidin et al., 2022), (Gulö, 2018). According to (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2021), which is cited in the article by Dewit and friends, multimedia learning, such as watching videos, has been shown to be effective in learning activities (Fakhrurozi et al., 2021), (Candra & Qodriani, 2019). It works well because students can learn at any time (Amelia & Daud, 2020), (Puspita et al., 2021),

(Cahyaningsih & Pranoto, 2021) and watch the videos to go over the explanation again (Samanik, 2019), (Kuswoyo & Rido, 2019), (Ahmad et al., 2021). There are numerous online platforms for studying with videos (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2019), (Riskiono et al., 2021). YouTube is one of the most widely used platforms (Kardiansyah, 2019a), (Qodriani & Kardiansyah, 2018). It is believed that YouTube is the largest provider of user-generated video content in the world (Adelina & Suprayogi, 2020), (Puspita & Pranoto, 2021), (Gulö et al., 2021); According to (Endang Woro Kasih, 2018) ,it is now widely used for the dissemination of digital information. In addition, YouTube gains popularity in the education sector due to the fact that it is accessible to everyone at no cost (Fakhrurozi & Adrian, 2020), (Rahmania & Mandasari, 2021), that anyone can create videos and share user-generated content on the platform (Wahyudin & Sari, 2018), (Qodriani & Wijana, 2021), that it has the potential to establish a community of practice (Nurmalasari & Samanik, 2018), (Amelia, 2021), that users can build their brands (Gulö, 2019), (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2020), and that they can become YouTubers (Oktaviani, 2018), (Amelia & Dintasi, 2019). Because of these factors, many people use YouTube to learn and express themselves (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020a), (Kuswoyo & Siregar, 2019).

Since YouTube is an international platform, the contents that we can find out on YouTube vary and they are uploaded in many different languages (Journal et al., 2021), (Fithratullah, 2019), (Yulianti & Sulistyawati, 2021). This condition has benefitted a lot of people around the world who have the interest to learn new languages (Kardiansyah, 2019b), (Fakhrurozi & Puspita, 2021) and improve their ability in certain languages (Setri & Setiawan, 2020). It is also utilized by EFL students to improve their English ability in some aspects outside the class by watching English videos uploaded on YouTube (Septiyana & Aminatun, 2021), (Amelia et al., 2022), (Novanti & Suprayogi, 2021). EFL itself stands for English as a foreign language which is referred to the usage of English in countries whose main language is not English (Samanik, 2018). Therefore, to acquire English as their foreign language effectively they have to study English not only inside the class depending on the materials given by the teachers but also outside the class from any other sources to improve their English skills, EFL students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2015, a study entitled ‘The Effectiveness of Using YouTube for Vocabulary Mastery’ was conducted by Dwi Heriyanto. YouTube provided statistically significant impacts on the acquisition of vocabulary by the students. The study findings suggest that in their classes, the participants perceived the use of YouTube positively (Heriyanto, 2015). Besides, a study by Derradji Hayet in 2016 was done with the title ‘The Importance of YouTube Videos in Enhancing EFL Learners’ Vocabulary. The finding of this study says that students are very interested in improving English vocabulary through YouTube videos (Hayet, 2016). Moreover, the finding by Seher Balbay and Selcan Kilis in 2017 with the title ‘Students’ Perceptions of the Use of a YouTube Channel Specifically Designed for an Academic Speaking Skills Course’ proved that to a large extent, the majority of students was benefited from the videos on the playlists of the specifically designed supplementary YouTube channel contents.

In relation to the previous studies, the researcher put her interest to see how actually YouTube plays a significant role in helping EFL students to improve their English ability in some aspects. This was also motivated due to the level of comprehension of EFL students that is different from each other. YouTube as a platform to learn English provides lots of benefits for EFL students. The researcher will be focused on the use of YouTube among EFL students to improve their L2. Therefore, this research will center on answering the research question.

Consequently, the objective of this research is to find out how YouTube can play a significant role to improve L2 among EFL students. The findings of this study can support the use of YouTube among students and society and EFL students who have not known about this way, as they can use YouTube as a platform to improve their English skills. Moreover, it can be a meaningful insight for readers in learning about the use of YouTube as a platform to improve L2. Besides, for those who want to conduct a research about this issue, this paper can be guidance to help other researchers.

METHOD

The purpose of this research was to explore the use of YouTube in improving L2 by EFL students. By using interviews, the researchers could explore more about the impact of

using YouTube by EFL students. The questions of the interview were taken from an article entitled 'The Importance of YouTube Videos in Enhancing EFL Learners' Vocabulary' (Hayet, 2016). The researchers took five questions needed to answer the research questions of this paper. Qualitative descriptive was used by the researchers as the method of this research since the researchers wanted to have a deep analysis of YouTube. In this research, the researchers asked students who used YouTube to improve their English skill. Afterward, the researchers selected them and interviewed four college students from one of private universities in Lampung, especially English Literature college students. In addition, the chosen university was affiliated with the researchers themselves. The four college students consisted of two men and two women. They were chosen as the representatives of students from English Literature study program at that university. Several questions were asked to the interviewees in which the main topics of the questions were: (1) The use of YouTube in improving L2 by EFL students; (2) The benefits of using YouTube to improve L2; (3) The obstacles of using YouTube to improve L2. The interview questions could be developed based on the answer of the interviewees. In writing this research, the researchers would have codes in labelling the questions and the interviewees. The questions have Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, and Q5 in which Q1 indicated the first question and so on. Males would be coded as M1 (the first male) and M2 (the second male). Moreover, females would be coded as F1 (the first female) and F2 (the second female).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher would take answers from the interviewees that were related and relevant to this research and as the representative of college students in this university. After selected the best answers, then it would be discussed by the researcher. The discussion would be divided into three parts based on the need of this research. The parts were the use of YouTube to improve L2 by EFL students, the benefits of using YouTube to improve L2 by EFL students, and the obstacles of using YouTube to improve L2 by EFL students. further explanation would be presented and discussed below.

The Use of YouTube to Improve L2 by EFL Students

Q1: How can YouTube help you in improving your English skills? Give a brief explanation of your answer.

M1 : I listened to a lot of videos from YouTube. That's the way I learned English.

F1 : YouTube can help me to improve my English skill because from YouTube I often watch the videos from western YouTubers or other people who use English in their YouTube channel. By watching the videos, I can learn how to spell the words and I can get new vocabularies that can be used in my daily life. Besides, I subscribe the youtubers who share about English language or even the country of England or US. For example, the YouTube channel or Like a Native, Mr. D, and many others.

The finding showed that most of EFL students learned from YouTube by listening and watching YouTube channel that used English as the language. This way was believed as an effective way to improve L2 by EFL students. The students often watched western YouTubers because by listening to the pronunciation of western people, the students could imitate the way western people pronounce words in English. After watching the videos, commonly, the students would like the videos and subscribe the YouTube channel since they were interested in that channel. By subscribing the channel, the students would get notifications for new videos. Therefore, they did not need to find out what kind of videos that they wanted to watch anymore since they have known the things that they wanted to watch.

YouTube was very helpful among college students, especially EFL students since YouTube provided many videos that could be understood easily by the students ranging from short to long videos. The finding of this current study was in line with the previous study conducted by Heriyanto, 2015 that YouTube was an attractive learning tool that could help students to improve their English skill in pronunciation and vocabulary. By watching the videos, students could practice the words that they got and correct their pronunciation. If they did the practice repeatedly and used the vocabulary in their daily life, it could help them much in improving their English skill.

Q2: What kind of YouTube videos that help you much in improving your English skill? Give a brief explanation of the reason for your answer.

M2 : Music, talk shows, and news since the YouTubers deliver the speech by using clear pronunciation and giving information.

F1 : Basically, every YouTube channel that uses English in its videos is helping me in improving my English skills since I can hear their accent and how they pronounce the words correctly. Even some videos do not use English language, I often use English subtitle. Therefore, I can be accustomed with English.

YouTube provided many kinds of videos that could be used in many aspects. In improving English skills, EFL students watched several kinds of YouTube channels. Most students listened and watched Music, talk shows, and news videos that used the English language. Moreover, the students said that they would watch any kind of videos on YouTube as long as the videos used the English language. However, they also said that even the videos did not use the English language, they would keep watching the videos by using the English subtitle provided by YouTube. This facility made EFL students often watched videos from YouTube.

The finding yielded from this current study was also supported by a previous conducted by Hayet, 2016 that types of YouTube videos that students preferred and at the same time could help them to improve their L2 were music, movies, and TV shows. Most students watched those kinds of videos to improve their L2. However, the finding of this study provided more kinds of YouTube videos that could help EFL students to improve their English since the researcher interviewed the interviewees to get more and specific data. It was found that EFL students watched any kind of YouTube videos that used English as the main language and provided English subtitles if the videos did not use the English language in delivering the contents.

The Benefits of Using YouTube to Improve L2 by EFL Students

Q3 : Do you often find out that by watching English videos on YouTube makes more interested in learning English and develop your English skill? Give a brief explanation of your answer.

M1 : Yes, I do find that way, because YouTube also entertains me.

F1 : Yes, since once I know about some words in English, I want to use the words and show to my friends that I have learned new vocabularies in English. Therefore, by

watching YouTube videos, it makes me more motivated to use English and share many new words that I have known in English through YouTube.

All of the interviewees said that YouTube made students more interested in learning English and develop students' English skills. This might happen since YouTube entertained them. Besides, it also motivated students to learn new vocabularies and used them in the daily conversation since they wanted to tell their friends that they have learned new things from YouTube.

This current finding was popped by the previous studies that YouTube brought up students' interests to enhance their English skills. Regardless of many videos on YouTube, students could be motivated to enhance their English skills and used the knowledge that they got in daily life. Therefore, it was found that YouTube made students more interested to improve their English skills.

Q4 : What are the best things about improving your English skills through YouTube?

M1 : YouTube videos help me a lot in improving my English in any skill. However, I think that YouTube helps me a lot in improving my pronunciation and the way I speak.

F1 : By improving my English skill through YouTube, I can learn watch YouTube everywhere and every time as long as I have a desire to watch the videos. So, there is no specific schedule to learn and improve my English skill. Besides, YouTube is easy to be used since we can save the videos and watch them again and again without having fear to lose the videos.

One of the reasons why YouTube was considered as one of the best platforms to learn English was that it provided students to access the materials anytime and anywhere as long as the students wanted to access it and they had a good signal. By having this privilege, many EFL students used YouTube to improve their L2 since to learn a language, we had to practice a lot. This finding was supported by a study conducted by Yagci, 2014 as cited in Balbay & Kilis, 2017 YouTube was an omnipresent platform which was open anytime and anywhere. YouTube was very easy for the students to access the videos without spending much money since they only needed to have internet data to watch the videos. Thus, the

ability to access YouTube became one of advantages for EFL students to enhance their L2 by watching the videos from it.

The Obstacles of Using YouTube to Improve L2 by EFL Students

Q5 : What are the obstacles to use YouTube as a platform to improve your English skills? Give a brief explanation of your answer.

M1 : I don't think there's an obstacle to use English as a platform to learn English. Because it is easy to find learning while entertaining ourselves. We can choose whatever the videos we wanted to watch, and it is free. We just need a good connection

M2 : When the speaker in the video is talking too fast and the video content is too monotonous.

F1 : The obstacle is that sometimes we do not whether the information that we got from YouTube is right or wrong, for example, the pronunciation. There was a case when I got wrong pronunciation from YouTube, then I tried to check it through dictionary to make it sure whether it is true or not.

F2 : The internet. If it is too slow, then the user will be irked and bothered and they may end up of closing the website.

When the students were asked about the obstacles of using YouTube, different perspective came up from different aspects. The first male student said that he did not find any obstacles of using YouTube to improve his English skill. However, the second male student said that there was a difficulty to understand what the speaker was talking about if it was too fast and monotonous. Nevertheless, the first female student said that uncertainty about the information and information became the obstacles for EFL students to improve L2 by using YouTube. Though, the second female student said that the most problem came up when students used YouTube was that the problem with the internet itself. If the internet was too slow, the students might end up of closing the YouTube since they did not want to spend much time to wait.

This current research findings are in accordance with a study conducted by Hayet, 2016 that there were several obstacles to use YouTube to improve L2. However, there was no

specific things explained in that study. In this current research, the researcher found out that each student had different point of view about the obstacles of using YouTube as a platform to improve L2. The ease of using YouTube for everyone made students difficult to select whether the information was true or not. Besides, the problem of pronunciation also became the obstacle of using YouTube since students should be aware whether the pronunciation was true or not. Moreover, the internet took a big part in using YouTube since if we wanted to access YouTube, we needed to have a good connection.

CONCLUSION

In the field of education, the idea of using YouTube to help EFL students improve their L2 has been discussed. YouTube has been shown to be a good way to improve English skills because it has a wide variety of videos that EFL students can easily and freely watch. Students can learn and have fun at the same time by using YouTube because the videos are presented in an interesting way. EFL students can improve their L2 by watching and listening to videos on YouTube continuously until they can identify which content is correct or not. However, using YouTube to improve L2 becomes increasingly difficult due to issues with information, pronunciation, and the internet. Several recommendations for future researchers interested in conducting research on the same subject emerge from this study. If YouTube is implemented across all educational levels, subsequent researchers will be able to provide a more in-depth explanation regarding the effectiveness of its use. We hope that reading this study will shed new light on how YouTube can help improve L2; In addition, it may serve as a point of reference or direction for other researchers wishing to investigate the subject, allowing future researchers to make additional contributions and conduct more in-depth research on the subject.

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