

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE USE OF YOUTUBE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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| Article Info | Abstract |
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| Article History Received: December 2022 Revised: December 2022 Published: January 2023 | <i>Digital learning has become a new learning mode in higher education. Learners have become heavily dependent on YouTube channels and other technology-enhanced language learning platforms. As the YouTube platform has become an inexorable part of students' lives, language teachers can explore their perceptions and assist them to learn English language with the help of this platform. This study aimed to find out the learners' perception of using YouTube as a learning medium to enhance their language learning. In addition, a few pedagogical implications will also be provided. The research respondents comprised sixty-six undergraduate students of the Department of English, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The data were collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that the majority of the students reported that they benefitted by watching YouTube educational videos; however, in preparing assignments, being attentive while studying, and acquiring grammatical competence, learners reported that this platform had little impact. Most of the students reported that YouTube helped them to learn English vocabulary, to make learning English very interesting, to comprehend the contents of YouTube videos in a very easy manner, get relevant materials to learn English language, acquire English language better by writing down the major points in a diary while watching videos, to develop speaking skills watching YouTube videos, and to enhance listening comprehension. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the use of YouTube has numerous positive impacts on EFL learners' English language proficiency.</i> |
| Keywords Students' Perception; YouTube Videos; English Language Learning; | |
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INTRODUCTION

Digital learning has become a new learning mode in higher education. Language teachers use various technological devices and tools to continue the flow of the teaching-learning procedure. Learners have become heavily dependent on YouTube channels and other technology-enhanced language learning platforms. They start their day with YouTube music videos, spend the day with YouTube movies, learning tutorials, documentaries, etc. and go to bed with YouTube relaxation music. YouTube acts as a source of entertainment and provides numerous educational videos for beginner, intermediate, and advanced-level learners (Nasution, 2019). As the YouTube platform has become an inexorable part of students' lives, language teachers can explore their perceptions and assist them to learn English language with the help of this platform.

YouTube has many positive impacts on the learners; e.g., they participate in classes enthusiastically, engage in social activities, think critically, comprehend the subject matter effectively, and learn in an independent way (Aprianto, 2020). Sakkir, Dollah, & Ahmad (2020) investigated the learners' perspective on the use of YouTube for attaining their English

language proficiency at the English Education Department, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia, and found that this platform helped them in preparing their assignments. A few students are too introvert to participate in any class activities. They can be motivated to watch the videos where students of other institutions do their group studies. Repeated watching will encourage these students to speak out one day and participate in class activities.

Several studies have been done on the perspectives of learners on using YouTube videos as an effective learning tool. Balbay and Kilis (2017) found in their research that YouTube videos are remarkably beneficial for language learners. Again, a study by Medoukali (2015) claimed that watching YouTube videos developed their comprehension skills. The study of Putri, Wijayanto, and Supriyadi (2020) showed that Indonesian university EFL learners had positive attitudes towards using YouTube in the cognitive, affective, and conative aspects, and they were able to regulate their own learning. Moreover, this learning tool provides abundant, authentic materials which are enjoyable and flexible. Again, Sianna, Ramlah, & Salasiah (2018) found in their study that teaching writing with authentic videos played a positive role in EFL learners' writing ability. According to Brinton (2001), YouTube videos are authentic materials that can assist students in learning English effectively.

In another study entitled "Investigating the use of YouTube as a virtual teaching medium in ELT among non-English students", Adisti (2022) found that YouTube videos positively affect learners in learning English language. "From the three classes, non-English students seemed to understand the explanations, instructions, and exercises given through an explanation video uploaded on YouTube on the Degrees of Comparison and Collocation material" (Adisti, 2022:7). They "posted the answer sheets on the YouTube comment column. They also got excellent results from doing assignments based on the explanation from the YouTube video" (Adisti, 2022; Karya et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Chhabra (2012) claimed that "YouTube videos can be used in an ELT classroom for various aspects of English as to enhance vocabulary, accents, pronunciations, voice modulation and many more (3)." Kristiani and Pradnyadewi (2021) demonstrated in their article entitled "The Effectiveness of *YouTube* as Learning Media in Improving Learners' Speaking Skills" the positive effects of YouTube on learners' speaking expertise. The research conducted by Putri (2022) revealed that practising drilling following YouTube videos helps learners to improve their fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

The students watch videos by prioritizing their own choices. In this way, they get an opportunity to uphold their autonomy (Trang, 2022). When a student does not understand any point in the language learning procedure, he tries to comprehend the point by replaying the video repeatedly. If a student wants to retain the content in his long-term memory, he can do that by watching the video repeatedly. This is the perfect way of internalization. Again, subtitles assist the learners in understanding the points and learning new words and grammatical structures. The tertiary-level students of Bangladesh use YouTube channels according to their own choice. No research has been done on the students of the Department of English, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, to explore their perceptions about YouTube to use for English language learning. Therefore, this study aims to find out the learners' perception of using YouTube as a learning medium to enhance their language learning. In addition, a few pedagogical implications will also be provided. This study is beneficial for the students, teachers, administrators, and researchers as the data provide insight and create awareness among them. There are two research questions in this study:

1. What is the perception of the learners of the Department of English, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh about using YouTube as a learning medium to enhance their language learning?
2. What can the language teachers do to assist the learners' English language learning through YouTube effectively?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study used a mixed-method approach to collect the required data. The quantitative data provided measurement of values and the qualitative data provided answers to the questions which helped to understand the perceptions better. The data was collected in 2022. The study concentrates on educational videos only. The research respondents comprised sixty-six undergraduate students of the Department of English, Jagannath University, Dhaka. All of the participants were aged 18 and above. They use YouTube as learning tool everyday.

Instruments

The data were collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was prepared by the researcher and it consisted of ten statements on the students' perception about using YouTube in their acquisition of English language. The questionnaire used two scales: "Agree" and "Disagree". Ten students participated in the interview voluntarily. Each student was interviewed at different time and places. The interview was conducted to validate the data gathered through questionnaires. It also provided insight into the quantitative data. The interview data were analyzed by qualitative procedure.

Data Analysis

The study used purposive sampling. The researcher distributed the questionnaire among the students. Then the students filled up the questionnaire and submitted to the researcher. The researcher interpreted the questionnaire result by calculating the percentage of the students who agreed with the statements and the percentage of the number of the students who disagreed with the statements. The highest percentage out of the two denotes that the students' preferred statement.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of the questionnaire, the responses of the students to each item are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
The Percentage of the Statements of the Questionnaire

| Statement no. | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
| 1. YouTube videos help me learn English vocabulary. | 95.45 | 4.55 |
| 2. When I cannot concentrate on my studies, YouTube videos make me attentive. | 48.48 | 51.52 |
| 3. YouTube videos make learning English very interesting. | 100 | 0 |
| 4. The English language contents of the YouTube videos are easy to comprehend. | 95.45 | 4.55 |
| 5. YouTube provides relevant materials to prepare assignments. | 36.36 | 63.64 |
| 6. YouTube provides relevant materials to learn English language. | 93.94 | 6.06 |
| 7. Writing down the significant points in a diary while watching videos on YouTube helps me to acquire English. | 84.84 | 15.16 |
| 8. Watching YouTube videos help me develop my speaking skills. | 54.55 | 45.45 |
| 9. The YouTube videos enhance my listening comprehension. | 95.45 | 4.55 |
| 10. Use of YouTube enhances my grammatical competence. | 16.66 | 83.34 |

From the findings of Statement no. 1, it was found that 95.45% of students agreed that they learn vocabulary with the assistance of YouTube videos. As they repeatedly listened to English audio and videos, they became curious about the new words whenever they came across, and learnt spontaneously. No teacher asked them to memorize the words with the meaning in their mother tongue. This finding is congruent with the result of the study conducted by Kabooha and Elyas (2018), who found that YouTube effectively motivated learners to learn vocabulary. 4.55% of students did not agree with this statement. Hia (2021) found in his research that learners of the ninth grade at SMPN 35 Bekasi were highly motivated to learn English vocabulary by watching YouTube's educational videos.

Regarding attention sustenance, 48.48% of learners opined that they pay full attention when they watch YouTube videos. For Statement no. 2, the students' response showed that 51.52% disagreed. Distraction is not unnatural because a student can remain attentive in a lecture class only for 10-15 minutes (Wankat, 2002). However, videos attract young learners so much that they even forget to blink. Realizing the fact, they stated that they became attentive by using videos. Callow and Zammit (2012) claimed that learners might be more involved in learning a foreign language by immersing themselves in YouTube videos.

As English is a foreign language, it is difficult for EFL students to find interest in it. Students can speak and write in their mother tongue without any restraint. However, they feel inhibited when they find the same content in English. When they watch videos, the students become engrossed in the content and immerse in it. It seemed to them very fascinating to listen to the native speakers and express views in the comment box. The varieties of the videos also make them interested in it. In this study, in Statement no. 3 we find that 100% of students agreed that YouTube videos were fascinating to them; none disagreed with this statement.

Students who read printed books feel obstructed because of the foreign language. Academic writing is different from informal speaking. On YouTube, thousands of uploaded videos are there. The English language contents of the YouTube videos are easy to comprehend. Students can choose the easiest one for them according to their level of comprehension. For Statement no. 4, the students' response revealed that 95.45% agreed and 4.55% disagreed. YouTube simplifies the topic of their interest and improves their cognitive discernment.

Assignment writing is a regular task for foreign language learners. Initially, they feel baffled as they find it challenging to write anything themselves. Later, they resort to the university teachers' YouTube academic lectures, which make them confident to start writing. In the case of academic writing, learners get the keys to open the door to effective materials on YouTube. However, the result of Statement no. 5 indicated that 36.36% agreed and 63.64% disagreed. This finding is incongruent with the result of Wang and Chen (2020), whose study showed that the learners resorted to educational videos of YouTube.

93.94% of the students agreed, and 6.06% disagreed with Statement no. 6: "YouTube provides relevant materials to learn English language". Students want more and more new materials wherefrom they can choose to practice the language. YouTube satiates their thirst by providing sufficient authentic materials. Statement no. 7 is "Writing down the major points in a diary while watching videos on YouTube helps me to acquire English language better". 84.84% agreed, and 15.16% disagreed with this statement. Students were very cautious about their retention of memory. Therefore, they wrote down all the necessary points in their diaries to utilize later. After receiving input from the audio-visual contents of YouTube, learners become competent in speaking spontaneously. The textbooks or dictionaries cannot assist them in speaking accurately; however, by listening to the native speakers' speech again and again, learners achieve native-speaker-like pronunciation.

By using YouTube, learners' confidence levels can be increased in speaking classes. Nowadays digital resident students can listen to native speakers' utterances all day long and

learn to speak fluently without any anxiety. 54.55% agreed, and 45.45% disagreed with Statement no. 8: "Watching YouTube videos help me develop my speaking skills". They can easily organize the points when they speak. The findings of the research carried out by Saed (2021) are consistent with the results of this study. He showed that the learner participants were tested for "fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation". The findings showed that the experimental group, who were taught speaking skills through YouTube, outperformed the control group. The findings of the study of Balbay and Kilis (2017) are similar to this study as 90% of the students believe that YouTube videos helped them in their Academic Presentation Skills course and motivated them to discuss in class.

After listening to YouTube videos regularly, students develop their listening power. Consequently, they can understand their English teachers' lectures easily. They can attend conferences, workshops, training programmes, etc. 95.45% agreed, and 4.55% disagreed with this statement: "The YouTube videos enhance my listening comprehension". This study is similar to the results of the study carried out by Chien, Huang, and Huang (2020), which indicated visible improvement in Taiwanese learners' listening comprehension and retention after receiving input from YouTube videos for five weeks. Again, Al Harbi (2019) researched the teachers' use of teaching tools (YouTube and Snapchat) and their impact on the EFL Saudi learners' listening comprehension skills. There were two groups: the experimental and the control. The former group continuously used social media, and the latter followed the traditional system. The performance of the experimental group was better than the control group. However, this finding is dissimilar to the study of Irana, Hayati, and Kurniawan (2021) where they reported that there was no significant correlation between using YouTube videos for the improvement of listening comprehension and achievement.

For the statement, "Use of YouTube enhances my grammatical competence", 16.66% agreed, and 83.34% disagreed. In this study, most of the students opined that they could not learn grammar from YouTube videos. The finding is incongruent with the findings of Nofrika (2019), who found that the participants improved their grammar skills by watching multimedia videos on YouTube.

The findings of the study were supported by the interview. Participant A reported:

My listening power has been increased remarkably through listening to news channels, sports commentary, and animated movies. I have started speaking in English after getting input from the YouTube channel.

Participant B expressed his views regarding YouTube:

I watched documentaries, movies, video lectures on English classics, etc., regularly. I resort to the learning videos when I do not understand any point. I wouldn't say I like grammar lessons on YouTube because the length of these tutorials is very short, and for that reason the lecturers could not make the viewers understand the grammatical items correctly.

Participant C opined:

I remember a few words and phrases of the lectures and I use these words and phrases in my speaking.

Participant D stated:

Whenever I find any term difficult to understand, I consult the video materials on the YouTube channel. Afterward, I read the textbook. I also take notes from YouTube lectures and try to summarize the whole video in writing. Moreover, I find the gestures and other body languages of the speaker very motivating.

Participant E said:

When I watch a prolonged educational video, I become distracted. If I want to learn, I can concentrate, because I become eager to know what is going on.

He added:

After watching a YouTube video for fifteen to twenty minutes, a lot of questions arise in my mind. However, I cannot ask the speaker these questions. Therefore, my queries remain unanswered. It seems not that helpful.

On the other hand, Participant F opined:

I can be attentive. It is very much beneficial for me.

Regarding assignments, he said:

When a teacher asks me to write an assignment, I search the topic on YouTube. The speakers explain the topic in an easy language, whereas the sentence structure and vocabulary of a journal article or a book are difficult to comprehend.

Participant E reported:

Google search engine is much more helpful and effective for me than YouTube. In case of YouTube, it is difficult to find any particular topic. A relevant site helps me to understand easily.

Regarding speaking proficiency, he opined:

To gain proficiency in speaking skills, I need more practice. Whenever I watch an English video, it helps me to learn the correct pronunciation.

Participant G stated:

YouTube videos help me speak because my purpose is to concentrate on the speakers' chosen words and sentence structures.

On the other hand, Participant H said:

I do not watch videos to enhance my speaking skill. That is not my purpose. My concentration is only on the points.

Participant I also said:

YouTube videos could be more helpful in case of speaking because I need to practise with a human being to improve my speaking skills. Sometimes, the non-native speakers need help pronouncing the words properly.

Regarding grammatical competence, she opined:

I do not find any effective YouTube videos on grammatical items.

However, another student Participant J said:

The YouTube videos on grammar are interesting and help me to understand easily.

From the above information, the study has showed that the students use YouTube extensively, which has opened bright new horizons. A few recommendations can be made on the basis of the findings of the study. English language teachers can stimulate the learners' interest by introducing YouTube to classroom activities. They can start using YouTube as a language-learning tool as it plays a vital role in learning (Almurashi, 2016). Gradually, learners will use this platform as an essential task spontaneously. A variation of the choice of YouTube videos is necessary; otherwise, its use might not motivate language learners.

Usually, learners get input in the language classes. When a language teacher suggests watching an English movie to learn vocabulary, it is enjoyable for them. They learn wholeheartedly and in a stress-free mood (Heriyanto, 2018). In addition, they can watch the prescribed movie at any time they are free. A teacher can use YouTube as authentic material to assist his learners. He can ask the learners to analyze a specific part of a movie or explain a song. They can also play roles after watching a play or film. The learners can be encouraged to narrate the story after watching a movie. This might enhance their speaking ability.

An English language teacher can search for appropriate videos for the target learners. He can give links and motivate them to watch those videos. They can suggest a few YouTube channels to their students, e.g., "English with Lizzie Jane", and "English with Lucy" for speaking proficiency. For grammar learning, learners can be suggested to watch "TeacherPhilEnglish" (English grammar animated videos), "Cambridge English TV", Munzereen Shahid's "Learning English Staying at Home", "10-Minute School" etc.

A language teacher can create YouTube videos himself and in that case, he has to keep a few points in his mind. First, he should think about the liking of the students and make the content interesting accordingly. Second, he should be careful about the duration of the video. Usually, students cannot retain their attention to very long videos. Therefore, the teacher can make an experiment by making videos of different lengths and by monitoring their attentive watching. Finally, the teacher's presentation should be of very high quality. Any drawback, in this case, can be disastrous. He can participate in training programmes and workshops on presentation skills and pronunciation. The purpose of all these efforts is to motivate the learners optimally to concentrate on their lessons. These recommendations might ease the teachers' tasks and contribute to the tertiary level foreign language pedagogy.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to explore the perception of the learners of the Department of English, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, about using YouTube as a learning medium to enhance their language learning. Moreover, the study also provided some implications for the language teachers who might effectively assist the learners' English language learning through YouTube. The findings revealed that the majority of the students reported that they benefitted by watching YouTube educational videos; however, in preparing assignments, being attentive while studying, and acquiring grammatical competence, learners reported that this platform had little impact. Most of the students reported that YouTube helped them to learn English vocabulary, to make learning English very interesting, to

comprehend the contents of YouTube videos in a very easy manner, get relevant materials to learn English language, acquire English language better by writing down the major points in a diary while watching videos, to develop speaking skills watching YouTube videos, and to enhance listening comprehension. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the use of YouTube has numerous positive impacts on EFL learners' English language proficiency.

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