



PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF YOUTUBE IN IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the attitudes of undergraduate students in Malaysia regarding the use of YouTube as a tool to enhance their speaking skills. A quantitative research instrument in the form of a 5-point Likert Scale survey questionnaire, adapted from Alkhatiri (2019), was used. The survey was administered to a sample of 30 undergraduate students who were currently enrolled in the English for Presentation Skills (ELC590) course at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The purpose of the survey was to gather information regarding the perceptions of these students regarding the impact of YouTube on enhancing English speaking abilities. The data was examined using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 27, employing descriptive analysis to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and ANNOVA. The results indicated that YouTube is considered to be a highly successful online medium for enhancing speaking skills, as evidenced by an average score of 4.05 in the current study. The ANOVA analysis revealed a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the association between attitudes and the usefulness of YouTube. This indicates a strong connection between attitudes and the usefulness of YouTube, and improvements in one area directly benefit the other. Therefore, it can be concluded that YouTube is a good resource for learning English, since it increases student motivation and engagement by utilising YouTube to improve speaking abilities among undergraduate students in Malaysia.

Keywords: Perceptions; YouTube; Speaking Skills; Attitudes; Usefulness of YouTube

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INTRODUCTION

According to Saed et al. (2021), as educational technology continues to evolve quickly, educators, content providers, and experts in English language teaching (ELT) recognise the urgent need to update teaching and evaluation methodologies at different educational levels. Furthermore, Qomariah and Zaim (2021) conducted a study on the incorporation of YouTube videos as educational resources in the classroom. It was discovered that YouTube videos can be beneficial for individuals who are learning. It facilitates the acquisition of new vocabulary, enhances pronunciation, aids in building English phrases, and acts as a source of incentive for persons involved in studying the English language. That is to say, a multitude of videos can serve as valuable teaching materials in English language classrooms. Fortunately, owing to technological progress, many of these instructional videos are accessible online and can be downloaded free of charge.

Jati et. al. (2019) claimed that platforms such as YouTube have played a pivotal role in offering readily available resources for English language educators. In other words, YouTube proves to be a beneficial tool for nurturing the speaking skills of learners. In addition to being motivational and captivating, the platform allows learners to listen attentively, pronounce words correctly, and articulate their thoughts while speaking. According to Jati et. al. (2019), authentic educational resources, like YouTube, are beneficial for learners in which educators can appropriately choose material that matches the proficiency levels of the learners. Hence, in this study, the researchers aimed to examine how undergraduate students perceive the role of YouTube in the improvement of their English-speaking skills.

Problem statement

To begin with, Andriani et al. (2019) found that the majority of students face difficulties in pronouncing words accurately and exhibit limited vocabulary which contributes to a lack of confidence in speaking English. Besides that, students encounter challenges in expressing themselves effectively in English, particularly when it is not their primary language. Kashinathan and Abdul Aziz (2021) argued that the perception of speaking skills development in the English language as complex and challenging among students is regularly attributed to a lack of enthusiasm and confidence in their speaking abilities.

These challenges underscore the necessity for educators to modify their pedagogical approaches by incorporating YouTube into English education and learning, to accommodate the preferred learning style of the present generation (Michael & Shah, 2020). Furthermore, the examination of the use of YouTube in English language courses for undergraduate students is an emerging field of study, with a limited amount of literature exclusively concentrated on this subject, particularly within the context of Malaysia. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the contrasting viewpoints of undergraduate students regarding the effectiveness of using YouTube to improve their oral communication skills. The main objective of this project is to determine the perspectives of undergraduate students on the influence of YouTube on improving their English speaking skills. The research aims to investigate the viewpoints of undergraduate students regarding the impact of YouTube on improving English speaking proficiency.

Significance of the Study

The research highlights the importance of YouTube as a tool for attracting online English language learners. While numerous studies have investigated whether YouTube serves as a supplementary method for information, there remains uncertainty about its effectiveness in aiding students to attain learning outcomes versus its potential as a distraction hindering learning. Discrepancies in outcomes may also arise across various levels of education and among individuals with different first languages. Consequently, the primary objective of this study is to investigate the viewpoints of undergraduate students concerning the influence of YouTube on the improvement of English-speaking skills within the Malaysian context. The results obtained from this inquiry will offer English language

educators insights into the extent to which they can effectively utilize YouTube videos to enhance students' language learning experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Importance of Speaking Skills in SLA

The importance of speaking abilities in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) cannot be overstated, given that they facilitate efficient communication. According to Brown and Yule (1983), speaking is the primary ability by which pupils will be evaluated in real-life scenarios. Speaking fluently and comprehensively is often the basis of a person's first impression, as it is an essential part of everyday life. However, individuals learning a second language may encounter difficulties in English communication due to factors like lack of motivation and confidence in their speaking abilities, demanding considerable effort to sustain (Kashinathan & Aziz, 2021).

Other factors include limited vocabulary resources and grammar knowledge, nervousness, insufficient opportunities to speak English in the classroom and in society, an unsupportive environment beyond the classroom (Ratnasari, 2020). Speaking is a particular area that requires instruction and focus, according to Shumin (2002). In English conversation, unlike other skills, individuals need to think quickly, respond promptly, and minimize hesitation and disruption (Kashinathan & Aziz, 2021). To promote more authentic and straightforward communication, teachers can help students improve their fluency by focusing on their speaking abilities, such as refining their intonation, rhythm, and pronunciation. Each student has distinct learning needs, so it is advantageous for educators to develop ways that these individuals can use to achieve similar learning results as their peers (Alkathiri, 2019).

YouTube in ELT

The incorporation of technology in language instruction began in the early 1960s and 1970s (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). This integration certainly represented a substantial change in teaching practices, resulting in fresh possibilities and approaches in language learning. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of using multimedia elements, including movies, for learning activities (Zahn, Pea, Hesse, & Rosen, 2010; DeWitt, et al., 2013).

YouTube has become an innovative resource in the field of ELT, providing an extensive collection of materials that benefit both instructors and students. Using YouTube in the classroom provides two primary benefits: access to genuine English content and the promotion of a self-directed and student-focused learning method (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). The platform offers learners access to a wide variety of authentic content, including professional presentations and commonplace conversations, which exposes them to a spread of accents, colloquialisms, and practical language usage. Learners will be able to know and learn the different dialects and varieties of English spoken around the world (Jalaluddin, 2016). The authenticity of the learning environment promotes an immersive experience, which not only improves auditory comprehension but also provides significant cultural insights that enhance the process of acquiring a language.

YouTube in Speaking Skills

Numerous studies have demonstrated the pivotal role of YouTube in the realm of education (DeWitt, et al., 2013; Chien, Huang, & Huang, 2020; Zulkflee, et al., 2022). Based on these studies, educators find YouTube to be well-received in ESL teaching, particularly in the development of speaking skills. People think it is a good idea to use it in ESL speaking lessons because it makes the teaching and learning setting better by getting more students involved and motivated in speaking activities (Susanti et al. 2022). Individuals retain information more effectively and comprehend concepts more thoroughly when exposed to visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learning experiences. Therefore, employing YouTube for practicing mimicry, expression, intonation, and vocabulary can assist students

in acquiring language skills accurately while enjoying the process and gaining confidence in speaking (Meinawati, Rahmah, Harmoko, & Dewi, 2020).

Apart from that, a study by Duffy (2008) suggested that YouTube can also be employed as a tool for instructing students to create a video as an integral component of their assessment, which they can subsequently upload. The comment section can function as a platform for facilitating constructive discussions and feedback, thereby fostering enhancements for subsequent projects. Additional instances of activities may include conversational exercises, 'film trailer' analysis, 'voiceover' practice, and 're-enactments of famous movies,' all of which can be utilized for listening and speaking exercises (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011).

In accordance with the research conducted by Alkathiri (2019), the utilization of YouTube within the English language classroom is deemed an effective instructional approach. This methodology has been observed to enhance engagement among students, consequently motivating their active participation in the learning process.

Previous Studies

Educators and researchers consider YouTube videos to be an effective tool for enhancing pupils' speaking skills. Tristiana and Swondo (2020) did an experimental investigation to determine the presence of a substantial impact of utilising YouTube content creation on the speaking proficiency of pupils. The participants consisted of 80 students in the eleventh grade at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta Yaspi, Labuhan Deli.

They were segregated into two groups, with one group comprising 40 students instructed through the creation of YouTube content, while the other 40 students were taught using traditional methods. The findings revealed a notable disparity in scores between the two groups, signalling a substantial impact of YouTube content creation on the enhancement of students' speaking skills. In addition, Khairul and Putri (2022) investigated the relationship between the frequency with which second-year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University watch English YouTube channels and their proficiency in speaking English.

The study employed a questionnaire and a speaking test as research tools, involving a total of 30 respondents. The data analysis revealed a correlation coefficient value of 0.74 between students' habit of watching English YouTube channels and their proficiency in speaking. This result signifies a positive correlation, indicating that students who habitually watch English YouTube channels tend to exhibit higher levels of proficiency in their speaking skills. Moreover, a study conducted by Hamdani, Puspitorini, and Solihin (2023) delved into the students' outlook on the effectiveness of the "lingua marina" YouTube channel in improving their speaking performance. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews involving ten psychology students in their fourth semester at Universitas Bhayangkara Jakarta Raya.

The study's findings demonstrated that the use of the "lingua marina" YouTube channel is advantageous in assisting students to improve their speaking abilities by facilitating the acquisition of new vocabulary, perfecting pronunciation, and boosting enthusiasm. Furthermore, Zulkflee et al. (2022) examined the viewpoints of learners in Malaysia and Indonesia about the utilisation of YouTube as a means to improve their oral communication abilities. A survey was conducted using a questionnaire that was delivered to 50 Malaysian and 50 Indonesian individuals who were at the secondary level. The findings indicate that students have a favourable view of using YouTube videos for English language learning. However, they generally have doubts about the platform's ability to enhance speaking skills.

Furthermore, the results suggest a striking resemblance in the functions of YouTube in enhancing speaking abilities for both Malaysian and Indonesian students at this level. This emphasises a common perception among secondary school students in both countries regarding the utilisation of YouTube to improve speaking skills. It is crucial to analyse this issue from various perspectives in order to have a thorough comprehension of the effects of using YouTube as an instructional internet tool on students' English-speaking abilities. This study aims to examine how undergraduate students perceive the impact of YouTube on improving their English speaking abilities.

METHODOLOGY

This study's research design employed a quantitative approach with a survey strategy to investigate the undergraduate students' perceptions of the role of YouTube in improving English speaking skills. According to Ary et. al. (1985), questions on people's beliefs, attitudes, traits, and behaviours are asked when using survey research. This study was done through the use of an adapted questionnaire consisting of 15 items.

Statistical approaches were employed to assess pupils' perspectives. This study involved the participation of 30 undergraduate students who were enrolled in the English for Presentation Skills (ELC590) course at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The selection of these students was based on their accessibility and eagerness to take part in the study. The selection of participants was based on two primary criteria: enrollment in the English for Presentation Skills (ELC590) course and utilisation of YouTube as a learning tool for the English language.

The study employed a quantitative research strategy, adhering to the methods described by Creswell and Creswell (2018). A group of 30 undergraduate students enrolled in the English for Presentation Skills (ELC590) course at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) was selected initially, taking into account their availability and willingness to participate. The research utilised a questionnaire, derived from Alkhatiri (2019), consisting of 15 items in the English language.

In order to examine the viewpoints of undergraduate students regarding the impact of YouTube on improving English speaking abilities, participants were instructed to fill out the online questionnaire using Google Forms. The questionnaire comprised two sections: one focused on attitudes, while the other assessed the utility of YouTube. The instructor aided this procedure because there was minimal direct contact to responders. The questionnaire findings were assessed utilising a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 5 to 1. Afterwards, the survey data that was gathered was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27. The analysis mostly focused on assessing the mean, standard deviation, and ANOVA.

Table 1: Five-point Likert scale

Five-point Likert scale	Option
1	Strongly Agree
2	Agree
3	Neutral
4	Disagree
5	Strongly Disagree

The researchers utilised Statistical Analysis Software (IBM SPSS) to evaluate the data. The frequency and percentage were used to ascertain the ratio of agreement or disagreement for each item in the questionnaire. The researchers employed the arithmetic mean and standard deviation to evaluate the degree of consensus and variability among the participants' answers. Later, the researcher utilised ANOVA to investigate the relationship between attitudes and the effectiveness of YouTube.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Table 2, it can be inferred that students exhibit favourable sentiments concerning the impact of YouTube on enhancing their English-speaking abilities. This can be seen from the overall high mean score of 4.06 (SD = 0.669). The highest mean score was 5th statement (*YouTube videos help me increase the number of new words I learn in English*) and 15th statement (*YouTube provides authentic materials.*) with the mean score of M= 4.37 (SD=0.556) respectively. Besides that, second mean score that most of the students agreed with were 1st statement (*Watching YouTube videos helps me to speak English with my friends and teachers in the class.*) as well as 6th statement (*YouTube videos give me the motivation to comment and discuss things in the class in English.*) with the mean score of M = 4.17 (SD= 0.699) respectively.

In addition, the third mean score that the students had positive attitudes with was 11th statement (*YouTube is attractive and engaging learning.*) with M= 4.12 (SD=0.592). Next in line were fourth mean score for 4th statement (*YouTube videos help me to understand better the English topic being delivered in class.*) and 14th statement (*YouTube is convenient and easy to access.*) with the same mean score of M= 4.10 (SD= 0.662) respectively. The fifth mean score that most students agreed with was 8th statement (*YouTube videos help me guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in English.*) with mean score M= 4.07 (SD= 0.785).

Moreover, they also agreed with 10th statement (*I understand the English materials better when I watch YouTube videos about it.*) with sixth mean score of M = 4.00 (SD = 0.788). The results also indicated that students agreed with 2nd statement (*YouTube videos give me the motivation to comment and discuss things in the class in English.*), 7th statement (*YouTube is accessible to various types of videos.*), and 12th statement (*YouTube videos simplify the English lesson for me.*) that all of them fell in seventh mean score of M=3.93 (SD= 0.583) respectively. With reference from Table 2, the eighth mean score was 9th statement (*YouTube videos help me to speak fluently in English.*) with mean score of M= 3.90 (SD=0.712). Lastly, showing the mean score of 3.87 (SD= 0.730) each, the ninth mean score was 3rd statement (*YouTube videos allow me to organize ideas better when speaking in English.*) and 13th statement (*YouTube is applicable for different learning styles.*).

Table 2: Students' perceptions on the role of YouTube in improving English speaking skills

No.	Statements	N	Mean	SD
Attitudes				
1	Watching YouTube videos helps me to speak English with my friends and teachers in the class.	30	4.17	0.592
2	YouTube videos give me the motivation to comment and discuss things in the class in English.	30	3.93	0.691
3	YouTube videos allow me to organize ideas better when speaking in English.	30	3.87	0.730

4	YouTube videos help me to understand better the English topic being delivered in class.	30	4.10	0.662
5	YouTube videos help me increase the number of new words I learn in English.	30	4.37	0.556
6	My English pronunciation improves when I learn through watching YouTube videos.	30	4.17	0.699
7	YouTube videos simplify the English lesson for me.	30	3.93	0.583
8	YouTube videos help me guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in English.	30	4.07	0.785
9	YouTube videos help me to speak fluently in English.	30	3.90	0.712
10	I understand the English materials better when I watch YouTube videos about it.	30	4.00	0.788

Usefulness of YouTube

11	YouTube is attractive and engaging learning.	30	4.12	0.592
12	YouTube is accessible to various types of videos.	30	3.93	0.691
13	YouTube is applicable for different learning styles.	30	3.87	0.730
14	YouTube is convenient and easy to access.	30	4.10	0.662
15	YouTube provides authentic materials.	30	4.37	0.556

TOTAL	30	4.06	0.669
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Relationship between attitudes and the usefulness of YouTube

The information presented in Table 3 revealed a significant and statistically persuasive finding, shown by a level of significance of ($p < 0.05$). This result indicated a deep connection between attitudes and the usefulness of YouTube among the participants. The average score across groups, which was measured at 709.81, and the average score within groups, which was recorded at 67.69, highlighted the existence of this strong association.

Essentially, this research indicates that as participants' attitudes towards the role of YouTube are high, their perceptions on the usefulness of YouTube are also undergoes significant enhancement. This further solidified the idea that attitudes and the usefulness of YouTube are intimately interconnected, and enhancements in one area have a direct beneficial impact.

Table 3: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	709.81	8	88.73	27.53	<.001
Within Groups	67.69	21	3.22		
Total	777.50	29			

YouTube is considered a highly effective online instructional tool in this study, with an average score of 4.06. This aligns with the findings of Albahlal (2019) in the field of English language acquisition, where participants reported that YouTube videos significantly enhanced their speaking skills. In addition, the study also found that YouTube

can increase students' interest and involvement in learning the English language, as shown by an average score of 3.93. The findings align with the research conducted by Damayanti (2022), Susanti et al. (2022), and Alobaid (2019), which suggested that incorporating YouTube into English language schools enhances students' confidence and involvement. Furthermore, the students reached a consensus that their English pronunciation shows improvement when they utilise YouTube videos as a learning tool, as substantiated by the average score of 4.17.

The current study corroborated the findings of Susanti et al. (2022), who observed that their subjects exhibited heightened drive and self-assurance in verbal interaction by utilising YouTube and engaging in role-playing exercises. Therefore, these significant discoveries indicate that English language educators should incorporate YouTube into their instructional methods due to its function as a valuable library of online materials (Yee & Hu, 2022). The majority of students reached a consensus that YouTube videos significantly enhance their English fluency, with an average score of 3.90. Similarly, Martinez (2022) contended that YouTube has the potential to augment pupils' comprehension in the realm of communication. According to Albahlal (2019), YouTube videos help pupils break down spoken language into understandable parts, enhancing their ability to absorb sounds more effectively.

In addition, YouTube serves as a highly efficient instructional tool that significantly enhances students' proficiency in the English language (Albahlal, 2019). The current investigation revealed that the majority of students concurred that their English pronunciation enhances when they acquire knowledge through the medium of YouTube videos. This study corroborated the conclusions of Damayanti (2022), which asserted that learners might enhance their pronunciation skills by engaging in simultaneous activities of watching videos on English Phonetics and actively practicing. In conclusion, the study further confirmed the strong connection between attitudes and utility of YouTube, and any enhancements in one component directly result in a favourable impact.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the present study has quantitatively examined the perceptions of Universiti Teknologi Mara students on the role of YouTube in improving their English-speaking skills. Overall, it is clear that YouTube as a potential instructional tool to be used in a classroom learning is one promising avenue that educators shall consider when taking into account the needs of their students. As discussed at length throughout the paper, one of the critical factors that dampens the learning of English language for many is confidence.

YouTube, as extensively shown in the study, is a learner-centred online tool that offers one the autonomy to actively participate in their learning needs. Therefore, apart from supporting them, YouTube is one approach to empowering these learners. Furthermore, this study confirmed the notion that opinions about YouTube and its utility are closely linked, and improvements in one aspect directly result in positive effects. This can be seen from the study whereby the attitudes and utility of YouTube are closely linked with ($p < 0.05$) level of significance, and improvements in one aspect have a direct positive effect.

Looking at how the platform generally has optimistic acceptance from many groups of learners, future research thus could consider to look into the integration of YouTube in the classroom to determine its impact on learners' performance. This includes integrating the use of such tools in the completion of course assessments, in exchange for the traditional methods which offer visual but not audio signals. This would then render learners' bigger autonomy in recognising and tackling their learning needs, while simultaneously building their confidence. Other than that, future research could also consider to investigate YouTube's potential as an instructional tool

beyond the classroom, in line with the growing interest in learning on the go- highly possible with tools like YouTube.

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