

Enhancing digital literacy through the role of YouTube video in English vocabulary learning: Students' perception

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ABSTRACT

YouTube is a valuable platform for learning English, providing an easily accessible medium for vocabulary acquisition. However, Grade 10 students at SMK Asima' Darul Falah in Bajur, West Nusa Tenggara, still struggle to use this technology fluently. Additionally, a lack of awareness and experience with YouTube as a learning tool contributes to their difficulties. This study aims to investigate students' perceptions of improving digital literacy through the use of YouTube for English vocabulary learning. Using a descriptive qualitative method, this study involved 15 students as respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions with a 5-point Likert scale, distributed through Google Forms, while interviews assessed students' perceptions after using YouTube for learning. Data analysis included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. The findings show that students perceive YouTube as a satisfying and useful tool for improving digital literacy and learning English vocabulary. In conclusion, Grade 10 students at SMK Asima' Darul Falah have a positive perception of the role of YouTube in improving digital literacy and English vocabulary learning, with additional access aiding their understanding and practice of vocabulary.

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1. Introduction

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of a nation, and in this digital era, technological transformation has significantly changed the way education is delivered and understood. The integration of technology in the learning process has had a tremendous impact on how teachers deliver material and how students acquire it (Subroto et al., 2023). The impact of such changes also influences one's view of learning resources. The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemdikbud) propelled the National Education Development in 2016 in reaction to the importance of proficiency in a nation or the lack of interest in education in Indonesia. It is supported by Amaliyah et al. (2022). who suggest that encouraging literacy culture management is the approach to raising the standard of instruction in schools. There are some criteria in the selection of useful learning resources, among others: their availability, their possibility for learners to refer to themselves, and their ability to satisfy the learners' needs for independent learning (Rusydiyah et al., 2020). Digital literacy according to Maphosa (2019) is ,the ability to find, evaluate, utilise, share, and create information found online..." Similarly, Dashtestani and Hojatpanah (2020) reveals that Digital

literacy is defined as ‘the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills’. Digital literacy-based learning resources become important to be applied in the world of education since they can present instructional materials contextually, visually, and aurally in interesting and interactive ways (Rusydiyah et al., 2020). In other words, gaining proficiency in digital literacy can help someone improve their writing, grammar, and typing abilities on websites like blogs and social media. As cited in the Decree of the Minister of Education Number 22 the Year 2016 about primary and secondary education process standards, information and communication technology must be applied integrative, systematically, and effectively by considering the condition and situation in the field (Permendikbud RI 2016 No. 22). This Minister’s decree gives a signal that the implementation of digital literacy plays an important role in producing learning resources that are effective and efficient.

In this era of modernization, the level of progress in education is increasing rapidly. Globalization is a problem faced today, with the growth of the economy, international competition, environmental, cultural, and political issues (Rusydiyah et al., 2020). Nonetheless, in today's globalization era, media also plays an integral role in education. Nguyen (2021), asserts that the importance of media in education cannot be ignored and emphasizes the need for its appropriate utilization. Therefore, it is important to have a variety of media to be applied to learn English, especially for vocabulary enhancement. There is no denying the value of media, which should be properly utilized in education (Sorohiti et al., 2024). One of the media that could be applied is YouTube, one of the popular websites. YouTube also provides a variety of videos based on the context people are looking for. Akhir and Nasrudin (2024) 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. Learners can gain knowledge, speaking skills, listening skills, writing skills, reading skills, grammar, vocabulary enhancement, and even cultures of other countries when they watch YouTube videos from a foreign country (Rufino, 2024). In addition to being motivational and captivating, YouTube helps students to apply their strategies for learning vocabulary. By watching videos on YouTube, students can increase their vocabulary knowledge. As mentioned, YouTube provides some benefits for students’ vocabulary learning, such as various videos of native speakers, lots of interesting videos that are quickly accessible, and an enormous quantity of free videos. Much research has studied the implementation of YouTube and its effectiveness when used for learning the English language, including Rahmatika et al. (2021). It is also explained that YouTube, with its innovative style of visual learning, has made education easy and conceptual (Sharma & Sharma, 2021). Alamri (2023) also found that YouTube is easy to use as a vocabulary learning medium, resulting in positive outcomes for different language skills and encouragement to use the said website.

Students' perception of the effectiveness of YouTube videos in English vocabulary learning is an emerging topic. Vocabulary is significant to the students who started to learn English as a foreign language (Lei et al., 2022). Learning English as a foreign language with a lot of vocabulary knowledge is a special benefit to the students. Besides, vocabularies are also linked with grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary which are crucial (Madani et al., 2023). Vocabulary is very important to have various words to make up sentences. Also, acquiring vocabulary is easier than learning grammar since it does not have specific rules to learn it (Sorohiti et al., 2024). Building a vocabulary is crucial to language acquisition because it is vital for all language skills (Komalasari, 2022). According to Brown (2021), vocabulary is the heart of the language and is crucial for language learners. In addition, vocabulary is the basis for language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Afzal, 2019). Without learning the vocabulary, it is difficult to attain any language proficiency.

Based on several studies conducted, students still find problems in mastering vocabulary learning. There are many factors that make the students find problems in learning English vocabulary such as linguistic and non-linguistic factors; word meanings and word grammar, in English, many words have opposites (antonyms) and sometimes words also have the same meaning (synonyms) (Krisnayanti & Winarta, 2021). Then, there are five problems that make it difficult for students to learn English vocabulary, including laziness in memorizing words, word meanings and word grammar, pronunciation, learning facilities, and motivation (Aji et al., 2023). Moreover, vocabulary learning is challenging, particularly for non-native speakers of English who face problems relating to the meanings of new words, spelling, pronunciation, correct use of words, guessing meaning through context, and so on (Krisnayanti and Winarta, 2021). Ghalebi et al. (2020) drew three basic conclusions

after attempting to examine the results of studies on vocabulary learning and general learning in particular. These are as follows: First, most students find that studying language is important, which motivates them to use a variety of strategies, which is one of the key traits of an effective learner who takes the initiative to manage their vocabulary learning; second, the students overuse some mechanical strategies like memorization, note-taking, and repetition in contrast to deep processing strategies like guessing, imagery, and the keyword technique; and finally, they employ more strategies than others for this aspect of language learning. Following this insight, Ismail et al. (2022) observe that pupils have difficulty finding reasons to write and constructing sentences. Furthermore, kids do not understand how to construct strong phrases in a paragraph or how to construct a decent sentence word for word. The kids are still perplexed about how to construct a paragraph utilizing language. By assessing the students' challenges, particularly in producing recount texts, the teacher saves the students from making some blunders.

Several studies have been done on the perspectives of learners on using YouTube videos as an effective learning tool. Madani et al. (2023) found in their research that YouTube videos are remarkably beneficial for language learners. Again, a study by Tahmina (2023), 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. Jailani (2022) 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. Regarding previous studies related to this topic, Solano et al. (2020) conducted a study on the theories that support the integration of YouTube for learning English as a second language. The results of this study show that the use of YouTube videos has some advantages in comparison to books, worksheets, slides, overhead projectors and films, because learners with a critical eye started to select videos available on YouTube and asked the teacher to incorporate them in classes as an effective tool to achieve their learning outcomes. In addition, videos helped students to restore confidence that encouraged them to participate in classes.

While there have been many studies highlighting the benefits of using YouTube in English language learning, there is still a gap in the in-depth understanding of how YouTube can be optimized for English vocabulary learning specifically, as well as in the understanding of the effectiveness of its use and how students' perceptions and experiences in improving their English vocabulary, as well as to identify the factors that influence the use of YouTube in the context of English language learning in Indonesia. By expanding the understanding of how YouTube can be used in English language learning contexts and the factors that influence its effectiveness, this research is expected to provide educators and educational practitioners with additional insights into the use of digital media in supporting English vocabulary learning in Indonesia.

Research Questions:

1. How do students perceive the effectiveness of YouTube videos in enhancing their English vocabulary learning?
2. What are the factors that influence the use of YouTube as a learning tool for English vocabulary among students in Indonesia

2. Method

The descriptive qualitative method was used in this study as the research design. As Syafrizal and Haerudin (2018) defined, descriptive qualitative research is appropriate to explore and collect information on experiences and perceptions in educational environments from the point of view of teachers at all stages of education. This research method allows us to describe, in depth, the students' perceptions of the use of YouTube videos in English vocabulary learning and its impact on their digital literacy. Miles et al. (1994) in Haidar's research excerpt (2024) conducted data analysis in 75 steps, which included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. Data were collected through closed and open questionnaires. Data reduction is the process of classifying and summarizing the necessary information to address the research problem. Data presentation involves using charts, tables, and other visual components to display the findings. Data verification is the process of ensuring the accuracy of the research by drawing conclusions from the data. Considering the limitations of the research, the researchers draw conclusions in this section (Baron and Young,

2022). This study focused on grade 10 students at SMK Asima' Darul Falah, with 15 student respondents participating. Closed-ended questionnaires and interviews were used in the data collection procedure to obtain insights on enhancing digital literacy through the role of YouTube videos in English vocabulary learning from the students' perspectives.

This study employed a closed-ended questionnaire and interview questions. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items on a 5-point Likert scale, distributed via Google Forms, while the interview included 3 questions to deepen the understanding of grade 10 students' perceptions after using YouTube for learning. Data were analyzed qualitatively, with the questionnaire identifying patterns and trends, and the interviews providing additional insights.

The closed-ended questionnaire was used to gain in-depth knowledge about students' perceptions. The following scale was used to rate respondents' responses to the closed questionnaire: SD = strongly disagree (1.00-1.80), D = disagree (1.81-2.60), N = neutral (2.61-3.40), A = agree (3.41-4.20), and S = strongly agree (4.21-5.00). For the interview, 3 (three) assessment criteria were used, namely: 1) Information Quality (Students can provide a fairly detailed explanation). 2) Flexibility (how many different ideas students found. 3) Originality (the level of originality of students' ideas related to unique ideas.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Student Responses Based on the Closed-Ended Questionnaire

Fig. 1 below shows the demographics of respondents by gender. Of the 15 respondents who participated in this study, 67% were women and 33% were men. The respondents are grade 10 students. They make judgments based on experiences that stem from their individual backgrounds.

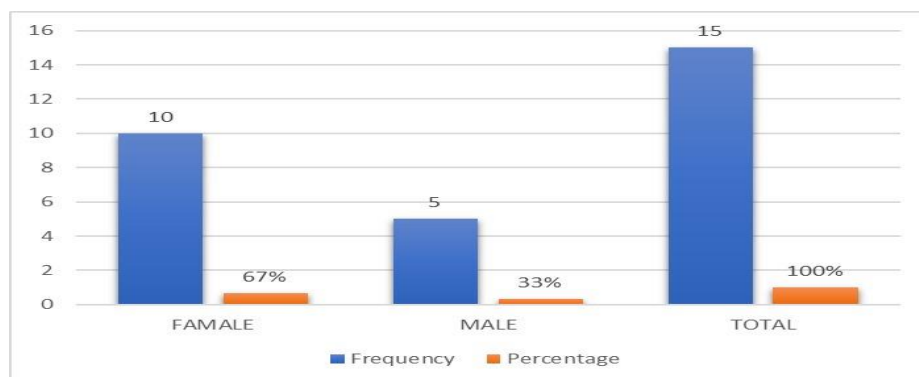


Fig. 1. Male and female distribution

After dividing the data into two sub-sections—closed questions and interviews—a survey with 15 questions was used to collect data, involving 15 students. The accompanying figure and data show the results. The following figures explain how the proportion of survey responses regarding students' perceptions of enhancing digital literacy through the role of YouTube videos in English vocabulary learning was calculated in Figures 2 and 3.

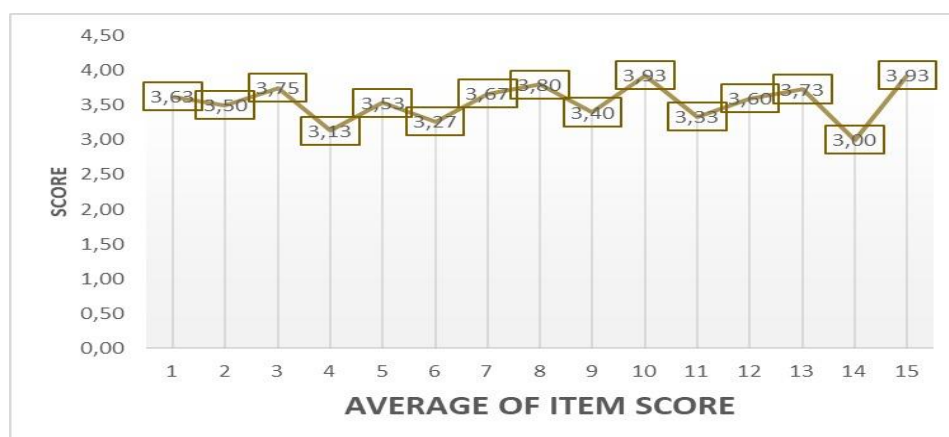


Fig. 2. Student score results

Each respondent answered the questions differently, as shown in Fig. 2. Based on the results of the questionnaire, students achieved a minimum score of 3.00, a maximum score of 3.93, and an average score of 3.55.

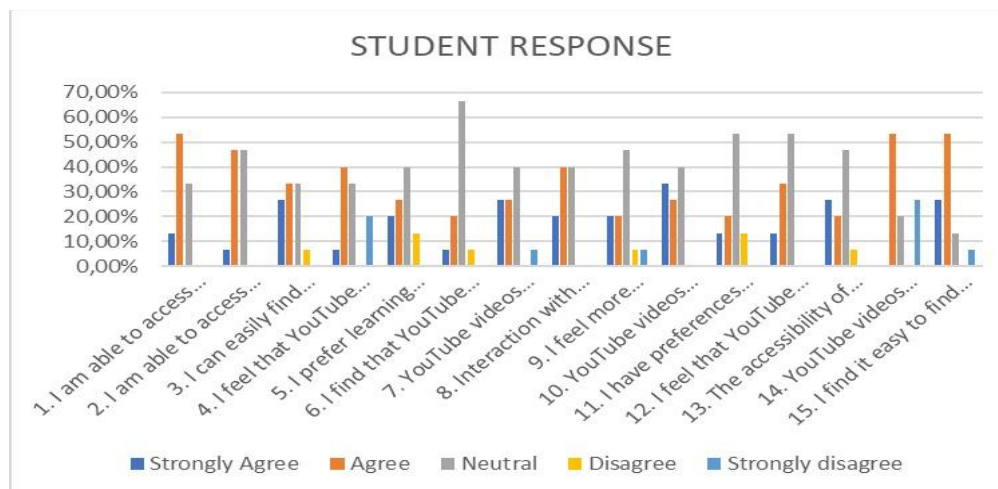


Fig. 3. Analysis of students' responses to the questionnaire

Based on Fig. 3, 15 students gave different responses to the questions asked. **First indicator:** I am able to access YouTube to find/watch videos. The highest score of 53.33% was on the “Agree” scale, indicating that the majority of students use YouTube primarily to find/watch videos. **Second indicator:** I am able to access YouTube both to find/watch videos and to create/upload videos. Two scores of 46.67% each on “Agree” and “Neutral” indicate that the majority of students use YouTube for both finding/watching and creating/uploading videos. **Third indicator:** I can easily find most of the English vocabulary learning materials on YouTube. The highest scores of 33.33% each on “Neutral” and “Agree” indicate that most students find it relatively easy to locate English vocabulary learning materials on YouTube. **Fourth indicator:** I feel that YouTube videos are effective in improving my understanding of English vocabulary. The highest score of 40.00% on the “Agree” scale indicates that the majority of students believe YouTube videos are effective in enhancing their understanding of English vocabulary. **Fifth indicator:** I prefer learning English vocabulary through YouTube videos rather than using textbooks. The high score of 40.00% on “Neutral” indicates that the majority of students neither strongly prefer YouTube videos nor textbooks for learning English vocabulary. **Sixth indicator:** I find that YouTube videos help me understand English vocabulary better than traditional learning methods. The high score of 66.67% on “Neutral” indicates that many students feel YouTube videos aid their understanding of English vocabulary more than traditional methods. **Seventh indicator:** YouTube videos motivate me to actively learn English vocabulary. The higher score of 40.00% on “Neutral” suggests that YouTube videos can motivate students to actively engage in learning English vocabulary. **Eighth indicator:** Interaction with YouTube videos is very important for my understanding of English vocabulary. Two equal ratings of 40.00% each on “Agree” and “Neutral” indicate that most students consider interaction with YouTube videos important for their understanding of English vocabulary. **Ninth indicator:** I feel more confident using English vocabulary after using YouTube videos as a learning resource. The highest score of 46.67% on “Neutral” indicates that most students feel more confident in using English vocabulary after utilizing YouTube videos. **Tenth indicator:** YouTube videos help me remember and use English vocabulary in the right context. The higher score of 40.00% on “Neutral” suggests that YouTube videos assist students in remembering and using English vocabulary correctly. **Eleventh indicator:** I have preferences for certain types of YouTube video content in learning English vocabulary. The highest score of 53.33% on “Neutral” suggests that most students have specific preferences for types of YouTube content used for learning English vocabulary. **Twelfth indicator:** I feel that YouTube videos help me expand my English vocabulary faster than conventional learning methods. The highest score of 53.33% on “Neutral” indicates that most students believe YouTube videos help them expand their English vocabulary more rapidly compared to traditional methods. **Thirteenth indicator:** The accessibility of YouTube videos as a learning tool for grade 10 vocational high school students is very good. The highest score of 46.67% on “Neutral” suggests that most students find the accessibility of YouTube videos as a learning tool for grade 10 vocational high school students to be very good.

Fourteenth indicator: YouTube videos influence how I learn English outside the school environment. The highest score of 53.33% on “Agree” indicates that most students feel YouTube videos influence their English learning outside of the school environment. **Fifteenth indicator:** I find it easy to find YouTube videos that suit my English vocabulary learning needs. The highest score of 53.33% on “Agree” indicates that most students find it easy to locate YouTube videos that meet their English vocabulary learning needs."

Based on data from a closed questionnaire, the following are some of the main conclusions drawn by the researcher; The first point regarding the Access and Use of YouTube: The majority of students (53.33%) agreed that they can access YouTube to search for and watch videos, indicating that YouTube is a common platform for content consumption. Students also have the ability to not only watch but also create and upload videos, with equal scores between “Agree” and “Neutral” (46.67%). The second point regarding the English Learning Materials: Students felt fairly neutral to positive (33.33% each) about their ability to easily find most English vocabulary learning materials on YouTube. Additionally, most students (40.00%) agreed that YouTube videos are effective in improving their English vocabulary comprehension. For the third point regarding the Learning Preferences: Most students felt neutral (40.00%) regarding their preference for learning English vocabulary through YouTube videos compared to traditional textbooks. Students were also neutral (66.67%) about whether YouTube videos help them understand English vocabulary better than traditional learning methods. For the fourth point regarding the Motivation and Confidence: Most students felt neutral (40.00%) about whether YouTube videos motivate them to actively learn English vocabulary. Confidence in using English vocabulary increased after using YouTube, with the highest score being neutral (46.67%). For the fifth point regarding the Interaction and Content Preference: Students felt that interaction with YouTube videos was important for their understanding of English vocabulary, with equal high scores for “Agree” and “Neutral” (40.00%). The majority of students felt neutral (53.33%) about their preference for certain types of YouTube video content for learning English vocabulary. For the sixth point regarding the Accessibility and Influence of YouTube: Students felt that the accessibility of YouTube videos as a learning tool was very good (46.67% neutral). The majority of students agreed (53.33%) that YouTube videos influence the way they learn English outside the school environment. For the seventh point regarding the Speed and Ease of Learning: Students felt neutral (53.33%) about whether YouTube videos help them expand their English vocabulary faster than conventional learning methods. The majority of students agreed (53.33%) that it is easy for them to find YouTube videos that suit their English vocabulary learning needs."

In conclusion, based on the data, the majority of students felt that YouTube was a useful and effective tool for learning English vocabulary. They are able to access, find, and watch videos easily and believe that YouTube videos aid in the understanding and expansion of English vocabulary. However, there was also a significant neutral trend in some aspects, suggesting that while YouTube is beneficial, other elements in learning are also important to students.

3.2. Student Responses Based on Interviews

The researcher used three indicators in the interviews, in addition to analyzing the contents of the questionnaire mentioned above. The researcher conducted a question-and-answer session with six students: Husnul Mizan, Robiatun Adawiyah, Nabila Juniarti, Dina Ardiana, Ramdani, and Saepol Anwar, focusing on students who are active YouTube users and use YouTube to learn English. The researcher classified the data based on the research questions and then identified similarities and differences. The data will be presented below.

a. Students' Feelings About the Effectiveness of YouTube Videos in Improving Their Understanding of English Vocabulary

The first question in the interview addressed the effectiveness of YouTube videos in improving students' understanding of English vocabulary. The participating students provided varied responses. Husnul Mizan stated that YouTube videos are very effective in enhancing English vocabulary learning. By seeing and hearing new words in context, students find it easier to understand and remember them. Ramdani and Robiatun Adawiyah expressed similar views, as shown in the following text:

"I find that videos are very effective in enhancing English vocabulary learning. The videos provide many examples of word usage in different situations, which helps me understand the different meanings and usages of the words. Also, I can watch the videos repeatedly to make sure I really understand and remember the new words."

b. How YouTube Facilitates Students in Gaining Exposure to New Vocabulary

Students provided different responses regarding how YouTube helps them gain exposure to new vocabulary. Nabila Juniarti and Dina Ardiana mentioned that YouTube is very helpful in exposing them to new vocabulary. With a variety of videos available, they can watch content relevant to their interests, such as vlogs, tutorials, and documentaries. Each video provides a different context for new words, helping them understand how to use them in various situations. Saepol Anwar stated:

"YouTube gives me access to different types of content in English. I can watch videos on any topic, such as science, technology, culture, and entertainment. Each video provides the opportunity to hear and see new words in different contexts, making vocabulary learning more interesting and varied."

c. Students' Opinions on Whether Visually Appealing YouTube Videos Help in Remembering New Vocabulary

Regarding students' opinions on whether visually appealing YouTube videos help them remember new vocabulary, they generally think that YouTube videos are very effective because they are easy to access, interesting, and aid in remembering new vocabulary more quickly. Husnul Mizan and Robiatun Adawiyah found that visually appealing YouTube videos were particularly effective in helping them remember new vocabulary. They noted that videos with strong visual elements, such as pictures, diagrams, or animations, make it easier to understand and remember new words. Attractive visuals also help them stay focused and engaged in learning, making the process more effective and enjoyable. Nabila Juniarti, Dina Ardiana, and Ramdani stated:

"YouTube videos are visually appealing and help us remember new vocabulary. Visual effects, bright colors, and good graphic design make the content more engaging and easier to follow."

Saepol Anwar added:

"YouTube videos that are visually appealing really help me remember new vocabulary. When a video has interesting visuals, I am more focused and engaged. This makes it easier for me to remember the new words introduced in the video because I can associate them with interesting images or scenes."

After analyzing the data from the closed questionnaire, it was found that students had a positive perception of using YouTube videos to improve vocabulary learning. Most students preferred the "Agree" and "Neutral" options. The data, as shown in Figure 3, indicate that YouTube videos are very effective for vocabulary learning. Additionally, YouTube videos can increase students' learning motivation by allowing them to choose preferred content and enjoy a more dynamic learning process.

In addition, students' perspectives on the use of YouTube for vocabulary learning are positive and effective. The videos provide many examples of word usage in various contexts, which significantly helps in understanding and memorizing new vocabulary. Kabooha and Elyas (2018) reported that both students and teachers believe that YouTube technology is an effective tool that helps students understand English or target English vocabulary better. The majority thought YouTube could enhance and improve their English vocabulary comprehension. Most students in this study strongly agreed that using YouTube in the classroom to learn new vocabulary creates an engaging learning environment and motivates them to learn faster and better according to their interests, allowing them to select preferred content. Terantino (2011) contend that YouTube offers learners access to language and culture-based videos while being fun and interesting. Additionally, it provides students with an avenue to obtain information and instruction from around the world, offering them an opportunity to engage meaningfully in the target language.

This research focuses on enhancing digital literacy through the role of YouTube videos in English vocabulary learning: students' perceptions. To extend this study, future research could aim to measure the direct impact of YouTube videos on language proficiency, especially vocabulary learning, using pre-and-post-tests or other assessment tools. Future researchers could also investigate the effectiveness and experiences of using YouTube videos or other social media for vocabulary learning to provide further evidence of their usefulness and limitations in English language education. Additionally, incorporating teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of YouTube videos or other social media for vocabulary learning could offer a more holistic view of the educational value and implementation challenges. Future studies could also explore how students with different learning styles or proficiency levels perceive and benefit from using YouTube videos for vocabulary learning. Furthermore, comparing different social media platforms or exploring the longitudinal impact on language proficiency for vocabulary learning could be valuable.

4. Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of YouTube videos on English vocabulary learning and students' perceptions of their use. The results show that grade 10 students at SMK Asima' Darul Falah generally view YouTube videos positively for vocabulary acquisition, appreciating the engaging visuals and diverse content. A total of 53.33% of students agreed that they can access YouTube to watch videos, and 40.00% felt that YouTube videos are effective in improving their vocabulary comprehension and motivating them. However, some students remain neutral regarding YouTube compared to traditional learning methods, with 66.67% of students feeling neutral about its effectiveness compared to traditional methods. This indicates that while YouTube is a valuable supplementary resource, it may need to be integrated with other teaching methods for optimal results. The study highlights the importance of content quality and individual preferences in influencing the effectiveness of YouTube as an educational tool. Further research should delve into the direct impact of YouTube videos on language proficiency and compare their effectiveness with other digital media to better understand their role in education. Overall, YouTube is considered a useful tool, but integration with other methods and further exploration are needed to enhance learning effectiveness and digital literacy.

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