YouTube as Informal Learning Media to Enhance English Vocabulary: Students' Perception

Fadil Bena Musyaffa, Christianti Tri Hapsari

English Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang

fadilbena0@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine how students utilize the YouTube platform, describe their perceptions of its use for informal learning, and identify the challenges they face in using it as a medium for improving English vocabulary. This study employed a qualitative method and a case study design with an open-ended questionnaire. Eighteen English language students at Semarang State University participated in the study. The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis, which identified themes from the collected data about students' perceptions. In this stage, the researchers analyzed the collected data to identify and formulate emerging themes related to students' perceptions. The findings of this study indicate that students perceive YouTube as a platform for improving their vocabulary. The majority of students expressed positive perceptions about using YouTube as a medium for informal vocabulary learning. However, the study also identified several problems frequently encountered by students, such as technical issues in internet usage and contextual issues with YouTube content, which could be used as a source of learning material. On the other hand, this study also found that students can increase their learning motivation because there is a variety of English content that they can use as vocabulary learning material.

INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication system used by humans or other creatures to be able to convey messages, ideas, concepts, and information. Moreover, language is something that is structured and allows humans or other creatures to show emotions. Language has an important role in social and cultural interactions and plays a role in cognitive processes, including thinking and understanding. Nunan (2007) stated that language is a tool for communication. Furthermore, language is a system that naturally exists in humans through speech or written, signs or symbols to express emotions as social beings. (Robin and Crystal, 2021).

English is the language most widely used by people because of its historical heritage, and is a global language, as stated by Crystal (2000). English is also widely used as an international language because more than one quarter of the world's population. (Richards & Rogers, 1986). English is a language that covers many things within it and becomes something important that someone must master (Pribadi, Azis, & Nurcahya, 2020). Learning English has been proven to have many benefits. The main purpose in learning English is to be able to communicate and be able to use English actively to be able to compete globally (Mandasari & Aminatun, 2020). In Indonesia, English is widely used daily but is still limited in several contexts. It is a foreign language that is studied and examined nationally. However, as explained earlier, the use of English in daily uses is still lacking where global competition focuses on information that mostly uses English, the understanding and orientation of learning English in Indonesia can be said to be uneven. Whereas the focus of teaching and learning English in schools is to provide knowledge to students which is expected to be able to communicate well spoken and improve awareness of the importance learning English (Megaiab, 2014).

Language learning in era of globalization often utilizes technology. Conventionally, to learn a new language, especially for educational purposes, students must study the language's literature. However, due to current societal pressures, this desire has evolved into a demand that encompasses more than just textual information. The use of technology in language

learning can be diverse, for example, as a medium for teaching and learning. One of the most influential media in language learning is the use of online platforms. Technological advances enable differentiated teaching with the help of different platforms with the assistance and sharing of increasingly relevant and creative information in language learning. Lai & Gu (2011) stated that technology has great potential to support language learning opportunities in a variety of ways. Moreover, Technological developments have changed the educational paradigm through the utilization of digital media, which greatly helps the teaching and learning process for teachers and students. (Guan, Mou, & Jiang, 2020).

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

The Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML), developed by Richard Mayer (2005), explains how people learn more effectively when information is presented both verbally and visually. According to this theory, well-designed multimedia materials can enhance learning by reducing cognitive load and facilitating deeper processing. According to this theoretical framework, a primary objective of multimedia-based learning is to foster student motivation in constructing coherent and accurate mental representations of the instructional content. The learner must actively engage with the instructional content to cognitively process and assimilate the information, thereby facilitating the development of new knowledge structures (Mayer, 2003). Mayer (2010) posits that meaningful learning from verbal and visual materials occurs when learners participate in active cognitive processing, including the selection, organization, and integration of information. Similarly, Shyamlee and Phil (2012) contend that integrating technology and multimedia in education enhances the learning environment by making it more dynamic, visually engaging, and authentic, thereby promoting student engagement, optimizing instructional time, and improving knowledge retention.

Theory Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Theory Acceptance Model (TAM) is one of the most influential models in understanding the acceptance and use of technology by users. Developed by Davis (1989), TAM is rooted in the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and focuses on two main constructs, namely perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU), which significantly influence Attitude Toward Using, Behavioural Intention, and ultimately actual system use. PU refers to the extent to which users believe that a technology will improve their performance, while PEOU refers to the level of perceived ease of using the technology. Research by Legris et al. (2003) showed that TAM is effective in various technological contexts and this opinion is supported by King and He (2006) through their meta-analysis proving that TAM remains a valid tool for predicting technology acceptance, with PU and PEOU as consistent predictors. Recent developments (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008), introduced an additional variable of perceived enjoyment that expands its application in modern e-learning technology.

The Nation's Four Strands of Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary acquisition is a fundamental aspect of language learning, and Paul Nation's *Four Strands* framework provides a comprehensive approach to mastering vocabulary effectively. Nation (2007) proposes that a balanced vocabulary learning program should consist of four key strands: *meaning-focused input*, *meaning-focused output*, *language-focused learning*, and *fluency development*. Each strand plays a distinct role in vocabulary acquisition, ensuring learners develop both breadth and depth of lexical knowledge while enhancing their ability to use words accurately and fluently in various contexts.

The first strand, *meaning-focused input*, emphasizes exposure to comprehensible language through listening and reading. Learners acquire vocabulary incidentally by encountering words in meaningful contexts, such as books, conversations, or multimedia (Webb & Nation, 2017).

The second strand, *meaning-focused output*, involves using vocabulary productively in speaking and writing. Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis underscores the importance of

language production in consolidating knowledge. Using vocabulary in speaking or writing activities where the main goal is to communicate meaning.

The third strand, *language-focused learning*, entails deliberate vocabulary study, including memorization, word lists, and morphological analysis. This strand incorporates explicit instruction, such as teaching word roots, collocations, and usage patterns (Schmitt, 2008).

The fourth strand, *fluency development*, focuses on automating vocabulary use through repetitive practice. This strand bridges the gap between knowing a word and using it effortlessly in real-time communication (Schmitt, 2010).

Perception

In the context of English language teaching and learning, students are required to develop proficiency in four core linguistic skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing, in addition to mastering grammar and vocabulary. Beyond technical competencies, psychological factors play a crucial role in foreign language acquisition, as they primarily concern the cognitive and affective dimensions of both learners and educators. Among these psychological variables, perception holds significant importance. The Oxford Dictionary (2007) defines perception as the cognitive process through which an individual interprets and assigns meaning to stimuli or objects in their environment. It encompasses the innate mechanisms of receiving, filtering, and structuring information within the mind, serving as a means of comprehending external events and forming conscious awareness of both internal and external realities. Rahmatullah (2014) posits that perception is shaped by two principal determinants: internal and external factors. Internal factors pertain to intrinsic individual characteristics, such as physiological state, personal interests, psychological needs, and prior experiences. Conversely, external factors involve environmental influences. Furthermore, Robbins (2003) categorizes perception into two distinct types: positive and negative, each influencing an individual's interpretation and response to linguistic input differently.

Informal Learning

Formal language learning is characterized by a systematic and intentional instructional approach, typically structured and facilitated by an educator within a classroom setting, with clearly defined objectives. In contrast, informal learning occurs spontaneously in unstructured environments, outside formal educational frameworks. This type of learning emerges from learners' participation in activities not explicitly designed for educational purposes but rather as part of daily life, often closely associated with experiential knowledge. Informal learning, the focus of this study, involves the utilization of resources that are not institutionally affiliated or intended for pedagogical use (Sockett, 2014). Additionally, informal learning has been shown to positively influence learners' cognitive development, with this study further highlighting its significant advantages. For instance, such learning methods enhance students' preparedness for second-language communication (Lee & Djati, 2019) and contribute to increased self-confidence (Lai et al., 2015).

YouTube as Learning Media

Online learning is a new approach that utilizes internet-connected smartphones in the educational process (Sadikin et al., 2020). Internet-based learning has a positive impact on education because it not only improves the skills and abilities, but is also effective in fostering a passion for learning. One of the online media that widely used to help language learners to improving their proficiency in particular language is YouTube. YouTube is an easy-to-use, on-demand video streaming website with a wide variety of resources. It offers a wide variety of videos that can be used as language learning materials. YouTube videos in English learning contexts also provide a wide area of independent learning for students, such as not being dependent on a setting like at school alone, time that is not limited by class hours, and the provision of knowledge based on students' interests and curiosity.

Recent research shows that YouTube is an effective platform for improving students' English vocabulary acquisition. A study by Alobaid (2020) found that YouTube

videos offer authentic learning contexts through content such as short films, podcasts, and interactive tutorials, making it easier for students to understand vocabulary in real-life situations. The study involved high school students who used YouTube videos for 8 weeks, and the results showed significant improvements in vocabulary recognition and usage, primarily due to repetition and dynamic visualizations. Furthermore, research by Kurniawan & Rahmawati (2022) revealed that YouTube's interactive features, such as closed captions and playback speed control, help students adjust their learning pace to suit their abilities. In the study, students who utilized these features were able to retain 25% more vocabulary than those using traditional methods. Meanwhile, recent research by Chen & Li (2023) emphasized the role of YouTube's recommendation algorithm in personalizing learning content, where students who regularly watch, English videos are exposed to a more diverse vocabulary that is relevant to their interests. These three studies highlight that the combination of audiovisuals, interactivity, and personalization makes YouTube a powerful tool for vocabulary learning. Thus, YouTube becomes not only a source of entertainment but also an adaptive learning medium that positively impacts students' English language development. Based on the explanation above regarding several review studies that discuss the use of audio-visual based media in language learning and implementation in the classroom that shows things that can improve skills in language abilities. The difference between the above research and this research is in terms of media use, in this case the researcher focuses students' perception on the use of the YouTube platform as an informal learning medium for students. The researcher also wants to research content that can attract the interest of learners through this YouTube platform. Finally, the researcher also wants to know the problems that may occur in the experience of students using the YouTube platform as an informal learning media. In conducting this research, researcher formulating several questions to this research topic. The research question is stated as follows:

1. How do students perceive the use of YouTube as informal learning media to improve their English vocabulary?

2. What problems do learners often encounter when learning English vocabulary using YouTube to improve their English vocabulary?

METHODS

The research design used in this research is qualitative, which aims to obtain important information about a phenomenon. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, particularly through description and use of words. Creswell (2017) stated that this method is suitable for this research regarding the in-depth description of a phenomenon and requires significant effort, such as asking questions and processes, collecting specific participant data, inductively analyzing data from specific themes to broader themes, and interpreting data meaning.

Supported by Denzin & Lincoln (2005) a method that provides an interpretive focus opening to phenomena in their natural environment with the aim of providing complete coverage of the experiences or perspectives related to the object of research through analysis and interpretation. This research methods are used to examine the research questions that researchers want to find answers to and this method is best at verbally describing how participants in a study perceive and interpret various aspects of their environment. The purpose of this research is to analyse students' perceptions of informal learning using YouTube video on their vocabulary mastery.

Participants

The data collected came from respondents in this study. The researcher investigated students' perceptions of informal English learning using YouTube digital media to improve their English vocabulary. In this study, researchers conducted research on students majoring English in the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants in this study, this researcher met the desired criteria, namely that participants were students study English as a foreign language (EFL). In this study, researchers also determined participants in this study

who had general knowledge about YouTube and were users of
the YouTube platform.

Instruments

According to Sugiyono (2017) the main instrument in
qualitative research is the researcher himself in and
questionnaire is a tool that has a different function from the
questionnaire in quantitative research. The instrument of this
research using questionnaire. An open-ended questionnaire
was used in this research. Open-ended questionnaire allows for
more detailed, narrative responses. In qualitative research,
questionnaires can serve as valuable data collection tools when
designed with open-ended questions to capture rich
descriptive insights into participants' experiences,
perceptions, and attitudes (Bryman, 2016). This differs from
other data collection techniques and emphasizes depth over
breadth, using probing questions to dig deeper into the
information provided by participants and obtain information
related to the phenomenon or focus of the research. According
to Patton (2015), the effectiveness of qualitative
questionnaires depends on careful construction—avoiding
leading questions, ensuring clarity, and providing space for
unstructured responses—while Silverman (2020) highlights
the importance of pilot testing to refine questions and assess
interpretability. The questionnaire also contains a list of
questions related to the respondent's personality or their
relevance to the research. Examples include name, class, etc.

Data Collection

According to Arikunto (2013), data are written facts
obtained related to a phenomenon that researchers use to
organize their research activities. In this study, data was
collected using a questionnaire as a data collection tool.
According to Sugiyono (2013), data collection is one of the
steps that must be taken in research because the main goal of
research is to obtain data. Researchers collected data using an
open-ended questionnaire to determine students' perceptions
of informal learning using YouTube to improve English
vocabulary and problems during their learning. Researchers

used an open-ended questionnaire to study students' informal learning habits on YouTube. Students were given a 10-question questionnaire via an online Google Form. This questionnaire used open-ended questions to uncover issues more openly and based on their experiences; participants were asked to share their opinions and ideas.

Data Analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), qualitative data analysis is a dynamic process that aims to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes in data. The Thematic Analysis approach emphasizes the importance of in-depth understanding of the data. In data analysis, there are six main stages: familiarization with the data, initial coding, theme search, theme review, defining themes, and report production. This analysis is flexible and realistic. Braun and Clarke emphasize that qualitative analysis is not merely a description of data, but an effort to produce a meaningful understanding of the phenomena being studied, by paying attention to the social context and subjectivity of participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
RESULT

This study aimed to determine students' perceptions of using YouTube as an informal learning media to improve English vocabulary. A 10-question open-ended questionnaire was administered to several English language students at Universitas Negeri Semarang. The data collected and obtained from 18 respondents in this study. Google Form Questionnaire was administered to conduct this research. As previously mentioned, this study was conducted to answer the following research questions: What are students' perceptions of using YouTube as an informal learning medium to improve English vocabulary? And the problem they often encounter in the process. The following is the questionnaire data obtained from respondents and answers can be seen in the following explanation:

1. **Students' impressions regarding the use of the YouTube platform as an informal medium for learning**

English vocabulary

a. *Perceived of Ease of Use*

Based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to 18 respondents, majority of respondents provided input that the use of YouTube as an informal learning medium was considered useful and quite effective. All respondents considered YouTube easy to use in their vocabulary learning. The majority of respondents (17 out of 18 respondents) gave an assessment regarding the access of using YouTube as their English learning medium. The majority of assessments were regarding the accessibility of the YouTube platform (9 out of 18 respondents). Respondents mentioned in the questionnaire regarding the use of YouTube as a medium for learning English based on several keywords such as easy to access (4 respondents), free (3 respondents) and available at any time (2 respondents).

"Ease of access and familiarity. I use YouTube quite frequently, thus it is easy for me to use it, especially to learn something when necessary, including improving my English vocabulary." (Respondent 18)

"Because it's easy to access and free content. I can learn vocabulary from real-life conversations, movies, or even educational channels at any time." (Respondent 11)

"I choose YouTube because it's easy to use and there's so much fun content to learn from." (Respondent 2)

"Easy to access and more importantly it is free. It also gives me entertainment while learning English." (Respondent 1)

The results of the questionnaire given to respondents showed that some respondents believed that content variety was what made YouTube effective for their English learning, particularly for improving vocabulary. Respondents who provided this assessment mentioned content variety,

informative content, and unlimited content on YouTube. The variety of English content that was considered able to improve English vocabulary (6 out of 18 respondents).

"I learned vocabulary using videos that are vlogs, tutorials, gameplay, or teaching videos." (Respondent 13)

"Through YouTube, I can enhance my vocabulary mastery by watching various videos." (Respondent 4)

"The use of YouTube is more effective than using conventional media because there are various video content and the content produced is in the form of informative videos so that we can not only read or listen but we can also see examples and better exposure." (Respondent 3)

"When I used YouTube as my media to learn English. I can listen song or watch movie or vlog which have a lot of vocabulary and beside of that there are more entertaining and interesting" (Respondent 14)

The features on YouTube also make it easier for respondents to access YouTube for informal learning purposes and have an impact on improving respondents' English vocabulary. Based on the data obtained from the research questionnaire, several findings were found regarding the participants' perceptions of ease of use. The data also revealed that participants found YouTube easy to use as an informal learning medium and found it helpful in improving their English vocabulary. Majority of respondents stated that several features on YouTube helped them in their informal learning to improve their English vocabulary. The most frequently mentioned useful features were subtitles, which help understand pronunciation and spelling. Comments, which provide additional examples of vocabulary usage. Visual or content context, which provide context and practice directly from English speakers. Replays, which provide repeated understanding.

"Subtitles usually contain new vocabularies based on the theme of the video so it is suitable for students who want to learn new vocabulary." (Respondent 13)

"Subtitles are the most helpful feature because I can see how words are spelled and pronounced at the same time." (Respondent 11)

"Comment sections. Because there are translation features that can help you in case there are some words that you do not even know." (Respondent 9)

Subtitles, majority of respondents rely on subtitles and the comments section on the YouTube platform to understand pronunciation and spelling directly, learn vocabulary, and see examples of vocabulary usage. Visual or content context and Replays: Some respondents. Several respondents also mentioned the convenience of learning vocabulary using YouTube, not just one method. Some respondents mentioned that they improved their vocabulary through two features at once.

"I find subtitles very helpful because they let me read the words while listening, which makes it easier to understand and remember. The comment section is also useful because sometimes people explain words or give examples in a fun and simple way." (Respondent 2)

b. Perceived Usefulness

Perceived ease of use can influence the perceived usefulness of technology, in this case, using YouTube as a medium for informal English learning. The ease of access and variety of English-language content on YouTube were reasons cited by several respondents as to why they use YouTube as a learning medium to improve their English vocabulary. Respondents gave the response of content variation as one of the three main responses (besides easy to access, free and available at any time) with 6 out of 18 respondents giving a

response regarding this. The researchers found that content variation influences the usefulness of YouTube as a medium for learning English vocabulary for students. Students responded that several types of video content on YouTube were useful for improving their English vocabulary. Respondents expressed their perceptions of the usefulness of using YouTube as an informal learning medium outside of the classroom setting or with traditional methods. The majority of respondents (16 out of 18 respondents) responded that using YouTube could be more effective than conventional methods.

"Learning vocabulary through YouTube feels more engaging. With textbooks, I sometimes get bored, but with YouTube, I hear how words are used naturally by native speakers. It helps me remember words better and understand the context." (Respondent 11)

"When I learn English using textbook it's make me bored. But it's different when I used YouTube as my media to learn English. I can listen song or watch movie or vlog which have a lot of vocabulary and beside of that there are more entertaining and interesting" (Respondent 14)

"I think it's more fun and exciting to learn from YouTube than traditional methods." (Respondent 6)

Several respondents also specifically stated that the reason for using YouTube as a medium for learning English vocabulary was because of the actual use of the language. Several of these respondents explained that using YouTube as a learning medium was influenced by native speakers and real-life contexts.

"YouTube feels different from traditional methods which tend to involve a lot of reading, YouTube's methods vary widely and tend to encourage practice." (Respondent 8)

"For me, learning through YouTube offers something that

traditional method doesn't that is knowing how a word is pronounced." (Respondent 12)

"From YouTube, I get to hear how people actually speak, and I learn new words from real convos. It's easier for me to remember the words and the pronunciation." (Respondent 2)

Most respondents considered learning through YouTube more engaging and effective than traditional methods like textbooks or formal classes. Two respondents stated that YouTube provides contextual learning through audio-visuals, which helps vocabulary comprehension and retention. However, several respondents still considered textbooks more effective for vocabulary memorization.

Furthermore, research respondents provided factors that participants considered when choosing YouTube videos as an informal learning medium to improve their understanding of English vocabulary. Some findings were related to interest, the suitability of topics or materials, and certain preferences, such as the duration of content related to English learning, in this case aiming to improve English vocabulary. The majority of respondents (10 out of 18 respondents) responded regarding English content based on their interest as the main factor in choosing content that they used as learning material to improve English vocabulary.

"I choose videos that are interesting to watch, the factor that determines whether a video is interesting or not is the topic of the video." (Respondent 16)

"I usually choose interviews, podcasts, and review videos to increase my English vocab. Because with these videos, I learned many new terms in English that I never knew before." (Respondent 7)

"I usually choose for channels that are made for English learners or videos with topics that I'm interested in, like travel

or lifestyles." (Respondent 11)

Another factor influencing respondents in choosing English-language YouTube content to improve their English vocabulary is its relevance to their desired topic. Five out of 18 respondents responded to this choice.

"Depends on the context of the material, I usually used explanation videos that have many useful vocabulary (for example live commentary, tutorial videos)." (Respondent 6)

"Topic and relevancy. I select videos based on those two criteria. For example, if I would like to learn about daily conversation vocabulary, then I look up conversation videos…" (Respondent 18)

"I select YouTube videos based on relevance to the topic I am studying." (Respondent 4)

There were also several respondents who gave specific preferences regarding the YouTube content they chose as learning material to improve their English vocabulary informally.

"Usually, I select the type of video that contains conversation or monologs. The factor that I considered is that the video must have conversation." (Respondent 13)

"I usually prefer the one with an American accent over the British one." (Respondent 5)

"By looking at the material and video duration that suits the material you want to learn, for example vocabulary." (Respondent 10)

Another research finding, based on data from the questionnaire, was the type of content respondents chose as

useful for improving their English vocabulary. Some common responses regarding the types of content respondents chose for learning English vocabulary included vlogs, video tutorials, films, podcasts, documentaries, reviews, and games.

"The types of videos that I found helpful are vlogs and tutorials. It is because that videos contain many vocabularies." (Respondent 13)

"I find vlogs and podcasts. These types of videos show how vocabulary is used in real situations, which helps me learn faster and more naturally." (Respondent 11)

"I found podcast as the most helpful and interesting for learning English words." (Respondent 4)

"Gaming channel is the most helpful for me personally. Since I love gaming and English it helps me understand better in the vocabulary." (Respondent 1)

The majority of respondents considered that content such as daily vlogs helped them improve their English vocabulary because they were considered to involve a lot of conversation and native speakers. 6 out of 18 respondents. The rest were evenly distributed, such as respondents who rated podcasts (3 respondents), games (2 respondents), tutorials (2 respondents), and several other respondents (video documentation, reviews).

c. Attitude Towards Learning

The results of the questionnaire given to respondents showed that the general perception of YouTube as a learning tool was positive. Majority of respondents (16 out of 18) stated that YouTube was effective and enjoyable for learning English vocabulary informally. Several respondents also explained why they use this platform as a medium for learning and improving their English vocabulary.

"YouTube can be a great tool to learn vocabulary. YouTube is actually one of my main sources of knowledge in

learning English, especially in vocabulary." (Respondent 1)

"I feel that using YouTube to learn English vocabulary is very effective." (Respondent 2)

"Fun and very helpful, learning English through YouTube makes it easier for me to add new vocabulary, many YouTube channels provide several learning models, including through film dialogues, song lyrics, speeches, and debate videos." (Respondent 8)

Several respondents stated that the YouTube platform effective in improving their vocabulary comprehension. It indicates students' attitudes toward using technology as one of their learning resources. However, several respondents also showed different perceptions, such as the response from one respondent who stated neutral and one respondent answered that the use of YouTube as an informal learning medium is still lacking. However, several respondents also showed different perceptions, such as the response from one respondent who stated that they still use the YouTube platform in their daily activities in a context other than education.

"I feel neutral. I see YouTube as an entertainment platform, not education. I believe YouTube is simply a supplementary tool when it comes to learning ..." (Respondent 18)

Most respondents in this study considered YouTube a useful medium for their informal learning. YouTube is considered a useful platform because it provides authentic content. The use of YouTube as a medium for informal English vocabulary learning outside of classroom settings and conventional methods is demonstrated by data from questionnaires distributed by researchers to respondents. The responses obtained from this questionnaire were that many respondents perceived learning through YouTube as helpful for students. The majority of respondents (8 out of 15)

considered informal vocabulary learning through YouTube to be more interesting and enjoyable, and learning was flexible. Although there was one respondent who considered books to still be a medium for improving English vocabulary, even though informally.

"In my opinion, books are still the best tools. Based on my experience, I remember more vocabulary when I hone my English vocabulary skills when using books." (Respondent 7)

d. *Behavioural Intention to Use*

Based on data obtained by researchers regarding behaviour that shows that it is useful and quite effective, as seen by the majority respondents (16 out of 18 respondents) planning to continue using YouTube as a learning medium to improve their English vocabulary. Most respondents plan to continue using YouTube due to its flexibility and variety of content. However, some respondents prefer not to rely on it as their primary source for learning English vocabulary. Behaviour in using a technology is influenced by attitudes towards using a technology, in this case informal use of YouTube.

"Definitely. Without being asked, I'll always choose YouTube over anything to improve my English skill especially in vocabulary." (Respondent 1)

"Yes, I plan to continue using YouTube because it's a fun and flexible way to learn new words. It helps me improve not just my vocabulary, but also another skill." (Respondent 2)

"Yes, I plan to continue using YouTube to improve my English vocabulary because it offers a wide variety of educational content that is easy to access and understand. The videos are engaging, and features like subtitles and real-life examples help me learn and remember new words more effectively." (Respondent 3)

"Yes, I will continue to use YouTube as a learning medium to improve my English vocabulary, because the application is very easy, the learning is varied, and it is free." (Respondent 8)

"Personally, no. I mainly use YouTube for entertainment. Learning from it, whether it is vocabulary or whatever, is something that I do not actively do, unless it is obligatory (e.g., homework, or assignment)." (Respondent 18)

In conclusion of the respondent stated: Yes: 16 respondents plan to continue using YouTube due to its flexibility and enjoyment. No: 1 respondent does not plan to continue, as they believe there are other free platforms that are more viable options. Neutral: 2 respondents may use YouTube only as a small supplement to books, which remain their primary source in learning vocabulary informally.

2. YouTube in Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, and the Nation's Four Strands (2007) provides a comprehensive framework for achieving this through four main components: meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning, and fluency development. Based on data obtained by researchers by asking respondents (N=18) to answer questions regarding the use of YouTube as their informal learning media to improve their English vocabulary.

a. Meaning-focused input

Students acquire new vocabulary through exposure and receptive activities in the form of listening and reading that are oriented towards understanding meaning, with the main focus on processing the information conveyed. Data obtained from research respondents show that YouTube is used as an informal learning medium for respondents with the aim of improving their English vocabulary skills. Respondents assessed that they use the YouTube platform as a means of information to seek new literacy by involving vocabulary understanding through meaningful YouTube exposure, such as reading or listening.

"I find vocabulary-focused YouTube videos most helpful for learning new English words, especially those that explain the meaning, pronunciation, and example sentences. Channels that teach words based on themes make it easier to remember and use them in context. I also like videos that include visuals, subtitles, and repetition because they help me understand and memorize new words more effectively." (Respondent 3)

Furthermore, respondents emphasized that their vocabulary learning on YouTube was influenced by their interest in the content they consumed. The majority of respondents considered vlogs (7 out of 18) to make it easier for them to remember new English words. Several respondents also responded based on their interests, such as tutorial videos and films.

"It helps me remember new words by helping me with helpful tips in the tutorial videos." (Respondent 6)

"Learning is interspersed with singing together, so learning is more enjoyable." (Respondent 10)

"Ted Talk is helpful but it gets boring because of the formality, so I sometimes listen to horror story telling. It mostly uses daily conversation which is easier to understand, no technical terms and most important is giving a list of idioms/terms that explain things in everyday life." (Respondent 12)

One respondent provided an assessment by highlighting that learning through YouTube to provide understanding of new vocabulary through listening and reading can be aided by the help of captions in videos. Specifically, the respondent explained that captions help with notes that proper with what native speakers say in their YouTube content.

"Using YouTube as learning tool means that we learn

through audio-visual way. When it comes to vocabulary specifically, YouTube has the Closed Caption setting so that what the speaker is saying is also written in the form of subtitle on the video. Thus, this can help with improving vocabulary. As long as the CC is in line with what the speaker is saying, learning English words are very possible." (Respondent 18)

b. Meaning-focused output

Refers to students acquire new vocabulary through use and it is a learning process that centers on the production of spoken and written language with primary emphasis on conveying meaning and exchanging ideas, rather than on mastering specific linguistic forms. Based on the data obtained by the researcher through the research questionnaire, it was found that the respondents applied English vocabulary learning through the use of YouTube as a learning medium that they applied in real-life or class situations (e.g., speaking, writing). Majority of respondents (10 of 18 respondents) assessed that the use of YouTube as their informal learning medium to improve their English vocabulary was applied speaking and writing.

"I try to use new words in conversations with my friends." (Respondent 11)

"It can be practiced in English class with friends, because sometimes in English subjects you are required to speak English both to friends and to the teacher." (Respondent 10)

"By making notes and practicing continuously, it will make it easier for me to apply new vocabulary both in speaking and writing." (Respondent 4)

"Maybe I make a list of vocabulary in a notebook, then I memorise and study the notes and try to apply them when I communicate with others." (Respondent 7)

"Usually, I found vocabularies that suitable for some

themes in writing and I applied it." (Respondent 13)

c. Fluency Development

Based on the data obtained by the researcher through the research questionnaire, it was found that the respondents applied English vocabulary learning through the use of YouTube as a learning medium that they applied in real-life or class situations (e.g., speaking, writing, exams). All respondents (N=18) assessed that the use of YouTube as their informal learning medium to improve their English vocabulary was applied in real situations. The majority of respondents (11 out of 18 respondents) applied English vocabulary learning through YouTube in everyday contexts especially in classroom settings.

"I will apply in my daily conversation but I'll do with my friends who also learn English or sometimes in front of mirror and write journaling." (Respondent 14)

Furthermore, based on the data obtained by the researcher, several respondents even applied the vocabulary learning results they obtained through YouTube media outside the classroom setting. And specifically, they applied them according to their activities outside the classroom setting to the application of their informal learning results.

"In practicing speaking, I prefer playing a game that is multiplayer online which I can practice my English speaking skill such as PUBGM or Valorant." (Respondent 1)

"I often apply the vocabulary I have just learned on social media." (Respondent 16)

"Mostly I used the vocabulary learn from YouTube in social media to communicate or just to vent out my frustration." (Respondent 12)

"I apply them when I remember them. For example, if I learned a new idiom, I may try to use it when I find the

situation." (Respondent 18)

d. Language-focused Learning

Related to direct vocabulary learning, including techniques such as memorization or morphological analysis. Based on data obtained by researchers through questionnaires, the majority of respondents assessed that learning English vocabulary through YouTube was created through subtitles. In addition, within the features available on YouTube, several respondents also assessed that the comments column was also a feature that helped them increase their English vocabulary. Features that provide a lot of vocabulary in them, such as these two features, are considered capable of helping respondents to improve their English vocabulary. helping to understand pronunciation and spelling. Comments, providing additional examples of vocabulary usage.

"Subtitles is kind of helpful for the first time learning English. You'll know what words the speaker said exactly. That will also improve your listening skill. When you feel you're getting better, you should turn off the subtitle feature it'll help you improve multiple times." (Respondent 1)

"I find subtitles most helpful because they let me read and hear new words at the same time. The comment section is also useful for seeing how others use the vocabulary in real situations." (Respondent 3)

"Subtitles, help me know how a word is written." (Respondent 12)

"Comment section is also good for understanding how foreigners write something, how they use the vocabularies, and so on." (Respondent 18)

Furthermore, majority of the respondent (8 of 18 respondents) stated that they applied what they learned from the materials they obtained from YouTube as their informal learning media to real life and in the context of English lessons

in class.

"I apply the vocabulary I learn from YouTube by using it in speaking during conversations or presentations, in writing essays or assignments, and when answering questions in exams." (Respondent 3)

"I use the vocabulary I learn from YouTube when I speak English in class or with friends. I also try to include the new words in my writing tasks and exams to help me remember them better." (Respondent 2)

3. Obstacles encountered by students in using YouTube as an informal learning medium for English vocabulary

Based on data obtained by researchers who aimed to identify the shortcomings or problems that participants frequently encountered in using YouTube as an informal medium to improve English vocabulary, ranging from practical and technical obstacles. Researchers found that content quality, disruptions, internet requirements, and learning structure were some of the obstacles encountered by participants. Each respondent had a different assessment of the obstacles they encountered. Some respondents gave the assessment that the variety of content that should make things easier for them was also found to be a shortcoming faced by respondents regarding content related to learning English vocabulary.

"With so many videos available, it can be challenging to find high-quality content that's relevant and accurate. Some videos may contain incorrect information, poor pronunciation, or inadequate explanation." (Respondent 4)

"One shortcoming of YouTube as an informal learning medium is that not all content is accurate or well-explained, which can lead to misunderstandings. Also, some videos focus more on entertainment than education, so it's easy to get distracted. Lastly, there's often no structured learning path,

making it harder to track progress or build vocabulary step by step." (Respondent 3)

"Because YouTube is a general platform and not just focused on English lessons." (Respondent 7)

Several respondents also assessed the distractions they faced when using YouTube as a learning medium. Advertisements and inappropriate slang made it difficult for respondents to understand new vocabulary. Furthermore, there were no subtitles on some videos they considered interesting as learning materials.

"Some creators use slang or incorrect grammar, which can confuse learners. Also, it's easy to get distracted and watch unrelated videos." (Respondent 11)

"The downside is that it's distracting from other content or recommendations. Also, the ads every few minutes can disrupt my focus and even put me in a bad mood." (Respondent 8)

".... not all videos use correct grammar or proper vocabulary, especially in casual or slang-heavy content. It's so easy to get distracted by unrelated videos." (Respondent 2)

Two respondents provided assessments covering the method of using YouTube as a learning medium. Some content was deemed difficult to use as a learning method or criticized the lack of learning structure, which can make it difficult for beginners to follow the progress systematically and seemed similar to existing classroom setting learning media. Some of respondents assessed the use of YouTube as a learning medium technically regarding internet access. Although available at any time, access to YouTube still requires internet access or respondents noted access issues without a connection.

"I think it's a bit complicated to applied it to children." (Respondent 6)

"There are still learning videos that are too rigid like in class but are only packaged as YouTube videos, without any interactive interaction between the video creator and the audience." (Respondent 10)

"Internet connection, is the BIGGEST downside of YouTube, which is understandable since it operates on the Internet. So, when there is no internet connection, you cannot use YouTube at all. It is practically useless, unless you have downloaded the videos that you want to watch." (Respondent 18)

"...sometimes the storage data takes up most of my internal storage." (Respondent 9)

On the other hand, there were respondents who gave an assessment that the use of YouTube was very good in its application, but only in terms of user preferences should they determine the content as a medium for learning English, especially vocabulary.

"The downside of YouTube is almost none. One of the concerns for me is a lot of people can make a content whether it is educating or not. So choose the content wisely." (Respondent 1)

DISCUSSION

The perception of using YouTube as an informal learning medium to improve students' English vocabulary skills based on this study is positive. The results of the data obtained by researchers through an open questionnaire indicate that students consider the use of YouTube quite effective. The majority of students provided answers indicating that this platform is useful and effective as a medium to improve their English vocabulary skills. Several things highlighted by

students regarding the use of YouTube are because of its accessibility and perceived ability to increase the desire to learn from within. Learning through online media can increase student motivation by using an interesting and interactive approach (Rais, M. et al.). The majority of respondents in this study rated YouTube as an informal learning medium for vocabulary development positively. A majority of respondents (88%) considered using the YouTube platform as a learning medium useful and effective. Some of the reasons cited were ease of access and a variety of content that could be tailored to students' interests as learning materials. 9 out of 18 respondent cited ease of access as the primary reason for choosing YouTube. This finding is supported by research by Chen et al. (2022) found that the accessibility of YouTube content increases students' intrinsic motivation through self-directed learning. In their study, 78% of Indonesian students reported an increase in vocabulary learning frequency after switching to YouTube due to its free cost and the ability to avoid classroom constraints (Chen et al., 2022, p.15). Research by Müller et al. (2021) demonstrated that videos with subtitles increased vocabulary retention by 40% compared to audio-only methods. This aligns with Lee's (2023) showed that vocabulary learned through contextual content (e.g., vlogs, films) has a 35% higher recall rate in a practical speaking test.

The majority of respondents chose YouTube content as a medium for learning English vocabulary based on the interests and preferences of each respondent. These preferences confirm the Interest-Driven Learning theory (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). According to Alm (2020), content that aligns with interests increases engagement and reduces cognitive load. Data shows that 88% of respondents (16 people) found it easier to remember vocabulary when learning via YouTube compared to traditional methods due to the entertainment factor (edutainment).

As many as 65% respondents (11 out of 18 respondents) applied English vocabulary learning through YouTube in everyday contexts. Respondents use the vocabulary they get from learning via YouTube for everyday uses such as talking, playing games, writing and social media. This reinforces the findings of Kohnke et al. (2023) that exposure to vocabulary in

authentic input (YouTube) improves spoken/written output because learners absorb collocations and natural language registers.

Despite its effectiveness, respondents identified limitations of YouTube as an informal media. Three main weaknesses are Inaccurate Content: Respondents 4 and 3 highlighted contents with "incorrect grammar" or "slang-heavy" content that could potentially be misleading. Lee's (2023) study found that 22% of English learning videos on YouTube contain lexical/grammatical errors. Distractions and Advertisements, some respondents complained about advertisements that "disrupt focus." Chen et al.'s research (2022) demonstrated that advertising distractions reduce effective learning duration by up to 28%. Internet Dependence, some respondents considered that easy access to YouTube still requires internet access, which is an obligation of digital media platforms. Some respondents also emphasized YouTube as a supplementary tool, not a primary resource and the learning structure is too flexible, making it difficult to measure the extent to which students have gained understanding.. Kurniawan & Rahmawati (2021) added that the lack of a structured learning path on YouTube makes it difficult for beginners to develop their own curriculum.

CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents (N=18) held a positive perception of YouTube as an instructional medium within the program context. A subset of respondents indicated a preference for other available features on the platform. Furthermore, YouTube's high accessibility and cost-free nature emerged as primary motivators for its use, with 13 respondents reporting its efficacy in aiding pronunciation and comprehension. Respondents also emphasized YouTube's pedagogical strength in presenting lexical items within authentic contexts (e.g., dialogues in vlogs, films, or games), contrasting this favourably with traditional methods perceived as comparatively rigid. Conversely, the study identified several obstacles inherent in informal

vocabulary learning via YouTube. Principal challenges included variable content quality, potentially encompassing grammatical inaccuracies, mispronunciations, or erroneous subtitle translations. Additionally, the platform's digital nature necessitates infrastructural prerequisites, namely stable internet connectivity and sufficient storage capacity. Nevertheless, some respondents suggested that such technical constraints could be mitigated through strategies like pre-downloading desired content.

REFERENCES

Alm, A. (2020**).** *Language Learning with YouTube: A Corpus-Driven Approach*. Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 23(3), 1–14.

Alobaid, A. (2020). *The Impact of YouTube on Vocabulary Acquisition*. Journal of Educational Technology.

Arikunto, S. (2013). Prosedur penelitian suatu pendekatan praktik. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Azis, N., Pribadi, G., & Nurcahya, M. S. (2020). Analisa dan Perancangan Aplikasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Dasar Berbasis Android. Jurnal IKRA-ITH Informatika.

Bahrani, T., Tam, S. S., & Zuraidah, M. D. (2014). Authentic Language Input Through Audiovisual Technology and Second Language Acquisition. *SAGE Open*, *4*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014550611

Bahtiar, M, I. (2022). Exploring English Subtitles on YouTube Video for The Enhancement of English as A Foreign Language (EFL) in Students' Listening Comprehension. (Thesis, English Education Program, State Islamic University of Kh. Achmad Siddiq Jember)

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Bryman, A. (2016). Social Research Methods (5th ed.). London: Oxford University Press.

Chen, L., & Li, M. (2023). *Personalized Learning Through YouTube's Algorithm*. International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning.

Chen, M., Li, R., & Zhang, T. (2022). Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE): A Meta-Analysis. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 35(8), 1–25.

Chun, D., & Plass, J. (1996). Effects of multimedia annotations on vocabulary acquisition. *The Modern Language Journal, 80*(2), 183-198. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1996.tb01159.x

Clark, V. L. P., Creswell, J. W., Green, D. O. N., & Shope, R. J. (2008). Mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches. *Handbook of emergent methods*, 363, 363-387.

Creswell, J. D. C. and J. W. (2017). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. *Notes and Queries*, *s4-I*(25), 577. https://doi.org/10.1093/nq/s4-I.25.577-c

Crystal, David. 2000. Language death. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. The Sage handbook of qualitative research, 1–32. Sage Publications Ltd. https://n9.cl/j968b

Guan, C., Mou, J., & Jiang, Z. (2020). Artificial intelligence innovation in education: A twenty-year data-driven historical analysis. *International Journal of Innovation Studies*, *4*(4), 134–147. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.IJIS.2020.09.001

Hwang, G.-J., Chiu, L.-Y., & Chen, C.-H. (2023). Effects of gamified multimedia on vocabulary acquisition: A meta-analysis. *Educational Technology & Society, 26*(2), 112-126.

Kohnke, L., Ting, A., & Zou, D. (2023). YouTube for Contextual Vocabulary Acquisition: An EFL Perspective. ReCALL, 35(1), 88–104.

Kurniawan, D., & Rahmawati, F. (2021). Digital Informal Learning: Indonesian Students' Practices in Enhancing English Vocabulary via YouTube. JEES (Journal of the English Educators Society), 6(2), 112–120.

Kurniawan, D., & Rahmawati, S. (2022). *Interactive Features of YouTube in Language Learning*. ELT Research Papers.

Lai, C. & Gu, M., 2011. Self-regulated out-of-class language learning with technology. Computer Assisted Language

Learning, 24, pp. 317-335

Lee, J. (2023). Authentic Input and Vocabulary Retention: A Study of YouTube-Based Learning. Language Learning & Technology, 27(1), 1–18.

Lee, J. S., & Drajati, N. A. (2019). Affective variables and informal digital learning of English: Keys to willingness to communicate in a second language. *Australasian.*

Mandasari, B., & Aminatun, D. (2020). VLOG: A TOOL TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL. *PROCEEDINGS UNIVERSITAS PAMULANG*, *1*(1). http://openjournal.unpam.ac.id/index.php/Proceedings /article/viewFile/4336/3270

Mayer, R. (2003). Elements of a science of e-learning. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 29*(3), 297-313. https://doi.org/10.2190/YJLG-09F9-XKAX-753D

Mayer, R. (2005). Cognitive theory of multimedia learning. In R. E. Mayer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511816819

Mayer, R. (2005). Introduction to multimedia learning. In R. E. Mayer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning.*New York: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511816819.004

Mayer, R. E. (2010). Applying the Science of learning to medical education. *Medical Education, 44,* 543-549. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2923.2010.03624

Mayer, R. E. (2022). *Multimedia learning* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Megaiab, M. M. a. (2014). The English Writing Competence of the Students of Indonesian Senior High School. The 2014 WEI International Academic Conference Proceedings, 2000, 187-192.

Müller, F., Ritzhaupt, A., & Kollar, I. (2021). Learning Vocabulary with Subtitled Videos: Cognitive and Affective Outcomes. Education and Information Technologies, 26(2), 1809–1831.

Nation, I. S. P. (2007). *The four strands. Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 2–13.

Nunan, D. (2007). *What is this Thing Called*

Language?. Basingstoke UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oxford English Dictionary. (2007). Learner's Pocket Dictionary 7th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Qualitative research and evaluation methods. India: SAGE Publications.

Plass, J. L., & Jones, L. C. (2022). Multimedia learning in second language acquisition. *Language Learning & Technology, 26*(1), 1-22.

Rahmatullah. (2014). *Persepsi Mahasiswa terhadap Pengguna Produk Helm Merek GM (Studi Kasus pada Mahasiswa Jurusan Administrasi Bisnis)*. Palembang: Polsri.

Rais, M. et al. (2024). The Influence of Digital Media Use on Student Learning Motivation in School Environments. JUPENJI: Indonesian Journal of Education. Vol. 3 No. 4 (2024).
https://doi.org/10.57218/jupenji.Vol3.Iss4.1332

Rezkia, S. M. (2020). Langkah-Langkah Menggunakan Teknik Data Kualitatif. *Diambil kembali dari https://www. dqlab. id/data-analisis-pahami-teknik-pengumpulan-data*.

Robbin, S. P. (2003). Perilaku Organisasi. Jakarta: PT. Indeks Kelompok Gramedia.

Robins, R. H., & Crystal, D. (2021). language. Encyclopedia Britannica.

Sadikin, A., & Hamidah, A. (2020). Pembelajaran Daring di Tengah Wabah Covid-19. Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Biologi, 6(2), 214–224.

Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research, 12*(3), 329–363.

Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Silverman, D. (2020). Qualitative research (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Sockett, G. (2014). The online informal learning of English. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan

Sugiyono. (2013). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D. Bandung: Alfabeta., 2013.

Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of

comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 235–253). Newbury House.

Venkatesh, V., & Davis, F. D. (2000). A theoretical extension of the technology acceptance model: Four longitudinal field studies. *Management Science, 46*(2), 186–204.

Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2017). *How Vocabulary Is Learned*. Oxford University Press.

Wu, C. P. (2024). Enhancing Vocabulary Proficiency and Self-Directed Learning through YouTube: A Study in an EFL Context. English Language Teaching. 17. 109-109. 10.5539/elt.v17n7p109.

Yuniarti, & Trisnawati, I. K. (2018). *Peningkatan kemampuan mencatat (note taking) teks bahasa Inggris dengan format cornell*. Visipena Journal, 9(2), 247–260. https://doi.org/10.46244/visipena.v9i2.457