

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF VOCABULARY LEARNING THROUGH ENGLISH-LANGUAGE YOUTUBE CONTENT

Grand Stef Yan Claudio^{1*}, Muhammad Subhan Fikri², Erma Sujiyani³, Julianthi Zefana Silitonga⁴

¹grandclaudio201@gmail.com, ²muhammadsubhanfikri@fkip.upr.ac.id, ³esyani02@gmail.com,

⁴zefanasilitonga@gmail.com

UNIVERSITAS PALANGKA RAYA

Received: May 19, 2026; Accepted: June 25, 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examined students' perceptions of English vocabulary learning through English YouTube content among seventh-semester students of the English Language Education Study Program at the University of Palangka Raya. The study employed a mixed-methods research design with an exploratory sequential approach. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires administered to 62 students, while qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with 14 selected participants. The results showed that most students had positive perceptions of using YouTube for vocabulary learning. YouTube was perceived to support vocabulary development, pronunciation improvement, and contextual understanding through authentic audiovisual input. Features such as subtitles, playback speed control, and easy accessibility were found to enhance flexible and self-directed learning. However, several challenges were also identified, such as advertisements, entertainment video recommendations, unstable internet connections, and difficulty understanding certain accents. The study concluded that YouTube can serve as an effective supportive learning medium for vocabulary learning if supported by appropriate learning strategies and self-regulation. These findings contribute to the development of technology-integrated language learning practices in EFL contexts.

Keywords: English YouTube Content, Learning Media, Students' Perception, Vocabulary Learning

A. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, English proficiency has become an essential competence for individuals in academic, professional, and global communication contexts. For students, especially those studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL), mastering English is not only a curricular requirement but also a key factor for academic success and future career opportunities. English language learning involves the development of four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are interconnected and mutually supportive in the process of language acquisition (Ali, 2022). However, effective language

learning does not rely solely on the development of these four skills. Supporting components such as vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, accuracy, and cultural awareness also play a crucial role in achieving communicative competence (Al-Seghayer, 2015).

Among these components, vocabulary is widely recognised as a fundamental element in language learning. Vocabulary knowledge enables learners to understand and convey ideas, thoughts, and emotions effectively in both spoken and written communication (Abadi, 2023). In addition, vocabulary mastery contributes significantly to the development of other language skills, including reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, and writing (Sujadi & Wulandari, 2021). Vocabulary can generally be defined as the knowledge of words and their meanings (Sari et al., 2019). However, vocabulary knowledge extends beyond recognizing word forms and meanings, it also includes understanding contextual usage, collocations, grammatical patterns, and pragmatic functions. Carter and McCarthy (2013) emphasized that vocabulary represents the core of language learning because learners directly experience vocabulary growth when acquiring a new language.

Despite its importance, many learners still encounter difficulties in developing adequate vocabulary knowledge. Previous studies have reported that students often struggle to remember new words, understand meanings, and apply vocabulary appropriately in different contexts (Afidah & Machfudi, 2022; Hasan, 2024). One of the contributing factors is the use of monotonous learning media that fail to engage students actively in the vocabulary learning process. Traditional vocabulary learning activities, such as memorizing word lists without contextual exposure, may lead to boredom and low retention rates (Purwanti et al., 2022). Furthermore, the complexity of English spelling and pronunciation systems often creates additional challenges for learners, particularly because English orthography is not always consistent with its pronunciation. As a result, students may experience confusion when learning and pronouncing unfamiliar words.

In response to these challenges, educators have increasingly explored the use of digital technology to support language learning. One technological platform that has gained significant attention in recent years is YouTube. YouTube is a widely used video-sharing platform that allows users to access, create, and share various forms of multimedia content (Burgess & Green, 2018). The platform provides diverse educational resources, including tutorials, lectures, vlogs, and language learning videos. According to Miller (2009), YouTube has become one of the largest online video communities, offering users opportunities to access authentic audiovisual materials from different cultural and linguistic contexts.

In the context of language learning, YouTube offers several advantages. The platform allows learners to encounter vocabulary in authentic contexts through visual and auditory input, which can facilitate comprehension and retention. In addition, students can repeatedly watch videos, listen to native pronunciation, and observe how vocabulary is used in natural communication situations. Nofrika (2019) argues that the integration of YouTube into language learning can create a more engaging and interactive learning environment, allowing students to learn independently while exploring various types of content that match their interests. Previous studies have investigated the use of YouTube in English language learning. For example, Tahmina (2023) found that most students showed positive perceptions toward the use of YouTube as a learning medium. Students reported that watching English videos helped them learn vocabulary more effectively and increased their

motivation to engage in language learning activities. Similarly, Kaboooha & Elyas (2018) conducted a study and found that students who learned vocabulary through YouTube videos demonstrated higher vocabulary gains compared to those who used traditional learning materials. The study also indicated that YouTube-based learning could increase students' motivation and participation in classroom activities. Other studies have also highlighted the positive role of YouTube in supporting language learning. Gracella and Nur (2020), through qualitative research, reported that students perceived YouTube as an accessible and flexible learning tool that supports independent learning. Students appreciated the availability of diverse content and the ability to learn at their own pace.

Despite the growing body of research on the use of YouTube in English language learning, several critical gaps remain in the existing literature. First, most previous studies tend to focus separately on either learners' perceptions or learning outcomes, while integrated investigations using a mixed-methods approach remain limited. This restricts a more comprehensive understanding of how students perceive and experience vocabulary learning through digital media. Second, research on YouTube-based vocabulary learning has predominantly been conducted at the school level, with relatively limited attention given to university-level EFL learners, who may demonstrate different learning needs and digital learning behaviors. Third, although YouTube has been widely recognized as a valuable multimedia tool in language learning, studies that specifically examine English-language YouTube content as a medium for vocabulary development are still insufficiently explored. As a result, there is a need for more context-specific and methodologically integrative studies to address these gaps.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore students' perceptions of learning English vocabulary through English-language YouTube content. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how students perceive the use of YouTube as a vocabulary learning tool and how it influences their learning experiences. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective technology-integrated language learning strategies and provide insights for educators in utilizing digital platforms to enhance vocabulary learning.

B. METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach to obtain a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions of learning vocabulary through English-language YouTube content. Mixed-methods research integrates quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis within a single study to provide a more complete understanding of the research problem (Creswell et al., 2004). The study adopted an explanatory sequential design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to further explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. The quantitative phase aimed to identify general patterns of students' perceptions, while the qualitative phase explored students' experiences and opinions in greater depth. Accordingly, the data collection procedure was implemented in two sequential phases following this explanatory sequential design.

Participants of this study involved 62 seventh-semester English Language Education students at the University of Palangka Raya in the quantitative phase. The final number of respondents was determined based on their willingness and completeness in completing the questionnaire. Participants were selected using specific criteria: having taken English

Vocabulary and ICT courses, and regularly accessing English YouTube content. These criteria ensured that respondents had academic backgrounds and practical experience relevant to the research focus. Then, in the qualitative phase, 14 participants were purposively selected from the questionnaire respondents based on the diversity of perspectives they presented. The number of informants in the interview phase was not strictly determined from the outset, but rather followed the principle of data saturation. Interviews stopped when the information obtained reached saturation, which is when participants' answers began to repeat themselves and no longer yielded significant new themes or insights (Saunders et al., 2017). Interview participants were selected to enrich and deepen the research findings.

The research instruments used in this study consisted of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. In the quantitative phase, the researchers used a questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Each statement was designed to measure respondents' level of agreement with each statement regarding their perceptions of vocabulary learning through English-language YouTube content. Likert scales are widely used to measure students' perceptions, attitudes, and experiences because they provide structured and quantifiable response data (Kusmaryono et al., 2022). Before distribution, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability. In the validity test, all items were declared valid and suitable for use as a research instrument, as the Corrected Item-Total Correlation value was greater than 0.254. In the reliability test, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.932 reflects a very high level of internal consistency and ensures that the instrument is highly reliable and suitable for use. The validity and reliability are important because they ensure that a research instrument measures data accurately, consistently, and appropriately according to the intended research objectives (Taherdoost, 2016).

In the qualitative phase, the study used a semi-structured interview guide as an instrument to obtain more in-depth data regarding students' experiences and perceptions of using YouTube content as a medium for vocabulary learning. The semi-structured interview guide included several open-ended questions designed to explore participants' perspectives in greater depth and provided flexibility for developing follow-up questions based on participants' responses during the interview process. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to facilitate data analysis. The qualitative data were then analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes in qualitative data. The analysis process was carried out through several stages: data familiarization, data coding, theme discovery, theme review, theme naming, and interpretation of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach enabled the researchers to identify key themes related to students' experiences using YouTube as a medium for English vocabulary learning.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented based on four emerging themes related to students' perceptions of using English-language YouTube content for vocabulary learning. These themes were identified from the interview data through thematic analysis and used to explain and deepen the quantitative findings. Together, the quantitative and qualitative results provide a more comprehensive understanding of how YouTube contributes to vocabulary development, contextual language comprehension, and learning motivation. The results are presented in diagrams and tables to provide a clear picture of students' perceptions. The diagrams are

used to illustrate the overall distribution of students' perceptions, while the tables summarize specific aspects of how English-language YouTube content is perceived to influence vocabulary learning.

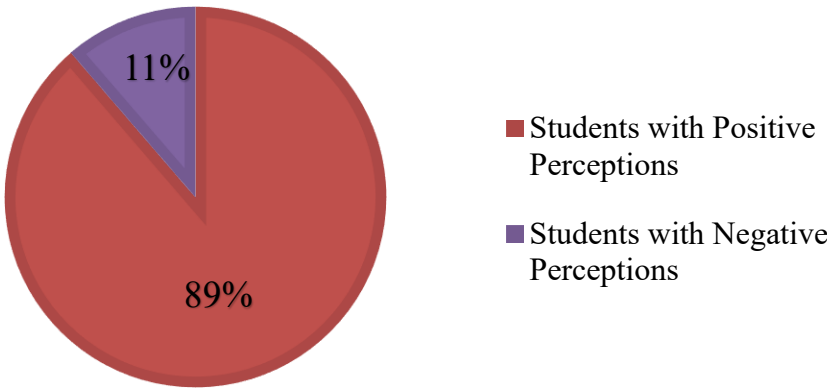


Figure 1. Overall Students Perceptions

Based on Figure 1, the overall results of the questionnaire show that the majority of students showed a positive perception towards the use of English-language YouTube content as a learning medium, covering 89% of the total respondents. On the other hand, 11% of respondents showed a negative perception. This comparison shows that the number of positive perceptions is almost eight times greater than the negative perceptions, indicating that, in general, students have a positive view towards the use of English-language YouTube content as a medium for learning English vocabulary. These overall results provide an overview of student perceptions and serve as a basis for further analysis in the following sections.

1. Students' Perceptions of Learning Vocabulary through YouTube

This subsection focuses on students' perceptions of using YouTube in the process of learning English vocabulary. The analysis is based on questionnaire responses and interview data to explore how students perceive and describe their experiences of learning vocabulary through English-language content on YouTube. The quantitative findings are presented first, followed by qualitative insights from the interviews to provide a deeper understanding of students' perceptions.

Table 1. The Questionnaire Results on Students' Perceptions of Vocabulary Learning through English-language YouTube Content

ASPECTS	LIKERT SCALES				NEGATIVE PERCEPTION	POSITIVE PERCEPTION
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Learning Vocabulary through YouTube	3%	11%	44%	42%	14%	86%

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents expressed positive perceptions about vocabulary learning through YouTube. A total of 86% of respondents expressed positive perceptions, with 44% agreeing and 42% strongly agreeing. This indicates that students view YouTube as an engaging, enjoyable, and motivating learning medium. This finding was further supported by interviews, which provided a deeper understanding of the reasons behind these positive perceptions. P1 stated:

"Learning vocabulary through YouTube is interesting because the wide variety of content helps expand my English vocabulary."

P6 added:

"English YouTube content helps me learn vocabulary through real-life contexts in audiovisual content, while also motivating me to improve and imitate English accents."

P3 also explained,

"The delivery style of English content on YouTube is more engaging than textbooks. YouTube feels more lively and less boring, which increases my motivation to continue learning."

Based on interviews with respondents with positive perceptions, the findings indicate that using English-language YouTube content can help students understand and improve their English vocabulary. The engaging presentation of material, combining visual and audio elements, helps students experience an interactive and contextual vocabulary learning process. Through the use of real-life language contexts, students can grasp the meaning of vocabulary and learn how to pronounce and use it in everyday contexts. The presence of elements such as images, sounds, expressions, and real-life context in English-language content makes it easier for students to understand vocabulary meaning, increasing students' interest and motivation, and its use in everyday life. This supports Mayer's (2005) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which stated that students more easily grasp meaning when using a combination of images and words than when using words alone. These results align with research conducted by Mokodompit et al. (2020) on seventh-semester students of English Language Education at Manado State University. This study found that students expressed a positive perception of the use of YouTube in vocabulary acquisition and that it had a positive impact on their abilities, particularly in the classroom. Students felt that the variety of English-language YouTube content available, such as films, vlogs, cartoons, and educational videos, prevented monotony and increased student interest in vocabulary learning. In this study, most participants revealed that they most frequently watched content such as English with Lucy, BBC Learning English, TED Talks, Aaron's English, daily life vlogs, and English songs to help develop their vocabulary. This content was considered engaging because it not only provided direct vocabulary explanations but also demonstrated word usage in real contexts through conversations, visual presentations, and song lyrics. Thus, YouTube is no longer seen only as an entertainment platform, but also as an effective learning medium in supporting English vocabulary learning.

On the other hand, accounted for approximately 14%, with 11% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing. This is generally due to self-regulation issues, where students feel easily distracted by other entertainment content available on the platform. Student interviews support these findings. N1 said,

"I don't think YouTube is very helpful because I often get distracted by entertaining videos and lose focus on studying vocabulary."

Another N5 speaker added,

"Learning vocabulary through YouTube feels less effective because many videos are delivered too fast, making pronunciation difficult to understand."

Some students argued that learning vocabulary through English-language YouTube content did not significantly impact their English vocabulary improvement. They viewed YouTube as entertainment, not as a learning medium. They felt that learning through YouTube was ineffective because there were many things that hindered the learning process, such as the presentation style and distracting video recommendations. This made the learning process distracted and aimless, thus preventing them from feeling the effectiveness of YouTube as a vocabulary learning medium.

2. Students' Perceptions of Vocabulary Improvement

This subsection discusses students' perceptions of improving their English vocabulary mastery after using YouTube as a learning medium. The analysis focuses on how students perceive the development of their vocabulary, including both the expansion of their vocabulary knowledge and their ability to understand and use vocabulary in appropriate contexts. The analysis begins with the presentation of quantitative findings from the questionnaire, followed by qualitative insights from the interviews to provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' perceived vocabulary improvement.

Table 2. The Questionnaire Results on Students' Perceptions of Vocabulary Improvement

ASPECTS	LIKERT SCALES				NEGATIVE PERCEPTION	POSITIVE PERCEPTION
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Students' Perceptions of Vocabulary Improvement	2%	14%	53%	31%	16%	84%

The next finding theme, presented in Table 1, reflects students' perceptions of vocabulary improvement through English YouTube content. 84% of respondents responded positively, with 53% agreeing and 31% strongly agreeing. Students felt that using YouTube helped them understand, learn, and acquire new vocabulary more easily. This improvement was evident in their ability to recognize word meanings, understand pronunciation, and understand vocabulary usage in everyday communication contexts. Through continuous exposure to English-language content, students also became more familiar with various types of vocabulary used by native speakers. Interview data further illustrate how students perceive their vocabulary improvement through YouTube. P2 stated,

"I feel my vocabulary has improved because English content introduces me to idioms and expressions like 'speak of the devil' and 'break a leg,' along with their everyday usage."

Similarly, P4 explained,

"I found a lot of informal vocabulary and everyday expressions rarely found in textbooks, such as actually, kind of, and make sense, which are very useful in everyday communication."

These responses indicate that students experienced an increase in vocabulary through exposure to authentic language available on YouTube. Students not only learned the meaning of words but also understood the contextual use of vocabulary in everyday conversations. Various types of authentic English language content, such as dramas, vlogs, and conversational videos, helped students recognize idioms, informal expressions, and everyday expressions rarely found in textbooks. Furthermore, the combination of visual and audio elements makes it easier for students to understand word meanings based on conversational context, making the vocabulary learning process more motivated, effective, engaging, understandable, and less monotonous.

This finding is supported by Mayer's (2005) Multimedia Learning theory, which explains that the process of delivering material in learning is more effective when information is conveyed through a combination of two or more modalities, such as visuals and audio. In YouTube content, students not only hear the pronunciation of words but also see visuals of the situations and expressions described, as well as the context in which the language is used directly. This helps students understand vocabulary meaning more easily and improves their retention of the learned vocabulary. These findings are also in line with Krashen's (1992) Input Hypothesis, which explains that language acquisition occurs directly through exposure to language that is authentic, meaningful, and easily understood by learners. Authentic and understandable language exposure is obtained through context, situations, images, and previous experiences. Therefore, authentic language exposure through multimodal activities such as listening to stories, watching films, and direct communication can facilitate natural language acquisition and increase learning motivation. This theory emphasized that understanding meaning and a supportive language environment are more important than simply learning formal grammar rules.

The findings of this study also aligned with those of several previous studies. A study conducted by Sukmawati et al. (2025) showed that watching vocabulary learning videos on YouTube helps students improve their vocabulary and become more enthusiastic, confident, and motivated when speaking English. Another study by Salsabila et al. (2025) found that YouTube provides authentic language exposure through audio-visual media, thus helping to improve vocabulary, language comprehension, and learning motivation in EFL students. Furthermore, Abbas (2025) demonstrated similar findings, stating that YouTube is effective as a source of authentic input because it presents a real-life communication context that supports the acquisition of vocabulary and language skills more naturally. However, despite the predominance of positive responses, 17% of respondents felt that the vocabulary gains they had made through YouTube were still limited. Some students felt they focused more on the entertainment or storyline than on the vocabulary used in the videos. For example, N4 stated,

“My vocabulary improvement from watching English YouTube content was limited because I focused more on the storyline and visuals than on the vocabulary used.”

Similarly, N2 stated,

“I felt more like I was maintaining my existing vocabulary rather than adding new vocabulary. YouTube helped clarify and reinforce the vocabulary I already knew, rather than adding to it.”

These responses indicate that not all students experience the same vocabulary gains through YouTube. These differences may be influenced by students' level of focus, viewing goals, learning strategies, and their engagement in paying attention to language use when watching English content. Therefore, Suli et al. (2022) stated that YouTube's effectiveness in improving vocabulary also depends on how students utilize the content as a learning medium. Thus, students' perceptions of vocabulary development through YouTube content indicate that video-based digital media makes a positive contribution to supporting English vocabulary development. This indicates a positive relationship between the intensity of YouTube use and English vocabulary acquisition (Prabaningtyas & Wulandari, 2023). YouTube content not only helps students acquire new vocabulary but also enriches their understanding of language use in real-life communication contexts.

3. Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of YouTube in Vocabulary Learning

This subsection discusses students' perceptions of the effectiveness of YouTube in supporting English vocabulary learning. The analysis aims to explore the extent to which students perceive YouTube as an effective medium for supporting vocabulary learning through its available features. The quantitative findings from questionnaires are presented first, followed by qualitative evidence from the interviews to provide a deeper understanding of students' perceptions of YouTube's effectiveness in vocabulary learning.

Table 3. The Questionnaire Results on the Effectiveness of YouTube in Vocabulary Learning

ASPECTS	LIKERT SCALES				NEGATIVE PERCEPTION	POSITIVE PERCEPTION
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Effectiveness of YouTube in Vocabulary Learning	2%	6%	44%	48%	8%	92%

According to Table 1, the effectiveness of the YouTube aspect received the highest level of agreement among other aspects. Quantitative data showed a very strong positive perception among respondents, with 92% responding positively, with 44% agreeing, and 48% strongly agreeing. This finding indicates that the majority of students view YouTube as a highly effective medium for learning English vocabulary. This high level of agreement indicates that students not only enjoy using YouTube but also experience real benefits through

YouTube features in their vocabulary learning process. This finding is supported by interview data. P5 explained,

"YouTube is very accessible and has a lot of learning materials. The content on YouTube is more comprehensive and rich."

Students also appreciated the various features that can be used to support the learning process. P7 stated,

"Subtitles help me understand and spell new words, while the playback speed feature helps me hear difficult pronunciations more clearly."

P1 also commented,

"The download feature allows me to keep learning without an internet connection, making vocabulary learning more flexible and convenient."

It was found that most students consider YouTube to be an effective learning medium for vocabulary learning. YouTube has transcended its conventional role as an entertainment medium and transformed into a highly credible pedagogical/learning tool in the eyes of students. This effectiveness is inseparable from the various supporting features provided by YouTube, such as subtitles, video playback speed settings, and video download features that enable students to learn flexibly and independently. The presence of these various features helps make the vocabulary learning process easier and smoother. These findings are consistent with research by Wahidah et al. (2026), who found that YouTube's caption, video replay, and subtitle features help students understand authentic language input more easily. Students can repeat specific sections and adjust their understanding of new vocabulary through the audiovisual context. Thanh et al. (2026) also stated that YouTube's subtitle, replay, and video speed settings help students tailor their learning process to their needs and abilities. Widi & Putri (2026) added that YouTube's subtitle, lyrics, and playback controls help students understand pronunciation, meaning, and vocabulary usage in authentic communication contexts. These findings also correspond with the Input Hypothesis by Krashen (1992), which explains that language learning takes place when learners are exposed to understandable linguistic input. In this context, YouTube facilitates the learning process by presenting authentic audiovisual materials that help students interpret language meaning through visual cues, spoken interaction, situational context, and naturally occurring communication.

Furthermore, the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning by Mayer (2024) also explained that learning is more effective when information is presented through a combination of visuals and audio, as this can aid comprehension and retention. These research findings are also supported by Abbas et al. (2025) research, which states that YouTube is effective in language learning because it provides easily accessible, varied material and supports independent learning through authentic language exposure. Nawaz et al. (2026) research explains that YouTube videos have a positive influence on vocabulary learning for non-native English learners. The research findings indicate that audiovisual media help students understand word meaning through visual context and real-life situations, thereby improving vocabulary retention.

In contrast, the percentage of negative perceptions was very low, only 8%. This very low figure indicates that technical and substantive barriers to YouTube were not significant for the majority of respondents. This low level of dissatisfaction indicates that YouTube has reached a very mature level of accessibility and usability, thus minimizing the barriers typically encountered in using digital media.

4. Challenges in Learning Vocabulary through YouTube

This subsection examines the various challenges students face in learning English vocabulary through YouTube. Understanding these challenges is essential to providing a more realistic perspective on the use of YouTube as a learning medium. The analysis is based on questionnaire responses and interview data to identify the barriers students experience during the learning process. The analysis begins with a presentation of quantitative data from the questionnaire and followed by qualitative findings from the interviews to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges experienced by students.

Table 4. The Questionnaire Results on the Challenges in Learning Vocabulary through YouTube

ASPECTS	LIKERT SCALES				NEGATIVE PERCEPTION	POSITIVE PERCEPTION
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree		
Challenges in Learning Vocabulary through YouTube	3%	26%	56%	15%	29%	71%

Although YouTube offers many benefits, students still face various challenges in using YouTube English content as a vocabulary learning medium. Based on the data presented in Table 1, 71% of respondents expressed a positive perception, with 56% agreeing and 15% strongly agreeing. This indicates that various obstacles/challenges remain in using English-language YouTube content as a learning medium. This finding was further clarified through interview data, which provided a deeper understanding of the challenges students face when using YouTube as a medium for vocabulary learning. P2 stated,

"Advertisements often interrupt videos unexpectedly, breaking my focus and disturbing my learning process."

P5 added,

"Recommended entertainment videos often appear and distract me. Their attractive visuals make me switch to other videos."

N7 said,

"When the internet is slow and the video buffers, it really ruins my mood."

Furthermore, several students also expressed other challenges, such as the length and accent used in the videos. N1 explained,

"Sometimes there are videos with interesting titles, but when I click on them, they're really long, which makes me bored."

P7 added,

"Sometimes, if the accent is too strong, like a British or Scottish accent, I have trouble understanding the words."

Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that while YouTube offers high effectiveness, its use is not without its challenges. The main challenges experienced by all participants were digital distractions such as advertisements, video recommendations, and long video lengths. These distractions often appear during the learning process, disrupting the learning process. Metwally (2025) stated that the use of digital technology in language learning often faces challenges in the form of digital distractions and the complexity of using internet-based media, which can affect students' focus. Advertisements that appear during the learning process can be a barrier because they often disrupt students' concentration when accessing learning materials. The repeated appearance of advertisements, whether in the form of videos, images, or pop-ups, can distract students from the material being studied. Video recommendations also become a barrier to learning because they often display entertaining content that distracts students from the learning material. Furthermore, the constant appearance of recommendations can reduce focus and make study time less effective. These findings align with research by Ghifary & Seinsiani (2025), who stated that the YouTube algorithm can distract students from learning objectives due to the abundance of entertainment content that attracts attention, especially its visuals.

Besides distractions, there are technical challenges such as slow internet connections and limited data quotas. Poor signal conditions affect video quality, such as blurry images and slower image loading. This video buffering can disrupt concentration and reduce motivation to learn, thus hindering the learning process. As Purwanti et al. (2022) stated, technical problems can arise during teaching and learning activities and hinder the learning process. Furthermore, difficulty understanding native speakers' accents and speaking speed in videos is also a common challenge. This indicates that the difficulty level of material in YouTube content is sometimes not matched to students' language abilities. Research by Wu (2024) also found that differences in accent and speaking rate are common challenges for English learners using audiovisual media. The findings also reported that students often have difficulty understanding pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary delivered at a fast pace, especially when videos use unfamiliar accents. This condition can affect students' level of comprehension of the material and slow down the learning process. Furthermore, the study also reported that lecturers tend to convey key points directly and concisely when using YouTube videos as a learning medium. In this case, YouTube is considered a medium that still has the potential to experience technical difficulties. This situation indicates that using YouTube requires good focus and self-control to ensure students remain consistent in their learning activities.

Despite facing various challenges, students continue to strive to find solutions to overcome these obstacles, such as selecting videos appropriate to their ability level, using subtitles, slowing down the video speed, and repeating videos several times to understand the material. This demonstrates students' adaptation efforts and independent learning strategies in utilizing YouTube as a learning medium. Therefore, it can be concluded that YouTube has

great potential to support vocabulary learning, but its use requires appropriate learning strategies and regulations to maximize its benefits.

D. CONCLUSION

This study investigated students' perceptions of using English-language YouTube content for vocabulary learning among university students. The findings indicate that the majority of students had positive perceptions of learning vocabulary through English-language YouTube content because it provided engaging, enjoyable, and motivating learning experiences through a variety of authentic audiovisual content. Students also perceived that YouTube contributed to their vocabulary improvement by helping them acquire new vocabulary, understand word meanings in real-life contexts, improve pronunciation, and retain vocabulary more effectively. In addition, YouTube was perceived as an effective medium for vocabulary learning due to features such as subtitles, adjustable playback speed, replay options, and easy access to a wide range of learning resources, which supported self-directed learning. Nevertheless, the study also uncovered several challenges that may limit YouTube's effectiveness as a learning medium, including distractions from non-educational content, difficulties in comprehending certain accents or rapid speech, and technical constraints such as unstable internet connections. These findings suggest that YouTube's effectiveness in vocabulary learning depends not only on the availability of digital content but also on students' ability to manage their learning focus and select appropriate learning materials. Overall, English YouTube content has strong potential as a supporting medium for vocabulary learning, particularly in creating a more contextual, engaging, and independent learning experience in the digital age. However, this study has limitations because it only involved students from one study program and focused on student perceptions without directly measuring vocabulary improvement through language proficiency tests. Future research is recommended to employ other variations, such as involving more participants, implementing an experimental research design, and combining perception data with vocabulary proficiency measurements to obtain more comprehensive findings.

E. REFERENCES

- Abadi, L. (2023). The Power of Vocabulary: Unlocking the Key to Effective Communication. *Journal of Foreign Language Education and Technology*, 8(2), 1-2.
- Abbas, N. F., Awad, Z. E., & Mohaisen, A. K. (2025). YouTube as a learning tool among EFL learners: A systematic review. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL*, 11(1), 96–110. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/call11.6>
- Afidah, A., & Machfudi, Moch. I. (2022). Students' difficulties in vocabulary mastery. *Critical Review of English-Arabic World Journal*, 1(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.35719/crewjournal.v1i1.1359>
- Ali, H. H. H. (2022). The importance of the four English language skills: Reading, writing, speaking, and listening in teaching Iraqi learners. *Humanitarian and Natural Sciences Journal*, 3(2), 153–165. <https://doi.org/10.53796/hnsj3210>
- Al-Seghayer, K. (2015). Salient key features of actual English instructional practices in Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*, 8(6), 89–99. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n6p89>

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2018). *YouTube: Online video and participatory culture*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (2013). *Vocabulary and Language Teaching*. Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., Fetters, M. D., & Ivankova, N. v. (2004). Designing a mixed methods study in primary care. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 2(1), 7–12. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.104>
- Fatimah, S., & Sulistyani, S. (2022). Students' perception of using media platforms for ESL students (A case study in SMK Darma Bahari Surabaya). *EL2J (English Language and Literature Journal)*, 2(1), 32–42. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.38156/el2j.v1i2>
- Ghifary, Y. N., & Seinsiani, I. G. (2025). Students' perceptions and challenges in using YouTube to improve speaking in learning English. *ELT Forum: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 14(Special Issue), 345–357. <https://doi.org/10.15294/elt.v14iSpecial%20Issue.28875>
- Gracella, J., & Nur, D. R. (2020). Students' perception of English learning through YouTube application. *Borneo Educational Journal (Borju)*, 2(1), 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.24903/bej.v2i1.623>
- Hasan, N. R. H. (2024). A study on student's challenges and problems in learning English vocabulary. *International Journal for Scientific Research*, 3(6), 207–227. <https://doi.org/10.59992/ijsr.2024.v3n6p7>
- Kabooha, R., & Elyas, T. (2018). The effects of YouTube in multimedia instruction for vocabulary learning: perceptions of EFL students and teachers. *English Language Teaching*, 11(2), 72–81. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n2p72>
- Krashen, S. (1992). The input hypothesis: An update. *Linguistics and language pedagogy: The state of the art*, 12(3), 409–431.
- Kusmaryono, I., Wijayanti, D., & Maharani, H. R. (2022). Number of response options, reliability, validity, and potential bias in the use of the likert scale education and social science research: A literature review. *International Journal of Educational Methodology*, 8(4), 625–637. <https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.8.4.625>
- Mayer, R. E. (2024). The past, present, and future of the cognitive theory of multimedia learning. *Educational Psychology Review*, 36(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-023-09842-1>
- Mayer, R. E. (Ed.). (2005). *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Metwally, A. A. (2025). Digital Technology in EFL Education: Students' Emotional and Cognitive Reflections from Blackboard Discussions. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 15(9), 1939–1951. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2025.15.9.2394>
- Miller, M. (2009). *Sams teach yourself YouTube in 10 Minutes*. Pearson Education.
- Mokodompit, R. N., Samola, N. F., & Tuerah, J. C. (2020). Students' perception of using YouTube in vocabulary mastery. *JELLT (Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching)*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.36412/jellt.v5i2.2456>
- Nawaz, H. F., Khan, A., & Saeed, M. (2026). Impact of YouTube videos upon learning vocabulary for non-native speakers of English: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Social Sciences Development*, 5(1), 73. <https://doi.org/10.53664/JSSD/05-01-2026-06-73-86>

- Nofrika, I. (2019). EFL students' voices: The role of YouTube in developing English competences. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, 4(1), 56–73. <https://doi.org/10.18196/ftl.4138>
- Prabaningtyas, H. L., & Wulandari, M. (2023). The correlation between the intensity of YouTube usage and vocabulary acquisition in English language learning. *INTERLING: International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 1(2), 69–78. <https://doi.org/10.55210/interling.v1i2.1417>
- Purwanti, Ni Komang Ratna., Suwastini, N. K. A., Adnyani, N. L. P. S., & Kultsum, U. (2022). YouTube videos for improving speaking skills: The benefits and challenges according to recent research in EFL context. *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Dan Kejuruan*, 19(1), 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jptk-undiksha.v19i1.41108>
- Salsabila, D. A., Salam, U., & Rezeki, Y. S. (2025). YouTube as a tool for English language learning: A meta-analysis in EFL contexts. *English Education: Journal of English Teaching and Research*, 10(1), 12–29. <https://doi.org/10.29407/jetar.v10i1.23641>
- Sari, I. P., Asahra, E. E., & Yana, Y. (2019). Improving students' vocabulary mastery using English song. *PROJECT: Professional Journal of English Education*, 2(3), 410–415. <https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v2i3.p410-415>
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T., Baker, S., Waterfield, J., Bartlam, B., Burroughs, H., & Jinks, C. (2017). Saturation in qualitative research: Exploring its conceptualization and operationalization. *Quality and Quantity*, 52(4), 1893–1907. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8>
- Sujadi, J., & Wulandari, F. (2021). Study of students' vocabulary difficulties in third-semester students of food technology major. *Edukasi: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 19(1), 90–104. <https://doi.org/10.31571/edukasi.v19i1.2347>
- Sukmawati, D., Sunjayanto, E., & Triana, J. (2025). An asynchronous learning to improve vocabulary building by using YouTube channel. *Scripta: English Department Journal*, 12(1), 164–173. <https://doi.org/10.37729/scripta.v12i1.6331>
- Suli, M., Kamil, A. B., & Mobit, M. (2022). YouTube-assisted self-regulated vocabulary learning: Indonesian EFL learners' experiences. *INTERACTION: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*, 9(1), 10–19. <https://ejournal.unimudasorong.ac.id/index.php/interactionjournal/article/view/2520>
- Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument; How to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in a research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)*, 5(3), 28–36. <https://hal.science/hal-02546799v1>
- Tahmina, T. (2023). Students' perception of the use of YouTube in English language learning. *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 11(1), 151–159. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v%vi%i.6883>
- Thanh, N. T., Pham Thi Ngoc, A., Nguyen Quynh, C., Ta Huong, G., & Chu Thu, T. (2026). YouTube's impact on students' self-directed language learning (SDLL): A comprehensive evaluation based on the knowledge-skills-attitude trio. *The JALT CALL Journal*, 22, 102669. <https://doi.org/10.29140/jaltcall.2026.102669>
- Wahidah, F. S., Mujiyanto, J., Rukmini, D., & Rustipa, K. (2026). Authentic spoken English on YouTube: Integrating YouTube vlogs into mobile-assisted extensive listening for EFL students. *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies*, 8(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.31849/2w33z089>
- Widi, S. K., & Putri, F. E. (2026). Exploring the use of Spotify and YouTube to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. *Global Perspectives in English Language Teaching and Learning*, 1(1), 32–40. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18443179>

Claudio, Fikri, Sujiani & Silitonga: Students' Perceptions of Vocabulary Learning...

Wu, C. P. (2024). Enhancing vocabulary proficiency and self-directed learning through YouTube: A study in an EFL context. *English Language Teaching*, 17(7), 109–119. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v17n7p109>