

THE USE OF WATCHING YOUTUBE VIDEOS FOR ACQUIRING STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

YouTube offers plenty of authentic material created by people worldwide which is frequently used as learning media. Numerous studies on YouTube have been carried out, some of which examined the effect of YouTube on listening ability, and the use of YouTube as learning media. However, only a few studies talk about the use of YouTube on students' listening comprehension particularly to monitor self-improvement for getting English listening proficiency. Therefore, anchored in Anderson's (1995) theory and filling the void of previous studies, this research was conducted to describe the use of watching YouTube videos for acquiring students' listening comprehension. This research applied a qualitative research approach using a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview as the instruments to collect the data. The subjects of this research were 4 students of the English Language Education Study Program of Lambung Mangkurat University. Findings showed that the use of YouTube videos by the respondents means they use extensive listening to improve their listening comprehension. The participants portrayed using YouTube as a way of self-improvement. The improvement they felt after watching YouTube videos was that they are able to easily find the main idea and general information while listening. It can be concluded that watching YouTube videos frequently is useful enough to improve students' listening comprehension.

INTRODUCTION

For many years, learning takes place only in the classroom. Typically, the listening sessions were conducted in the language laboratory (Asyiqin et al., 2022). With technological advances in this globalization era, there are many available sources to be used as media in the learning process. One of them is the use of social media. Social media is online media that includes blogs, social networks, and virtual worlds, which are very useful. One of these social media that can be used is YouTube. YouTube is one of the most popular online video websites globally and it offers plenty of authentic material created by people worldwide (Nasrullah, 2021; Rusmanayanti & Nasrullah, 2020).

YouTube is a rich source of cultural authentic material that can motivate students to engage in an educational capacity with popular cultures through English Videos (Alqahtani, 2014). Authentic materials do not come from course books because they are not designed for pedagogical purposes. As Herod states in Yuyun & Simamora (2021) that using authentic materials means using examples of language produced by native speakers for their real purposes rather than using language produced and designed solely for a classroom. YouTube has numerous videos that can be used as English learning materials which can be used as effective learning tools to develop students' listening abilities (Aboudahr, 2020).

Some research shows that the use of YouTube can improve students' listening abilities. Widiyanto et al., (2021) emphasize that using YouTube as media for teaching and learning increased students' listening ability. Hendrayasa (2021) in his research listed the benefits of YouTube for listening in the English Language, namely it is a source of authentic material, it is useful for teaching material and learning resources, and with the help of YouTube videos which provide visual support, students can acquire a better insight into the subject matter. That shows YouTube is one of the valuable sources for teaching and learning listening, and it may have a good effect on students' listening ability. On the contrary, a study by Fadhillah et al., (2021) shows that the students sometimes preferred podcasts they could find on Spotify rather than watching YouTube. They did not find it interesting to watch YouTube Videos as they were watching series or movies. A study by Irana et al., (2021) shows that there is no correlation between the habit of watching videos on YouTube and the listening mastery of the student.

The study by Fadhillah et al., (2021) on English Department Students' Perceptions of Using English Talk Show Videos on YouTube to Improve Listening Skills shows the reasons for using YouTube videos by students are they can enrich their vocabulary, identify the topic in spoken language, and differentiate English accents. Another research on the effect of YouTube video on students' listening comprehension performance was done by Qomariyah et al., (2021) which shows YouTube video has a positive and significant effect on students' listening comprehension performance with a t-test result of 1.834. Learning listening comprehension was more interesting and motivating for the students by using YouTube videos as the learning media during the learning process in the classroom. The difference between this study and Fadhillah et al., (2021)'s work is the research objectives and instruments used for collecting the data. The previous study's objective was to find out the

students' perception of YouTube videos while this research's objective is to describe the use of watching YouTube videos on students' listening comprehension. The video used as an object of the previous research was specified into English Talk Show YouTube videos while this research does not use any specific YouTube Videos. The difference between this research and the previous research by Qomariyah et al., (2021) is that YouTube videos, in the previous study, were used as learning media in the classroom. On the contrary, watching YouTube videos in this research is used for students' self-improvement. Thus, in light of these concerns, this research intended to describe the use of watching YouTube videos for acquiring students' listening comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

This research investigated the use of watching YouTube videos for acquiring students' listening comprehension. The qualitative research approach was used in this research. Qualitative research is research where findings are presented verbally or in another non-numerical form (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Four students of ELESP of Lambung Mangkurat were the participants in this research. The researcher collected the data using a semi-structured interview. The participants were students from batch 2021. The first step to collect the data was spreading the questionnaire through Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of 15 statements. 39 students collected the answers. This step was done in 21 to the 25th of November 2022. The participants were then chosen based on the score from the questionnaire for preliminary. Then, the researcher did an interview four participants. The participants were asked questions based on the interview guidelines. In addition, the question was possible to develop in the interview process based on the interviewees' answers. The interview was done individually with the participants, according to the available time from the participants. The interview was done face-to-face. The instruments were validated by one of the experts in the listening field in ELESP of Lambung Mangkurat University. The validation was done in order to see the suitability of the instruments to the research objective by using a validation form.

FINDINGS

Listening is a process of identifying and understanding what the speaker is saying, which includes understanding the speaker's pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. One of the advantages of using YouTube videos for language learning is it provides authentic examples of conversational/ everyday use of English by native speakers. The participants of this research watched YouTube videos frequently to practice their listening skills. Student 1 stated that she watched YouTube about four times a month. Meanwhile, Student 2 explained that he watched YouTube videos for about an hour every day. Another participant, Student 3, said she never did count on how many times she watched YouTube videos to practice her listening skill as she watched YouTube videos whenever she had a topic that she was interested in. Student 4, on the other hand, said that she would watch YouTube videos when there were interesting videos on her page.

Student 1: *Maybe a month there are four times even though it is not quite precise conducted every week. One thing, for sure, four times is commonly allocated.*

Student 2: *It is not as frequent as before, but at least I do it once an hour.*

Student 3: *I will watch YouTube if I want to learn to listen. If there are any topics that I like for example topic about animals, I will watch the video concerning that matter. Of course, I will find English videos provided that I learn nothing. However, I do not set up a time to watch in a month or a week. Regarding this, if you have in a mood I will watch it.*

Student 4: *I watch if on the wall of YouTube there something attracts my interest, I will watch it even, and I do it repeatedly.*

The four respondents stated that they watched different videos every time they watched YouTube. Student 1 explained that she might watch the same video twice a day, but she watched different YouTube videos the next day. Furthermore, she never had a scheduled time to practice her listening comprehension by watching YouTube videos. Student 2 said that he would watch YouTube videos to practice his listening comprehension unintentionally as he watched English YouTube videos every day at a random time whenever he has time. He thought that it would be a way to practice his listening indirectly. Another participant, Student 3, explained that she would watch a different video from YouTube. She watched YouTube videos according to the topic she liked to explore more. In addition, she had no exact frequency for her to watch YouTube videos to practice listening as she would watch whenever she wanted. She shared that she would watch videos in English from another online video platform. Student 4 stated that she watched different YouTube videos to practice her listening comprehension, but she could watch the same video five times if she liked the video. She never had a specific number on the frequency to watch YouTube videos as she watches if there were interesting videos to watch.

The four participants watched random YouTube videos from any kind of YouTube channel, as long as it was English Spoken video. They never had a specific channel for learning English or learning English skills. Student 1 said that she watched entertaining YouTube videos in English from a YouTube channel that was about how to do make-up. The main reason was the video was entertaining and the second was it was a fun video to watch. The same reason was conveyed by Student 2 who said that he watches YouTube videos in English from any kind of channel, the entertaining one, not specifically a learning English Channel. The same goes for Student 3 who explained that she never had a specific YouTube channel about learning English. A different statement was conveyed by Student 4 who randomly watched YouTube videos but sometimes she watched a specific YouTube video for practicing her listening comprehension. Two participants, Student 1 and Student 3, stated that practicing listening comprehension was helpful for their education as they both were studying in the English Education program, while two others agreed that improving their listening comprehension was for a communicational purpose.

Student 1: *I can understand if someone speaks in English or when I am in a class activity where English becomes a means of communication spoken by my lecturers because I am an English student.*

Student 2: *This language [English] I reckon is a communication preceded by listening in order to comprehend so after that I can make a necessary response.*

Student 3: *Due to the fact that in my department we have been provided a course named listening, it is crucial for me to learn in order to pass the course successfully.*

Student 4: *So, from my perspective, when we would like to communicate with others and at the time we do not understand someone's locution, we find ourselves difficult to deal with. That is to say, listening is a very important skill to possess since we are social creatures that always have communicated and interacted with one another. With this reason in mind, if we get used to communicating and getting trained for listening, we find it easy to communicate without looking up the dictionary.*

According to the four participants, watching YouTube videos to improve listening comprehension was beneficial. Student 1 stated that by watching YouTube videos in English, she could be familiar with numerous English words. Student 2 added that it was helpful for him to be able to increase his intention to learn English, especially to practice listening and as he watched, his understanding would be increased too. Student 3 explained that by watching YouTube videos, she was familiar with English-spoken videos, so whenever she was in class, she would never feel bored listening as she had practiced it.

Based on the cognitive framework of language comprehension proposed by Anderson (1995), she assigned some problems to perceptual processing problems, parsing, and utilization. Some problem that the respondents encountered in the perceptual processing stage was that they could not discriminate sounds due to fast speaking which made them could not respond to the words they listened to quickly enough. Student 1 conveyed that it was hard for her to listen carefully while watching YouTube videos, as the speakers spoke too fast. Another problem was she could not recognize words due to her own wrong pronunciations. Student 2 faced another problem in the perceptual processing stage. He could not respond to the words he heard quickly enough and recognize the sounds of the words he had learned. He was not able to distinguish sounds due to linking, assimilation, and omission in speaking.

Student 1: *Because in learning (YouTube) the native speakers are the ones who narrate or speak, I find it difficult to keep the pace of the speaker so if I just listen one time, I hardly get it. It is worsened by the various distinctive pronunciation spoken by native speakers which render me not understand utterances entirely.*

Student 2: *Although I have come across the vocabulary which has been learned, even though I have been familiar with that of which, I sometimes find myself confused whether the words said are correctly perceived by my thought. In this regard, I just focus on the sounds even though I still do not understand. The challenges come when*

the native speakers use linking verbs [sound], there might be words omitted. In this area, I still do not get it.

Another problem that occurred in the parsing stage was the respondents could not understand the next part of the text they listened to because they paid more attention to the previous part of the text. They sometimes could not comprehend words with multiple meanings. The utilization stage problem faced by the respondents was they could not understand the intended message of several parts, even though it seems that they understood them.

The result of practicing listening by watching YouTube videos was that they are able to distinguish the general information and the main idea and to know when they should focus to listen to find the main idea. The four participants agreed that watching YouTube videos helped them to improve their ability in finding general information and main idea as they might know where the general information and main idea were stated in the video. Other than general information and the main idea, knowing the supporting detail was also important.

According to the participants, they had difficulties in deciding the supporting details, even when they watched YouTube videos. Student 1 explained that it was difficult for her to decide whether the information she got from listening was supporting details. It was different from finding general information and the main idea. Student 2 portrayed that it was not easy to find supporting details when it come to listening. Student 3 felt the same as well, as she never had a chance to truly practice her ability in distinguishing the supporting details. Student 4 elaborated that finding supporting detail was a little bit more difficult than general information and the main idea. She further explained that she was unintentionally watching YouTube videos only to find the main idea or the topic that was discussed in the video. After knowing it, she might continue to watch another video. So, they all agreed that being able to distinguish the supporting details and watching the full video was needed so that they were able to fully understand the video.

Student 1: *Because I am accustomed to watching videos from YouTube, I learn to guess the general information (main idea) and it sometimes takes me to the correct answer. Even though I sometimes get wrong, at least I know when I should listen seriously with full concentration.*

Student 2: *If wanting to find out general information and the main idea, I find it easier to get the meaning across since while listening I can read the subtitles provided by YouTube (if available). From that strategy I can guess the general information, the main idea, or at least I know its topic. Because I get used to listening via YouTube (media, I am fond of listening to whatever topics especially when there are assignments. I know how to guess the location of general information and the main idea. Likewise, through this way, I finally know that when the speakers on YouTube emphasize the intonation, it carries significant information to notice.*

Student 3: *When I watch YouTube compared with the test situation, I experience a different situation. In this setup, because I get used to listening to YouTube within the*

knowledge of vocabulary that I can pick up, I have more understanding of the words it consists of. Like reading, the main idea and general information are located in specific places so does listening.

Student 4: *As with watching YouTube videos, I am aware that the main idea sometimes is situated in the second dialogue. It happens also in the listening course especially when I face practice. In this matter, I need to be more careful to identify the main idea of the information given where the main idea could be in the second utterance spoken by the speakers.*

Another part of listening comprehension was the Ability to determine a speaker's attitude or intention towards a listener or a topic. Student 2 stated that to determine it, he would focus on the speakers' intonation, while Student 1 believed that knowing the speaker's attitude or intention towards a listener or a topic could be done after hearing the full video, so there would not be a misunderstanding. Student 3 added that by watching YouTube videos, she knew some differences in someone's intonation when he spoke. It made her able to define the speaker's attitude or intention towards a listener or a topic.

DISCUSSION

One way to practice Listening comprehension is by watching YouTube videos. This was done by the four participants who frequently watch YouTube videos for educational purposes and communicational purposes.

The students need to use good strategies to improve their listening comprehension, (Scholnick & Gabler, 2003): using what you have already know, scanning for the main idea, scanning for the important points, inference (making intelligent guesses), scanning for specific pieces of information, using context clues, and using structure and intonation clues. Of all strategies mentioned above, the four participants practice using what they have already known, scanning for the main idea and general information, and intonation clues.

Most of the participants agreed that by watching YouTube videos, the main ability that they can practice is to identify general information and the main idea. Topic/ main idea; the topic is the gist of a passage, the central thought, the chief topic of a passage expressed or implied in a word or phrase, the topic sentence of a paragraph, a statement in sentence form that gives the stated or implied major topic of a passage and the specific way in which the passage is limited in content or reference. Helgesen & Brown (2007) state there are five types of listening comprehension questions, namely listening for specific information/ literal comprehension, listening for gist/ reorganization, inference, listening and making evaluation, and appreciation.

Some difficulties that the students may encounter in the listening comprehension process are recorded materials quality, differences in culture, accent, unfamiliar vocabulary, length, and

listening speed (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). In addition, knowledge of the topic is also included as an internal factor in listening skills. A lack of background knowledge and experience of the topic can make it difficult for students to interpret the language they hear (Putri et al., 2019). These difficulties were faced by the four respondents. As they are learning English as a foreign language, when they watch a native speaker's YouTube videos, they could not keep up with the phase the speaker speaks. They need to watch the video more than once to finally be able to understand what they're listening to.

The use of YouTube videos by the respondents means they use extensive listening to improve their listening comprehension. The use of authentic materials in the form of podcasts, movies, TV and radio programs, videos, and other Internet resources, is highly suggested in extensive listening (Ivone & Renandya, 2019). Initially, extensive listening studies and programs rely heavily on the use of audiobooks available as graded reader supplements. Many studies focus on the use of this type of audio materials because they are obtainable commercially, systematically graded, and available in a wide variety of topics. However, they usually feature one flawless speaker in every audiobook, so they lack authentic cues and discourse markers of spoken language. Commercial audiobooks cannot be duplicated due to their copyrights. Moreover, listening to audiobooks is time-consuming and boring because it takes a long time to improve comprehension and vocabulary levels (Apple, 2006). In its further development, Extensive listening has incorporated the use of a variety of non-commercial audio and video materials available on the Internet.

In Anderson's (1995) framework language comprehension comprises three stages: Perceptual processing, parsing, and utilization. Perceptual processing is the first stage, which is mainly concerned with encoding the audio, visual, or written language, as soon as the listener receives the stimuli. Parsing involves the listener's effort to transform whatever is heard or seen into a mental representation of the combined meaning of these audio or visual stimuli. These segments are recombined to generate a meaningful representation of the original sequence. This mental representation is related to the existing knowledge stored in long-term memory commonly known as propositions, scripts, or schemata, and is made use of by the listener during utilization, the third stage of cognitive processing.

Based on the cognitive framework of language comprehension proposed by Anderson (1995), she assigned half of the problems to perceptual processing problems, three others to parsing, and two others to utilization. These problems are real-time processing problems, resulting from a number of factors like a failure in word recognition, ineffective attention, failure to use appropriate comprehension tactics, lack of schematic knowledge, limited processing capacity, and so on. She found that the more skilled listeners demonstrated a higher degree of awareness of their listening problems. Furthermore, the high-ability listeners might have more high-level utilization problems, while the low-ability listeners appeared to have more low-level perception problems, although all of them shared some similar problems.

1. Perceptual processing

The four respondents had some problems with perceptual processing. They could not discriminate sounds due to fast speaking which made them could not respond to the words they listened to quickly enough. In this regard, the learners experienced being aware and slowly recognized that utterances they heard come from words and sound blending (Avivi-Reich et al., 2014; Goh, 2000). In the further phase, they were likely to start to know words and boundaries (based on context), meaning delivered in a different accent and fast-paced utterance despite the myriad of challenges encountered (Adi et al., 2022).

2. Parsing

The problem that occurred in the parsing stage was the respondents could not understand the next part of the text they listened to because they paid more attention to the previous part of the text. They sometimes could not understand words that have more than one meaning. The problems they dealt with in this phase, can be a starter for them to recognize word groups that carry salient meanings which then develop to identify the important information from sentence length. In this regard, once they cope with this area, the sentence complexity will be no longer very hard to comprehend (Nowrouzi et al., 2015; Swan & Walter, 2017).

3. Utilization

The utilization stage problem faced by the respondents was they could not understand the intended message of some parts, although it seems that they understood them. This refers that practicing dealing with the problems of topical knowledge where they just happen to meet the rare vocabulary, and they experience difficulties to understand them. Despite their inability to understand the various discourse, they start to learn and pick up some learning for YouTube aligned with topics they like. This way, they can acquire the vocabulary and understand meanings in a further stage (Werdiningsih & Mardiyah, 2019).

Afterward, from a series of practices through YouTube conducted by learners independently, listening resources which consist of cultural knowledge, genre knowledge, and varied experience in understanding various programs can construct the learners' listening skills while acquiring and learning the vocabulary based on each context. From problems encountered, strategy can be taken, and self-improvement will take place (Nowrouzi et al., 2015).

The participants portrayed using YouTube as a way of self-improvement. As Golovin states in Kryucheva et al., (2018) the following definition of self-improvement: “[it] begins in our teens when the time comes for cultivating the ‘ideal Me’ – our conscious personal ideal comparing ourselves with which often causes a sense of dissatisfaction with and a desire to change our-selves. In developing this idea, we bring into correlation with it our goals and

deeds, with our consciousness moving along a vertical line within the space of our personal motives. This process is accompanied by particular emotional stress regarding ourselves and our deeds, namely some remorse, dissatisfaction with ourselves, and assessments and reassessments of ourselves” (Kryucheva et al., 2018). Self-improvement for the participants’ listening comprehension might be done by adding the frequency of watching YouTube videos. The desire to improve themselves to have better listening comprehension can gradually overcome the problems they faced in the three stages of language comprehension. The perceptual processing stage, which is mainly concerned with encoding the audio, visual, or written language, could be practiced by watching good short videos with a great audio recording. This could help the participants to practice their ability to distinguish sounds they heard. On the other hand, the participants might watch conversational YouTube videos to practice the parsing stage, to generate a meaningful representation of the original sequence from each sentence they heard from the video. Meanwhile, for practicing the utilization, the participants could watch monologue YouTube videos with a theme. They may watch all kinds of videos to practice the three stages of the language comprehension framework by having the subtitle on and on repeat.

YouTube videos were useful for students as a source of learning, where they can get the material easily and freely. They could adjust the material in YouTube videos they watch to their own needs and likes. As watching YouTube videos was one of the extensive listening activities, the students could arrange the time they watch as they want. This was beneficial for the students as they can spend some of their leisure time watching YouTube videos to practice their listening with no rules of what to watch, kinds of videos, videos length, and difficulty level. The frequency of watching YouTube videos might be able to reduce the problems the respondents face to acquire listening comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The result of this research showed that the two participants of this research frequently watched YouTube videos; meanwhile, the other two occasionally watch YouTube videos to improve their listening comprehension. The use of YouTube videos by the respondents means they use extensive listening to improve their listening comprehension. The participants portrayed using YouTube as a way of self-improvement. The YouTube videos they watch are varied according to the theme of the video they were interested in. The main ability in listening comprehension that the participants practice by watching YouTube videos is to identify general information and the main idea. Therefore, the improvement they felt after watching YouTube videos was that they are able to easily find the main idea and general information while listening. YouTube videos are useful enough to help them improve their listening comprehension as long as they watch them frequently and within the scheduled time. The strategies they use to improve their listening comprehension such as using what they already know, scanning for the main idea and general information, and intonation clues. The four respondents face the greatest difficulty with listening comprehension, including when they watch YouTube videos. They cannot control how quickly a speaker speaks. Therefore, they watch the same YouTube videos more than once to fully understand the content.

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