

Acceptance of YouTube Channel for English Language Learning Among Digital Native Learners

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ABSTRACT

In the globalized world that we live in today, everyone realizes the importance of the English language as a lingua franca. The English language has been used as a mediator language in every area such as business, education, tourism, and many more. It is indeed a demanded language for every sector to converse and communicate in neither verbal nor written form. Due to users' lack of motivation, encouragement, and acquired learning skills, particularly for those who do not practice speaking English with English native speakers, learning the English language is challenging. As we are moving forward to the digital world in line with the advancement of the current technology, thus English language learners are provided with many options from various platforms to learn lessons, particularly in English lessons. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the factors of using YouTube as a platform for English language learning among digital native learners. This study uses a thematic analysis by reviewing and analyzing qualitative data that entails searching across a data set to identify, analyze and report repeated patterns. It is found that YouTube is proven to be a practical, innovative, and responsible platform for conveying English language learning in such attractive and engaging ways to digital native learners. The finding shows that YouTube has been shown to be an effective, innovative teaching and learning tool for delivering English language instruction in Malaysia to English learners, especially those who are digital natives. The English language does not serve as the first language in Malaysia, hence English language learners in Malaysia are keen to utilize YouTube as a preferred platform to learn the English language. This is because of the availability of native speakers from different countries, especially in most developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Keywords: English language, language learning, YouTube, Digital Native learner

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The objective of the Study

The objective of this conceptual paper is to investigate the factors of using YouTube as a platform in English language learning among digital native learners. Many teachers believed that teaching tools and materials are considered most vital in teaching English language learning to the students so that the learning process will be more attractive and engaging to the students.

Below is the brief definition for all backgrounds of the study in order to clearly understand and comprehend the variables stated in this conceptual paper.

INTRODUCTION

The requirement for English as a language in many thriving industries, including business, tourism, science and technology, education, and diplomacy. As a result, it has the distinction of being a universal language. British High Commissioner to Malaysia, Charles Hay claimed that the English language has conquered the world like a virus and is the fastest growing language in human history (Lovrenciar, 2019). According to Hay, some 1.75 billion people throughout the world, or one in every four of the global population are English speakers (Lovrenciar, 2019). Malaysia is currently ranked #30 out of 100 countries and considered moderate usage of the English language compared to in 2019 as #26 and considered High usage of English speaking according to EF English Proficiency Index (EF, 2020).

David et al., (2015, cited in Rusreena et al, 2018) stated in their findings that Malaysian undergraduates are still having low competency in the English language even though they have received between 11 to 13 years of formal English lessons within schools. A low level of English proficiency is one of the top five issues highlighted by the Chief Economist at Malaysian Rating Corp Bhd., Nor Zahidi Alias. He stated that the jobless rate in Malaysia is due to poor English proficiency (Rusreena et al., 2018). The Malaysia Employers Federation (MEF) Executive Director, Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan added that most job seekers are incompetent in developing proper English sentences as well as unable to convey the right and clear message in a conversation (Rusreena et al., 2018). Apart from that, instead of placing blame on the instructors, the education ministry and other stakeholders in the education sector should conduct a thorough investigation into the issue of Malaysian students' low competency in the English language (Ali & Siti, 2021).

Related to this situation, students found an alternative way of learning English through YouTube channels. The goal of using YouTube as a learning tool is to create engaging, enjoyable, and dynamic learning environments (Rahmatika, Munawir & Leo, 2021). The objective of this study is to provide in-depth, understandable explanations regarding factors of students learning English through listening skills via an English YouTube channel. Therefore, this conceptual paper will find out the factors of using YouTube as a platform for English language learning by digital native learners in Malaysia. It is one of the efforts made by Malaysian learners to upgrade and improve their English language proficiency and eventually be outstanding speakers of the global language, the English language.

The objective of this conceptual paper is to investigate the factors of using YouTube as a platform in English language learning among digital native learners. Many teachers believed that teaching tools and materials are considered most vital in teaching English language learning to the students so that the learning process will be more attractive and engaging to the students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND GLOBALISATION

The English language is considered one of the features in the context of globalization where English is recognized to be of the ultimate value. The usage of English as a language learning medium and its use in most educational institutions has been globally spread. As stated by Fishman (2001), globalization contributes both a constructive as well as a destructive phenomenon. In constructive terms, it is also perceived to access knowledge, employability, as well as education, while on the other hand, it can deteriorate the status of other languages and the cultures that are related to them. This is to show the phenomenon of globalization in education systems in many countries. However, Zaman (2019), stated in her research that globalization and education have been the main sector due to the competitiveness in the economy, as stated Sajid (2005, cited in Zaman (2019) claimed that instead of being a platform for acquiring knowledge, it is being used with the purpose to compete on an international platform for economic growth.

Impact of English Language as a Global Language

There are many countries that view the influence of the English language as a universal language and contribute a vital impact to the respective nation. Khateeb (2015) conducted a study on the impact of the English Language on the public education system in Saudi Arabia in the globalization era. He further detailed the historical and primary purposes of teaching English in Saudi Arabia. His results showed the purpose of using English in the Saudi context for instrumental functions especially educational purposes is vital. In addition, society in Saudi also believed that English education is necessary for advancement and progression. In addition, this situation is fully supported by the Ministry of Education which listed four primary purposes of teaching and learning English. These include improving linguistic proficiency, having knowledge and comprehension of other's cultural, economic, and social issues, introducing Saudi culture to the other side of the world, and enhancing international communication for international affairs.

At this point, it is contradictory to countries like South Korea, China, and Japan in which English is not the first language. Thus, Gil & Najar (n.d) study these countries to understand how they manage the impact of English as a global language. First is South Korea; a small yet developed country with a linguistically and ethnically identical population. It is revealed that South Korea regards English language education as means for two primary purposes including promoting Korean culture to the world and maintaining the Korean cultural identity. Sama goes to China as a vast, varied, aggressively developing country, and currently is becoming increasingly noteworthy in global relationships. Yet, the Chinese language is still seen as the language through which culture, values, and shared national identity are produced and maintained in the Chinese setting, like the South Korean context. What happened in China not matched Japan's context, a well-developed country with advanced usage of high technology. It is found that in Japan, English is seen as a medium, and foreigners are treated as resources to be utilized, learners are seen as a group rather than individuals. Besides that, English proficiency is presented as something valuable and precious like an asset that creates prosperity as well as revenue.

From the study conducted by Gil and Najar (n.d), it can be concluded that East Asia nations most likely regard English as a medium of taking part in and fitting in the globalizing world while at the same time maintaining their original culture, values, and national language. In southeast Asia which is in the Malaysia context, Zaman (2019) studied the representation of the English Language in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 taking into the sight of CDA perspective. It is clearly stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (Blueprint) by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) that globalization and competing at an international level are part of Malaysia's strategies for the need for a transformation of the education system. As a result, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) an international standard for describing language ability used as a guide to describe language ability to ensure that students' level of English language proficiency is on par with an international standard. The researcher also added ongoing issues in Malaysia as an effort to improve the level of English language proficiency among the Malaysian youth that have gone over numerous adjustments.

Thus, it can be summarized that most of the researchers revealed that many countries are well-received and impacted by the global language; the English language is in line with the competitive globalizing world in both sectors, economic as well as education per se.

THE FACTORS OF USING YOUTUBE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

The advancement of technology in line with unlimited access to the internet, allows language learners particularly English language learners to learn any lessons, particularly English lessons (Ong, Chai, Tan & Tan, 2018). In fact, they can receive lessons not only from the local context yet from another part of the world with native speaker background and be exposed to the different accents and pronunciations. There is a variety of platforms that can be utilized for the purpose of acquiring any knowledge. In today's era, YouTube videos are widely used particularly in English Foreign Language (EFL) tutorial classes, and serve as one of the primary tools in English language teaching. Morat, Saari, Abidin, &

Abdullah (2017) showed that YouTube, among the abundance of video-sharing sites, has been acknowledged and widely accepted as a reliable channel as it provides access to an immense database of online videos. It also allows users to watch, free download, and upload their own videos. Apart from that, it offers an interactive platform for YouTube members. It is proven by a study conducted by Yoganarasimhan (2011), which found that there are few features on YouTube that allows members to have active interaction including ‘comment-boxes, messages, and activity feed subscriptions.

Advantages of using YouTube

Morat et al., (2017) explained in their research a few advantages of using YouTube and one of them was that can be exploited by English language teachers for educational purposes. Due to the huge video database available on YouTube, it offers various types of videos to English language teachers as well as can use videos for diverse language learning purposes in several resourceful and creative ways. Morat et al., (2017) added another advantage that differentiates YouTube from other traditional social media content is the length of YouTube videos and it is mostly involved short videos. Consequently, English language teachers can choose videos of different lengths as well despite of different types of videos that YouTube offers. Another advantage of YouTube described by Morat et al., (2017) is its cost-free accessibility. As the most prominent and popular social media sites, YouTube videos are also extensively embedded in many websites as well as blogs, hence making it exceedingly accessible for English teaching and learning for numerous purposes.

Neil & Coleen (1992) proposed the acronym “VARK” in order to describe four learning styles of language learners. Generally, there are four main learning styles for any foreign language learner such as visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. It took them thousands of hours to conduct the study by classroom observation. Botirca (2007) explained that the usage of YouTube videos will create an interesting learning environment, however, it also assists learners to be able to adapt to their own learning styles. For example, visual input of videos will assist visual learners, while auditory learners will benefit from the specialty of YouTube videos offers which allows learners to watch the videos in a replication manner. This study also supported by Cakir (2006) stated that visual learners are also engaged in watching videos instead of listening to a recording that engages the auditory learners. This is because if the auditory learners are not able to get the exact meaning, they can also rely on the visual representation of the video including facial expressions, body language and gestures, movements, clothing, and many other images presented in the video.

Hence, it can be summarized from several previous researchers implied that English language learners specifically may receive numerous advantages by using YouTube as a platform for learning the English language. YouTube offers an unlimited deal for them to suit their own learning styles accordingly. Thus, YouTube may be used in academic settings, and language instructors can use it to improve students’ proficiency with the English language (Shadam, Riyadh & Ayang, 2020).

Impacts of using YouTube

Several types of research had conducted on the impact of using YouTube in English language learning. The outstanding impact of using YouTube in English learning was also proven in research conducted by Morat, Shaari, Jafre & Amelia (2017). Based on the findings, it was found that the content of YouTube could be exploited to expose the learners to genuine English. Not only that, but it also demonstrates that YouTube consists of web 2.0 features that are able to familiarize English learners with the contemporary technology application. Anis & Berlian (2016) also supported their research and found that YouTube has been revealed to be a possible means for the dialogic ability of learners. Similarly, Azurawati, Farahidatul, Rafidah, Farhani, Syahir, & Nooraileen (2018) conducted research to investigate university students’ perceptions of the usage of YouTube especially in learning the English language. As a result, it was found that students are highly interested to use YouTube in learning English. Plus, it was revealed that students are keen to use YouTube to help them in completing their course assignments as well as for study purposes.

Hence, it can be concluded that students preferred to use English YouTube videos to help them enhance their English language proficiency with the purpose to excel in academics as well as offering bright future marketable employment opportunities. However, throughout reviewing all the past research conducted by many authors, there is a gap in the current literature whereby none of them highlighted the factors most students preferred or utilize YouTube as a platform for learning language, particularly English language. Therefore, this conceptual paper aims to investigate the factors of using YouTube in English language learning by most digital native learners in Malaysia.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Definition provided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) language use is equivalent to language learning. It consists of the activities conducted by individuals who draw on the acquired range of overall and detailed, communicative language proficiency at their disposal involving several environments for instance; classroom, work, personal as well as public, outside circumstances, and limitations to engage in language activities.

YOUTUBE

YouTube is an essential site for cultural aggregation...the site as a whole where variously sized videos, commentaries, tools, monitoring devices, and logic of hierarchy all merge into a dynamic seamless whole (Uricchio, 2009). According to Alexa (as cited in Kousha, Thelwall & Abdoli, 2012), YouTube is a video-sharing website, and followed by Google and Facebook, it is recognized as the third most visited website. Terantino (2011) stated in his study showed that YouTube was founded by former employees of PayPal Company known to be Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. With the domain's name as <http://www.youtube.com>, it was established in 2005. To put it in a simple form, YouTube is one of the most prominent social media platforms that offer users to upload various videos pertaining to anything.

DIGITAL NATIVES' LEARNERS

Dr. Mark Prensky was the first who coined the term 'digital natives. He defined it as learners who were surrounded by digital media and were born between 1980 and 2000 (Lie, 2015). In addition to that, digital natives can be known as netizens, Gen Y, and the Millennials. However, not many of them were inclined toward technology and computers even though they were born in a technology environment. They are the generations that enjoy online gamers as well as keen to buy the latest gadgets such as new Tabs, iPad, and iPhones. From their perspectives, having the latest technology is joyful and fun. According to Creighton (2018), digital natives have spent most of their lifetime with the existence of digital communication technology.

METHODOLOGY

This conceptual paper is established solely on a review and Thematic analysis of research as well as data from the previous literature. Thematic analysis is closely examining the data to identify the main themes and patterns collected from textual sources. Therefore, themes were identified and analyzed in the literature.

Firstly, the Google Scholar search engine is used in searching the previous literature research. There are a few terms used for instance: '*English language learning and globalization*', '*the usage of YouTube and Malaysian English language learners*', and '*digital native*'. All the articles found were retrieved from the year 2015 until the recent year 2021 to measure the development of the ideas on the topic discussed. However, not all articles were retrieved from recent years as some fields such as sociology, physiology, and linguistics field were mostly discussed from the selected years which are 2015 until 2021. When 'English language learning and globalization' was searched on google scholar, 9 journal

articles were found and out of 9 of them, only 4 were applicable to this conceptual paper. However, in terms of “the usage of YouTube and Malaysian English language learner,” quite a several articles were retrieved which include a total of 17 journal articles, but only 8 articles were deemed to be relevant. Then, all journal articles were retrieved and reviewed. Other terms were searched and sorted in the same manner. The reading process began once the data was gathered by reviewing by summarizing content that provides relevant information from the past literature on the variables presented. Lastly, all articles were analyzed and themed according to the relevant points.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding from the review shows that three themes were found Attractive and Engaging Learning, Accessible to Various Types of Videos, and Applicable to Different Learning Styles. The data gathered through reviewing from past literature conducted and then analyzed to be themed accordingly to answer the objective of this study; to investigate the factors of using YouTube as a platform in English language learning among digital native learners.

Attractive and Engaging Learning

This theme was identified from 9 journals and 4 are applicable to the theme. An attractive and engaging learning theme focusing on attracting native learners to learning English, an effective approach should be attractive and engaging to the students. This is the fact that Malaysia’s national language is Bahasa Malaysia and English is considered a foreign language. Thus, it is vital to make the learning process to be as much attractive as it can be. Botirca (2007) explained that the use of video in the classroom not only will make the class more interesting and yet engage the learning process. It is supported by research conducted by Mahadhi, Ibrahim, Mustaha, Islam, & Al Younus (2018) discovered that YouTube has engaging audio-visual resources for learning English. They also listed various channels which are interesting and exciting in English language learning such as Learn English, BBC Learning English, English Teacher Mealanie, VidEnglish, and Learn English Vocabulary and Conversation. Malaysian learners can improve their pronunciation, boost their vocabulary, and get to know phrases and idioms as well as presentation skills.

In terms of engaging learning learners, there are three different measurements of student engagement discussed by Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris (2004) mentioned behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement, respectively. Besides, behavioral engagement promotes a positive attitude, active participation, and involvement. In addition to that, behavioral engagement also to observing the action on the part of the students discussed (Axelson & Flick, 2011). Another measurement of learners’ engagement learning process was through emotional engagement. According to Fredericks et al., (2004) it can be referred to as the students’ affective reactions for instance; attentiveness, satisfaction, or a sense of togetherness. Investment in learning as well as involvement in self-regulation and being strategic falls under cognitive engagement as discussed by Fredericks et al, (2004). This is further discussed by Finn & Zimmer (2012) that cognitive engagement is shown when learners exceed the minimum requirements as well as can use it in expedite learning when facing difficult resources that exceeding the minimal requirements involves receiving explanations and justification for related concepts. In this instance, it can be received by learners through providing inquiries, persevering with complex tasks as well as reading additional material beyond and surpassing the recommended materials.

Therefore, to focus on English language learning, researchers had revealed that in terms of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement throughout the learning process, a captivating and creative approach to teaching and learning will succeed.

Accessible to Various Types of Videos

This theme was discovered in 8 journals with 4 related themes. In this globalization era, YouTube is proven to be one of the advancements in information technology (IT). According to Jalaluddin (2016, as cited in Ilyas & Putri 2020), YouTube allows users or members to share various kinds of videos including video clips, TV clips, music videos, movie trailers, and other content namely video blogging, short original videos as well as educational videos. Morat et al., (2017) also found similar findings that YouTube's vast video database provides English language teachers the opportunity to explore various types of videos and use them for diverse language learning purposes in several resourceful and creative ways. In addition, Morat et al., (2017) also found that YouTube videos offer cost-free accessibility. As the most prominent and popular social media sites, YouTube videos are also extensively embedded in many websites as well as blogs, hence making it exceedingly accessible for English teaching and learning for numerous purposes.

Apart from that, YouTube allows Malaysian learners to get access to numerous Native English teachers from other countries. Burt, 1999; Tuzi & Mori, 2008; Xiaoning, 2007 as cited in Morat et al., (2017), explained that YouTube provides a genuine language learning environment for Malaysian learners. The authenticity of a video could be illustrated through videos in the form of movies, television programs, and news broadcasts, which present authentic language that is not sped up and is spoken with real accents most of the time (Morat et al., 2017). Hence, with its authentic content, language learners, especially ESL learners, could be introduced to the nature of the language in a more realistic manner as presented by the characters in the videos. This is especially important for Malaysian learners who have minimal exposure to authentic English as they are not living among the native speakers.

Applicable for Different Learning Styles

Finally, this theme was identified from 9 journals that discussed these relevant subjects. Discussion from Neil & Coleen (1992) proposed the acronym "VARK" in order to describe four learning styles of language learners. Generally, there are four main learning styles for any foreign language learner such as visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. It took them thousands of hours to conduct the study by classroom observation. Hence, it can be summarized that English language learners specifically may receive numerous advantages by using YouTube as a platform. This is because YouTube is applicable to different learning styles.

However, as the world is currently moving forward to a more digitalized system, integrating technology relevant to the cognitive learning styles of the digital natives into the educational environment can benefit both students and instructors (Sarkar & Manzo, 2017). It can be discussed that YouTube allows digital native learners; young learners and adult learners as well as English language teachers to utilize two different approaches; traditional or new approaches in delivering English lesson materials according to the learners' learning styles.

IMPLICATION OF YOUTUBE AS A LEARNING CHANNEL

It is not surprising that YouTube is the most popular platform used by learners to learn English as YouTube has produced videos for instructional purposes. Since learners' use of the tool for learning English, usage patterns might be impacted more by the volume of activities produced in a particular type of social media than by learners' preferences.

In this situation, the frequency of usage of unauthorized resources (such as YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp) may more accurately represent learners' preferences for the tools they choose to use to study English. The most popular English-learning resource among our students was found to be YouTube. Wikis were probably used on a weekly basis while Facebook was also heavily used on a daily and weekly basis. In addition to the top three tools (YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp), female students tended to utilize Instagram while male students tended to use wikis for daily use. More female students utilized WhatsApp than male students did for weekly use, with the exception of the top three tools (YouTube, wikis, and Facebook) (Li, 2017).

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research can focus on the usage of YouTube as an English learning tool for students in school. Students should be evaluated on their capacity to use YouTube-based speaking resources and other ICT language learning tools to learn, gain from, and interact with their classmates. Since YouTube attracts students' attention and helps to stimulate their interests, using it in the classroom should be mandatory and able to encourage students to use YouTube to improve their English language skills. Due to the fact that YouTube should be used to improve not only speaking abilities but also other language abilities (reading, writing, and listening). Relevant to the new technologies must be taught to students in order for them to advance their language abilities, YouTube might be the best channel for that purpose.

CONCLUSION

Numerous researchers had found that the traditional method of teaching and learning is restricted in terms of effectiveness. In fact, in line with the 21st-century advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), teaching and learning the English language can be enhanced through creativity and innovative approaches. This study revealed that YouTube is proven to be a practical, innovative teaching and learning material in conveying English language learning in such attractive and engaging ways to English learners, especially to the digital native learners in Malaysia. The application of the various learning styles for the learners in learning the English language contributes to the engaging learning environment for the learners as well. As stated in Malaysia's Federal Constitution Article 152, the Malay language is the national language, thus it is regarded that the English language serves as the second language in Malaysia. Hence, Malaysian learners are keen to utilize YouTube as a preferred platform to learn the English language due to the accessibility and availability of native speakers from different countries, especially in most developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. YouTube can assist Malaysian learners in improving their level of English language proficiency to be on par with international standards as clearly stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025.

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