The Correlation Between the Use of Youtube Short Videos to Enhance Foreign Language Reading and Writing Proficiency, and the Academic Performance of Undergraduates

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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T

Technology has opened avenues for varied modalities of language acquisition. Among these, YouTube serves as a pertinent technological platform offering language learners opportunities for linguistic enhancement. This study delves into the relationship between the utilization of YouTube short videos and the advancement of foreign language (FL) reading and writing competencies among undergraduate students. Specifically, the investigation seeks to elucidate the impact of YouTube short videos on the overall academic performance of undergraduates. Employing a quasi-experimental design, participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental group (EG) or the control group (CG). The intervention involved integrating YouTube short videos into FL instruction as the independent variable, while assessments of FL reading and writing skills served as dependent variables. Thirty individuals participated in the study, with 15 assigned to the EG and 15 to the CG through random selection. A paired T-test was employed to ascertain the statistical significance of the findings. Results indicated a notable improvement in reading and writing proficiency among the EG compared to the CG. This suggests the efficacy of utilizing YouTube short videos in bolstering learners' language skills. Notably, the paired sample T-test yielded a significance (two-tailed) value of 0.000, falling below the conventional threshold of 0.05, further validating the observed improvements.

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Introduction

YouTube has emerged as a prominent social media platform contributing to the enhancement of educational endeavours among students. Extensive scholarly literature (Duffy, 2008; Hariyono, 2020; Mayora, 2009; Noreewec & Margana, 2018; Simbolon & Febrianti, 2020; Zaidi et al., 2018) underscores the significant influence of YouTube videos on the language proficiencies of foreign language learners. Within this context, YouTube facilitates language acquisition by affording learners opportunities to refine various language competencies encompassing speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills. Notably, the platform harbours diverse channels dedicated to language instruction, enabling learners to select from a spectrum of resources tailored to their preferences and learning styles. Factors such as video quality, duration, instructional approach, and compatibility with learners' preferences influence channel selection. Of particular interest are YouTube short videos, defined as videos with durations not exceeding 15 seconds. Short-form content plays a pivotal role in engaging learners' attention and facilitating information retention. Furthermore, the succinct nature of YouTube short videos necessitates creators to curate content with utmost relevance, fostering a sense of anticipation among viewers and encouraging repeat engagement.

Several studies have investigated the impact of YouTube on improving language learning, particularly for students studying foreign languages. Scholars highlight YouTube's significance in enhancing language proficiency and fostering enthusiasm for language learning among students. While research demonstrates the positive effects of YouTube on language skills among university students, there's a need to delve deeper into how YouTube short videos specifically influence reading, writing, and overall academic performance. Despite scholars exploring YouTube's educational relevance and its effects on language education, there remains a gap in understanding the correlation between YouTube short videos and undergraduates' reading and writing proficiency. Thus, this research aims to address this gap by examining the impact of YouTube short videos on language skills and academic performance.

The current study aimed to investigate the impact of YouTube short videos on the academic attainment of undergraduate students. Employing a quasi-experimental design, participants were randomly assigned to either an EG or a CG. Thirty individuals were selected randomly, with 15 allocated to each group. Subsequently, a paired T-test was conducted to evaluate the statistical significance of the results. The analysis revealed that the EG exhibited greater enhancement in reading and writing proficiency compared to the CG, suggesting the efficacy of YouTube short videos in improving language skills. Additionally, the paired sample T-test yielded a significance value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance below the conventional threshold of 0.05. The remainder of the study comprises sections on literature review, research methodology, data analysis, discussion, conclusion, implications, and avenues for future research.

Literature Review

Language Learning Beyond Classroom

The process of language acquisition has transcended traditional educational confines, evolving into a dynamic and multifaceted progression that extends well beyond the

physical boundaries of academic institutions. Contemporary lifestyles, increasingly characterized by digital interconnectedness, necessitate language use across virtual and real-world contexts. Yang (2020) highlights this paradigm shift in language learning, ushering in a new era marked by extensive research in the linguistic domain. Alqahtani (2014) underscores the pivotal role of technological advancements in surmounting geographical barriers to language acquisition. The emergence of online platforms, language learning applications, and interactive software empowers learners to take charge of their learning journey, ensuring equitable access to linguistic resources tailored to individual preferences and needs.

Moreover, alternative educational approaches, such as gamification, offer innovative avenues for language practice. Sailer and Homner (2020) assert that gamification enhances language learning by immersing learners in enjoyable and immersive experiences. Language learning applications often integrate gamified elements, such as challenges and rewards, fostering dynamic environments conducive to vocabulary and grammar acquisition. Arce and Valdivia (2020) further support this notion, suggesting that gamification techniques, when coupled with digital support tools, positively impact learning potential.

The proliferation of online language communities facilitates interaction among language learners, native speakers, and enthusiasts, creating virtual platforms conducive to language proficiency development. These platforms, including social media sites, language exchange websites, and forums, offer collaborative learning spaces, cultural interfaces, and real-time language practice, nurturing a sense of global language community (Perez et al., 2023).

Considerable scholarly attention has been directed towards prominent social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Malik & Asnur, 2019), as well as Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, and WhatsApp (Trang, 2022). Palurović et al. (2020) underscored the benefits of incorporating social media into higher education, particularly in fostering student-centred pedagogical approaches. Notably, YouTube has been highlighted in the literature for its utility as an educational tool, facilitating communication, collaboration, and knowledge dissemination (Bekteshi, 2019). AISSAOUI (2023) asserted the reliability of Facebook groups as an effective tool for organizing learning activities. Conversely, Malik et al. (2019) observed Twitter's predominant use for communication and evaluation purposes. Collectively, the utilization of social media platforms positively contributes to knowledge acquisition among students.

The potential of YouTube in Language Learning

The advent of technology has ushered in a myriad of online resources that can augment traditional language teaching and learning methodologies. Among these resources, YouTube emerges as a prominent platform offering a rich array of video content encompassing diverse genres such as video clips, television excerpts, movie trailers, video blogs, and educational materials (Hariyono, 2020). Kabooha and Elyas (2018) underscore the global reliance on YouTube as a primary source of entertainment, education, and information dissemination, enabling users to upload, share, and consume videos. This platform serves as a catalyst for interpersonal engagement, community formation around shared interests, and content creation and dissemination.

Moreover, YouTube harbours immense potential for enhancing language learning. Kelsen (2009) posits YouTube as a valuable educational tool, offering access to a wealth of instructional resources and promoting self-directed learning. Kim (2019) highlights YouTube's unparalleled capacity for observing authentic language usage, providing learners with diverse materials such as dialogues, interviews, video blogs, and cultural demonstrations that offer genuine insights into language usage. The platform's accessibility stands out as a significant advantage, ensuring learners can access language learning content at their convenience, catering to varied schedules and preferences (Bekteshi, 2019). Additionally, scholarly literature acknowledges the autonomy fostered by YouTube videos, empowering students to engage in self-directed learning approaches (Bekteshi, 2019). Regular interaction with educational videos on this platform may afford learners opportunities for second language immersion, supplementing formal language study programs with authentic language experiences.

In an empirical investigation, Lo (2012) explored learners' engagement with the YouTube platform, with a particular focus on Chinese language videos available therein. The study highlighted the significant impact of selected films for classroom use in stimulating learners' proactive pursuit of academic support during second language acquisition processes. Scholarly discourse recognizes the benefits of incorporating YouTube videos to enhance learners' proficiency across listening, speaking, reading, and writing domains. For instance, while Lating (2022); Mayora (2009), and Yeh et al. (2020) examined the utility of YouTube videos in bolstering EFL learners' writing skills, Rachmawati and Cahyani (2020) investigated their efficacy in improving learners' pronunciation. YAGOUB (2020) delved into how this platform facilitates the development of speaking skills among second-year EFL students at Biskra University. YAGOUB's study unveiled that the consistent and frequent integration of instructional YouTube videos by faculty members at the University of Mohammed Kheider Biskra significantly influences students' attitudes, sustains their engagement throughout sessions, and motivates them to enhance their oral communication proficiencies.

Developing Reading and Writing Proficiency with YouTube Short Videos

An additional dimension of YouTube videos that attracts the swift attention of language learners is represented by YouTube short videos. These short videos, akin to their longer counterparts, possess condensed durations, a characteristic that resonates harmoniously with the abbreviated attention spans characteristic of the contemporary era. The brevity of these videos fosters swift engagement, rendering them adept at captivating learners' attention and sustaining their focus throughout educational sessions. A study conducted by Zhang et al. (2022) elucidates that the distinction between short videos and conventional videos transcends mere temporal differences, encompassing the reconfiguration of multimodal components within compressed time frames, as posited by Alvi et al. (2021). Effective execution of the intricate process of video production necessitates meticulous selection and integration of these multimodal aspects by video creators. In the realm of FL acquisition, scholars recognize the significance of linguistic choices conducive to language learning. However, the inclusion of multiple modalities is imperative for ensuring the efficacy of succinct videos and their potential for autonomous analysis distinct from conventional counterparts, as emphasized by Muhlisoh et al. (2022).

Concurrently, the multimodal elements embedded within YouTube short videos encompass interactive and collaborative features, video content, speed control, filters and effects, text and captions, stickers and emoticons, music, and audio. These elements are prominently displayed on the interface of YouTube short videos, as depicted in Figure 1 and Figure 2, serving as replicas of the interface appearance.
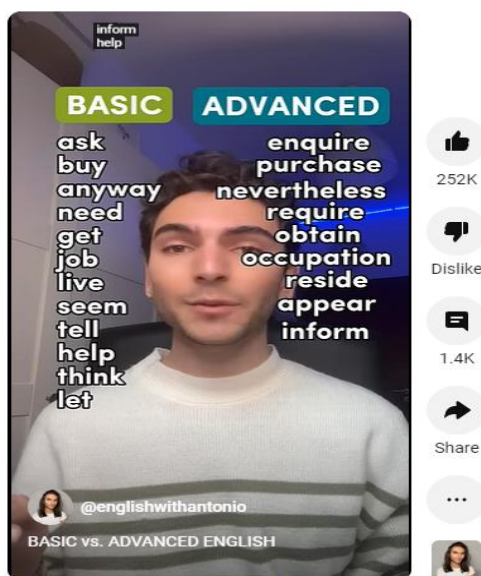

Figure 1: *A sample of language-related YouTube Short Video.*
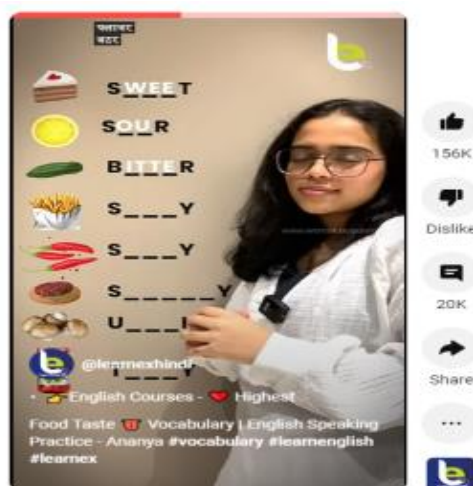

Figure 2: *A sample of language-related YouTube Short Video.*

YouTube short videos, besides facilitating swift engagement among language learners,

incorporate multimodal elements such as video content, text, and captions to enhance reading and writing proficiency. These brief videos offer a visual context that aids in comprehending written material. According to Zhang et al. (2022), learners can deepen their understanding of textual content by interacting with relevant films, thus visually depicting scenes, characters, and concepts, which facilitates comprehension. This multimedia approach improves overall understanding and accessibility of reading materials, particularly benefiting visual learners (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Moreover, visually stimulating elements in short video content often inspire detailed writing, encouraging learners to express observations with rich sensory language and vivid details. This practice enhances observational skills and improves the ability to communicate visual imagery effectively through language. The study is guided by two hypotheses.

Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is a significant correlation between the use of YouTube short videos to enhance reading and writing proficiency and the academic performance of undergraduates.

Ha (Alternative Hypothesis): There is no significant correlation between the use of YouTube short videos to enhance reading and writing proficiency and the academic performance of undergraduates.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The present research adopted a quantitative research methodology, specifically employing an experimental research design. Experimental studies are characterized by two essential features: deliberate manipulation of treatment variables by the researcher and random assignment of units, typically students, to different treatment conditions. These attributes constitute fundamental measures employed by researchers to establish causal relationships. In this study, a quasi-experimental design was utilized, incorporating pre- and post-tests for both experimental and control groups (EG and CG, respectively). Two courses were randomly selected for participation. The experimental group received instruction utilizing YouTube videos, while the control group received conventional training using audio tapes.

Research Participants

The sample population comprises 30 university students, comprising 18 females and 12 males, randomly drawn from diverse locales. Selection criteria were applied, necessitating participants to be intermediate-level EFL learners, aged between 17 and 24 years. The research sample was divided into two groups, totalling 26 students. Random allocation was employed to assign both groups into two subgroups. The EG comprised 15 students, while the CG consisted of 15 students as well.

Research Instruments and Procedure

Prior to the commencement of the experiment, both groups underwent a pre-test to evaluate their proficiency in reading and writing comprehension. Identical tests were administered to ensure comparable levels of proficiency between the groups. Initially,

students were tasked with reading a designated text and composing a 500-word descriptive essay ("An Important Day in My Life") to gauge their baseline reading and writing skills. Subsequently, a post-test was administered to assess progress in reading and writing proficiency. Notably, the EG utilized YouTube short videos from various channels, including Antonio Parlati (Learn English), English Listening Practice, Sara English School, and Let'stute Gohar Khan, to enhance their skills, while the CG received traditional instruction methods. This assessment aimed to discern any discernible disparities in the reading and writing proficiency of students exposed to YouTube video instruction compared to those who were not. Data scores were processed using statistical formulas and analysed through specialized procedure.

Data Analysis and Discussion

A pre-test was administered to ensure the equivalence of the two groups regarding their initial performance in listening comprehension abilities at the outset of the experiment. The results of both the pre-test and post-test are presented in Table 1, which delineates the outcomes of the pre-test conducted within the two group cohorts. Additionally, a t-test was conducted to further scrutinize the data gathered from the pre-test of reading and writing proficiency. Table 1 illustrates the mean scores of the CG and the EG, which are 18.70 and 19.04, respectively. A marginal disparity in mean scores is observed between the two groups. To evaluate the extent of this discrepancy at the onset of the study, a t-test was employed to compare the mean scores. However, the close proximity of the mean scores between the two groups suggests a lack of substantial disparity in the pre-test performance of the EG and CG. The t-values, approaching 0, indicate an absence of significant difference between the means. Furthermore, the p-values for both cases are 0.68, surpassing the conventional significance threshold of 0.05. This observation implies that, based on the pre-test outcomes, no statistically significant difference exists between the two groups. In summary, the pre-test results fail to provide compelling evidence to warrant the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, during the pre-test phase, no statistically significant disparity in reading and writing skills or academic achievement is discerned between the EG and CG.

Table 1

Pre-Test for Reading and Writing Proficiency.

Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	T-value	P-value
Control	15	18.70	2.370	0.61	-0.43	0.68
Experimental	15	19.04	2.122	0.53	-0.43	0.68

*Significance α ≤ (0.05).

Table 2, complemented by t-test analysis, presents the post-test outcomes. The objective of this evaluation was to ascertain whether significant differences existed in the post-test performance of participants within the respective groups. For the CG, the mean and standard deviation of the observed reading and writing performance development were 19.80 and 2.93, respectively. Conversely, for the EG, these figures were 23.80 and 1.61, respectively.

Analysis of mean scores reveals a notable discrepancy between the EG and CG in overall test performance. Additionally, t-values of -5.812 for both groups indicate a statistically significant difference in mean scores. Remarkably small p-values, less than 0.000, further confirm statistical significance. Thus, significant disparities between the

experimental and control groups are observed. The EG demonstrates a statistically significant enhancement in overall reading and writing skills, as evidenced by the post-test results. These findings strongly support the rejection of the null hypothesis, suggesting a substantial disparity in reading and writing proficiency or academic achievement between the experimental and control groups following the implementation of YouTube short videos as an intervention. The observed effect is positive, signifying that YouTube short videos positively impact the academic achievement of the EG.

Table 2

Post-Test for Reading and Writing Proficiency.

Groups	N	M	Std. Dev.	Std. Err	Degree of Freedom (df)	t value	p-value
CG	15	19.80	2.93	0.58	28	-5.812	<0.000
EG	15	23.80	1.61	0.39	28	-5.812	<0.000

*Significance $\alpha \le (0.05)$.

Table 3 was utilized to examine the variations between pre-test and post-test scores within both the experimental and control groups (intra-group assessment). This assessment aimed to elucidate the distinct changes in performance observed in both the experimental and control groups since the initiation of the study. The control group's performance was evaluated through pre- and post-tests, revealing improvements in mean scores for reading proficiency among participants, as depicted in Table 3. Consequently, it may be inferred that individuals in the control group did not demonstrate significant enhancement in their reading and writing proficiency. Conversely, regarding the experimental group, compelling evidence suggests substantial disparities in overall reading and writing performance between the mean scores on the pre-test and the post-test. These discrepancies are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, denoted by the calculated p-value of 0.00, which is below the predetermined significance threshold of 0.05 (0.00<0.05). Based on this evidence, it can be concluded that the utilization of YouTube short video technology has yielded a noteworthy impact on enhancing the reading and writing proficiency of foreign language students, consequently improving overall academic performance.

Table 3

Paired Sample T-Test for the Pre and Post-Tests for Both Groups.

Sample	N	Mean Score (pre-test_	Mean Score (post-test)	sd	Standard error mean	Sig.(two-tailed)	F	Df
Control	15	18.70	19.80	1.056	3.055	0.185	-1.347	14
Experimental	15	19.04	23.80	4.723	3.321	0.000	-5.452	14

Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between the utilization of YouTube short videos for enhancing foreign language reading and writing proficiency and the academic performance of undergraduate students. To address this aim, two pertinent hypotheses were formulated: first, positing a significant correlation between

the use of YouTube short videos to augment reading and writing proficiency and academic performance of undergraduates, and second, proposing no significant correlation between the use of YouTube short videos for enhancing reading and writing proficiency and academic performance of undergraduates. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design, a cohort of 30 students participated in this research, subsequently divided into control and experimental groups (CGs and EGs). Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to both groups to evaluate their respective performance. To analyse the data comprehensively, a paired sample t-test was employed to delineate the distinct changes in performance observed in both the experimental and control groups since the inception of the investigation. Initial assessment outcomes revealed no statistically significant differences in levels of reading and writing competence or academic achievement between the control and experimental groups. Both groups exhibited comparable averages, with t-values approximating zero and p-values exceeding 0.05.

The results of the post-test unveiled a statistically significant shift in both the CG and the EG. The study outcomes indicate that while the CG exhibited a marginal change in scores, the EG demonstrated a substantial enhancement in their reading and writing proficiency, along with overall academic performance. Notably, the t-values for both groups indicated statistically significant differences. These findings provide empirical support for rejecting the null hypothesis, affirming a significant statistical correlation between the utilization of YouTube videos and the academic success of undergraduate students.

The findings suggest that the instructional approach positively influenced the learning outcomes of language learners. In conclusion, these findings align with previous research, which similarly highlighted the beneficial impact of YouTube video instruction on writing skills compared to traditional teaching methods. However, Mohammadian et al. (2018) identified a significant disparity in the reading proficiency of students instructed via YouTube videos compared to those taught in conventional classrooms, revealing an important gap in comprehension between the two instructional approaches.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of YouTube videos on FL writing and speaking skills. Initial hypotheses were proposed to test the potential correlation between using these videos and educational outcomes. Preliminary findings indicated no significant differences in achievement between the control and intervention groups. However, post-test results showed a significant improvement in the intervention group, supporting the alternative hypothesis. Meanwhile, the control group displayed a non-significant increase in scores. The findings underscore the positive impact of YouTube videos on academic performance, particularly in reading and writing. They emphasize the importance of incorporating multimedia instructional strategies to transform teaching methodologies and enhance student learning. Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between multimedia resources, such as YouTube short videos, and student achievement. It recommends strategic utilization of YouTube clips as learning resources, highlighting the importance of selecting reliable content to enhance FL reading and writing approaches. Accessing only reliable content on YouTube is crucial for improving overall understanding of FL learning, reading, and writing.

Research Implications

This research aimed to address gaps in the existing literature and offer practical recommendations regarding the utilization of YouTube clips for FL learning. It contributes to the literature by emphasizing the critical role of YouTube clips and videos in students' learning and academic advancement. The study underscores the significance of introducing learners to YouTube clips containing relevant FL knowledge, which can positively impact their performance. Previous studies have not adequately explored these findings, making this research a noteworthy addition to the literature on the role of YouTube clips in FL learning. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of YouTube clips in facilitating FL reading and writing skills. The findings from the experimental group demonstrate that YouTube videos significantly influence students' learning strategies, thereby enhancing their performance. In contrast, learners in the control group encountered difficulties accessing YouTube clips, hindering their FL learning. The study advocates for the use of YouTube clips in FL learning, emphasizing their importance for students' overall performance.

In addition to its theoretical contributions, the research offers practical implications for enhancing FL learning through YouTube videos. It emphasizes the necessity of appropriate learning materials in YouTube clips and videos to improve students' learning outcomes. Accessing reliable learning materials is crucial for enhancing learning strategies and advancing FL learning. Therefore, ensuring the quality and relevance of content in YouTube videos is essential for promoting effective FL learning. Furthermore, the study suggests improving students' learning attitudes through external motivation and accessing premium content for FL learning. Quality content plays a vital role in enhancing the learning process and fostering a better understanding of FL reading and writing. Hence, prioritizing the quality of content is essential for developing proficiency in FL reading and writing skills.

Future Directions

This study has made significant contributions to knowledge and offered practical recommendations. However, there are still some gaps in the existing literature that warrant further investigation. Firstly, the study utilized experimental and control groups for analysing findings, a method commonly employed in literature. Future studies are encouraged to gather data and analyse findings based on independent observations to enhance research methodologies.

Additionally, there is a need for random selection of respondents when collecting data using Likert scale questionnaires. This approach would constitute a valuable addition to the literature in future studies. Moreover, while this study exclusively focused on YouTube clips as a source of learning, other platforms such as TikTok could also serve as reliable resources for improving student learning. Future research endeavours should consider incorporating TikTok as a source of foreign language learning and collecting data accordingly. This would contribute significantly to the literature, as TikTok is rarely discussed as a learning channel by scholars. Furthermore, scholars could enhance contributions to the body of knowledge by conducting multigroup analyses based on gender differences. This approach would offer a detailed exploration of the perceptions of

different genders regarding foreign language learning from platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, enriching the scholarly discourse on the subject.

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