


Students' Perception on the Effect of YouTube Livestream to Their Receptive Skills and English Component

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A B S T R A C T

The increasing popularity of YouTube livestreams as a form of digital media has generated growing interest in their potential contribution to English language learning. This study explores university students' perceptions of the impact of YouTube livestreams on the development of receptive English skills and language components. A qualitative approach was employed through semi-structured interviews with two university students who regularly engaged with English-language livestream content. The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and perceptions. The findings indicate that participants perceived noticeable improvements in listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation awareness through repeated exposure to authentic spoken English. However, both participants reported limited benefits for reading skills and expressed uncertainty regarding the influence of livestreams on grammar development, suggesting that these aspects require more explicit instructional support. Overall, the findings suggest that YouTube livestreams can serve as a valuable supplementary resource for developing receptive language skills, particularly listening and vocabulary. Nevertheless, the study is limited by its small and relatively homogeneous sample and its reliance on self-reported perceptions rather than objective measures of language proficiency. Future research involving larger and more diverse participant groups is recommended to validate and extend these findings.

Keywords: *Youtube, Livestream, Students' Perception, Listening Skills, Reading Skills, Grammar, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, English Learning.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed the landscape of language learning. Technology, as defined by Arthur, is "a means to fulfil purpose" (Toh & Kirschner, 2020), indicating that it is fundamentally designed to assist humans in achieving specific goals. In the context of education, this purpose has evolved from merely supporting instruction to actively reshaping how knowledge is accessed, shared, and constructed.

The development of the internet and mobile technologies has enabled learners to access educational content anytime and anywhere, making learning more flexible and personalized. As noted by Burbules et al. (2020), "information technology is increasingly driving changes in education by transforming teaching methods and fostering a more collaborative, connected learning environment." This shift highlights that technology is no longer just a supplementary tool but a central component in modern education.

However, the integration of technology also introduces new challenges. While earlier barriers were related to access—such as limited internet connectivity or lack of devices—current challenges focus more on the quality of technology use and the digital competencies required to utilize it effectively. These challenges are often associated with "more advanced digital competences" and their integration into subject-specific knowledge (Schmitz et al.,

2022). Additionally, a lack of proper training in digital tools and ICT continues to hinder effective implementation in educational settings (AlAjmi, 2022).

Although previous studies have examined the role of digital platforms such as podcasts, YouTube videos, and other online resources in language learning, most of them focus on structured or pre-recorded content. There is still limited research on livestream environments, particularly those that are informal and not specifically designed for educational purposes. This indicates a gap in understanding how such environments contribute to language development.

Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of the impact of YouTube livestream content on their receptive English skills and language components. By focusing on learners' experiences, this study seeks to provide insights into how informal digital environments can support language learning.

Despite these challenges, technology offers significant potential for enhancing language learning, particularly through exposure to authentic and interactive content. One such form of digital content is YouTube livestreaming, which allows real-time interaction between content creators and viewers. Unlike pre-recorded materials, livestreams provide spontaneous communication, exposure to informal language, and opportunities for interaction, making them a rich source of authentic input.

Fundamental Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) and Krashen Input Hypothesis (1989), which together provide a framework for understanding how informal digital contexts such as YouTube livestreams support language learning. Krashen emphasizes that language acquisition occurs through exposure to "comprehensible input... a little beyond [the learner's] current level of competence (i+1)" (Krashen, 1989). This highlights the importance of meaningful, context-rich input in developing receptive skills, particularly listening and reading. In livestream environments, learners are exposed to unscripted, real-time communication and interactive features such as live chat and audience participation. These elements provide continuous input that allows learners to infer meaning from context and become familiar with different accents, speech rates, and everyday expressions.

Previous Study

Several previous studies have examined the integration of livestreaming and digital platforms in English language learning. Samat et al. (2019) found that livestreaming provides "authentic content, real-life English communication, and promotes autonomy among learners." Similarly, Yusuf & Ali (2023) reported that livestream environments allow students to "practice their English skills in a more interactive and meaningful context" and encourage "active participation and collaboration." Kruk (2022), in his study of virtual environments, highlighted that real-time interaction supports motivation, reduces anxiety, and enhances learning through natural exposure to language. In addition, Boltziar & Munkova (2024) found that YouTube captions help improve listening comprehension and provide "valuable assistance in recognizing new vocabulary and understanding connected speech."

YouTube content serves both educational and entertainment purposes in language learning contexts. Educational videos typically provide structured explanations of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, whereas entertainment-oriented content, such as vlogs and gaming videos, exposes learners to informal expressions and authentic real-life communication. Through continuous exposure to such content, learners may develop familiarity with naturally occurring language use in everyday situations. Previous research has shown that captions can support listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition by enabling learners to pause, replay, and review unfamiliar language forms more effectively (Boltziar & Munkova, 2024). In addition, visual elements such as gestures, facial expressions, and contextual cues contribute to meaning construction and enhance learners' comprehension during the learning process (Zheng et al., 2022). However, the effectiveness of video-based materials is influenced by factors including content complexity and learners' language

proficiency levels (Montero Perez, 2022). Although captions and visual supports may facilitate understanding, learners may still experience challenges when encountering more advanced linguistic features or complex discourse.

Compared to pre-recorded videos, livestreaming offers a more interactive and immersive learning environment that allows learners to observe authentic language use and participate in real-time communication (Chen et al., 2019). Through livestreams, learners can engage with streamers and other viewers simultaneously, creating opportunities for exposure to spontaneous and natural interaction. Furthermore, livestreaming supports informal and self-directed learning because learners are able to select content based on their personal interests, such as gaming or lifestyle streams. Such repeated exposure to meaningful communication may contribute to incidental language acquisition and provide learners with opportunities to develop their language skills in a more engaging and authentic context (Akpan, 2021).

YouTube offers extensive access to both pedagogical and authentic content, including instructional tutorials, interviews, podcasts, vlogs, gaming streams, and lifestyle videos. This diversity enables learners to engage with language input across multiple communicative contexts while accommodating varying learning preferences and proficiency levels. Through its multimodal characteristics, such as captions, subtitles, visual demonstrations, contextual cues, and interactive features, YouTube facilitates exposure to authentic language use and supports learners' comprehension, retention, and production of linguistic forms.

Previous studies have suggested that integrating YouTube-based materials into language learning environments can improve learners' pronunciation accuracy and speaking fluency more effectively than traditional instructional approaches alone (Saed et al., 2021). In particular, videos incorporating animated articulation guides, mouth movement demonstrations, or phonetic visualizations assist learners in understanding how specific sounds are physically produced, thereby supporting more accurate pronunciation practice (Juma, 2021). Furthermore, captions and subtitles contribute to learners' ability to process spoken input and imitate pronunciation features through repeated exposure and active engagement with the content (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020).

Educational videos frequently combine spoken explanations with written examples, allowing learners to simultaneously observe and hear grammatical structures in use. Captions further strengthen this process by enabling learners to visualize sentence organization, verb forms, and syntactic patterns while processing spoken discourse (Pattemore & Muñoz, 2020). Such multimodal input contributes to learners' ability to recognize and internalize grammatical structures more effectively. Moreover, the integration of YouTube into instructional approaches such as the flipped classroom model has been associated with increased learner engagement and more active language practice. Within this model, learners independently review grammar explanations through video-based materials before participating in collaborative classroom activities designed to reinforce grammatical understanding (Afzali & Izadpanah, 2021).

YouTube also plays an important role in vocabulary development by supporting both intentional and incidental vocabulary learning. Research has consistently shown that captioned videos contribute significantly to learners' ability to recognize, recall, and comprehend new lexical items (Montero Perez, 2020; F. Teng, 2022; M. F. Teng, 2023). Formal educational content commonly employs structured instructional strategies, including glossed captions, keyword highlighting, repetition, and visual explanation, to facilitate the acquisition of academic vocabulary and strengthen form-meaning connections (F. Teng, 2022; Wei & Fan, 2022).

Although previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of digital media in language learning, most have focused on structured or instructional contexts. Limited attention has been given to informal, entertainment-based livestream content and its role in language development. Furthermore, existing research often emphasizes productive skills such as speaking, while less focus is placed on receptive skills, particularly in naturalistic

environments. There is also a lack of qualitative research exploring learners' personal experiences and perceptions when engaging with livestream content.

Therefore, this study aims to address these gaps by examining how students perceive the impact of YouTube livestreams on their receptive English skills and language components. By focusing on informal learning contexts, this study provides a deeper understanding of how language acquisition occurs outside traditional educational settings.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, and the findings were presented using a case study approach. The researcher chose the case study method because it provides a detailed and in-depth understanding of individuals. In addition, this study explored students' perceptions of how livestream content influences their English language proficiency and language components through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the participants. The qualitative case study approach allowed the researcher to examine the participants' experiences and perspectives in depth, which was essential for understanding how livestream content affected their language components, including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, as well as their receptive skills, namely reading and listening. By focusing on only two participants, the study was able to provide a deeper and more contextualized analysis of their unique viewpoints. Furthermore, the semi-structured interview format gave flexibility to explore participants' responses more thoroughly while still remaining connected to the research questions.

Respondents

Participant selection in qualitative research is generally conducted purposively rather than randomly in order to identify individuals who are capable of providing rich and meaningful information related to the research objectives. Several criteria were established in selecting the participants. First, the participants were required to regularly watch English-language YouTube livestreams. Second, they needed to engage with livestream content at least once a week in order to ensure consistent exposure to authentic English communication. Third, the researcher had prior knowledge of the participants' livestream viewing habits, which enabled the researcher to select individuals whose experiences closely aligned with the focus of the study. Two participants were ultimately selected because they fulfilled the established criteria and demonstrated frequent engagement with English-language livestream content.

Instruments

This study employed semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research because they provide a balance between structure and flexibility, allowing researchers to address predetermined topics while also encouraging participants to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives in detail. The interview instrument consisted of twenty-four questions organized into several thematic categories based on the objectives of the study. The questions were specifically designed to explore participants' perceptions regarding the impact of YouTube livestreams on their English language development.

Procedures

The data collection process was conducted through several systematic stages to ensure clarity, consistency, and ethical compliance. The interviews were conducted face-to-face. During the interviews; participants were encouraged to respond freely and elaborate on their experiences in detail. Follow-up questions were also asked whenever necessary to obtain deeper insights into participants' perceptions and experiences regarding YouTube livestream exposure. Following the interviews, the audio recordings were manually transcribed into written text using Microsoft Word. The transcriptions were then reviewed repeatedly to ensure transcription accuracy and familiarity with the data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis procedure in this study followed the thematic analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), which is used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within qualitative data. The process consisted of six iterative stages: (1) familiarizing with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the final report. After the interview recordings were transcribed, the transcripts were read several times using both inductive and deductive approaches to develop familiarity with the data and identify important points through coding. These codes were then organized into broader themes that reflected different aspects of the participants' perceptions regarding the influence of YouTube livestreams on their English language development. The themes included patterns related to vocabulary exposure, grammar comprehension, pronunciation awareness, as well as listening and reading comprehension. To ensure the themes accurately represented the data and remained relevant to the research focus, they were carefully reviewed and refined throughout the analysis process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**Student's Perception on The Impact of Livestream on Their Receptive Skills***Listening skills*

The findings of the present study demonstrate that participants perceived YouTube livestreams as contributing positively to the development of their receptive English skills, particularly listening comprehension. The participants' experiences indicate that repeated exposure to authentic and spontaneous spoken interaction within livestream environments facilitated greater familiarity with naturally occurring English communication.

Both participants reported noticeable improvements in their listening comprehension after regularly engaging with English-language livestreams. Participant A stated, "Yes, there is always improvement by listening to streamer I can find new word and maybe pronounced it more correctly and also trained my listening skills through livestream and interact with other". Similarly, Participant B explained, "Yes, there is an improvement because nowadays I can watch English movie, video, or even livestream without using subtitles and still understand what they say and understand the message". These responses indicate that participants experienced increased confidence in comprehending spoken English and gradually reduced their dependence on subtitles during media consumption. This transition from subtitle reliance toward more autonomous listening comprehension further appeared in Participant A's statement: "Usually back then, I watch YouTube videos with subtitles for me to understand the videos, and right now I watch livestream that doesn't have a subtitle but I still can understand it". Such findings suggest that listening development emerged not through explicit language instruction but through repeated interaction with authentic spoken input over extended periods of time.

The findings are consistent with previous research concerning the role of subtitles and authentic audiovisual input in supporting listening comprehension. Dizon & Thanyawatpokin (2021) found that subtitles and dual subtitles significantly supported vocabulary learning and listening comprehension, with learners using textual aids demonstrating stronger vocabulary identification and meaning recall. Similarly, Majuddin et al. (2021) reported that captioned videos produced substantially better comprehension outcomes compared to uncaptioned videos, indicating the important role of textual support in facilitating listening development. Although livestreams are often characterized by spontaneous and unscripted communication, the authentic nature of livestream interaction may further strengthen comprehension by situating language within meaningful real-world contexts.

The findings additionally suggest that the frequency and duration of livestream exposure may play an important role in supporting listening development. Participant A reported engaging in highly intensive viewing practices, stating, "I watch 12-hour livestream in a day with different streamer", whereas Participant B described a more moderate but

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consistent viewing routine, explaining, "Usually, it is around 2–3 hours". Despite differences in viewing intensity, both participants maintained regular exposure to English-language livestreams. These findings support the argument that sustained and repeated engagement with authentic spoken input may contribute to long-term receptive language development. Gonulal (2022) emphasizes that extensive listening practices, ranging from several minutes to prolonged periods of exposure, can significantly enhance listening comprehension, particularly when repetition enables learners to focus on details and features of spoken language. Furthermore, the findings support the argument that consistent exposure to diverse spoken input may gradually strengthen learners' comprehension abilities over time. Mukhtorova & Ilxomov (2024) argue that students who regularly engage with English through varied audio sources are more likely to improve their comprehension of spoken communication and their ability to understand complex material. The participants' experiences in the present study similarly indicate that livestream exposure contributed to increased familiarity with natural speech patterns, conversational rhythm, and spontaneous communication. Through continuous interaction with livestream content, participants gradually developed greater confidence in interpreting spoken English without relying heavily on subtitles or translation support.

Reading Skills

Findings regarding reading development revealed more limited and inconsistent outcomes. Both participants reported relatively low levels of engagement with textual features such as live chat during livestream viewing. Participant A stated, "Yes, sometimes I read the comment", while Participant B explained, "Most of the time, I just focus on the livestream but sometimes if there is something funny or great happening, I open up the chat". These responses suggest that interaction with textual content occurred only occasionally and was often dependent on situational interest rather than deliberate reading-oriented engagement. Although participants were exposed to written communication through live chat and audience interaction, such exposure appeared insufficient to substantially influence reading comprehension development. This finding aligns with Hiver et al. (2024), who argue that meaningful engagement in language learning requires learners to actively focus attention and establish connections between language forms and their meanings in use. In the absence of sustained textual engagement, participants' opportunities for developing reading comprehension through livestreams remained relatively limited.

Students' Perceptions of the Effects of Livestream Content on English Language Components

The findings of the present study indicate that YouTube livestreams contributed to participants' perceptions of development in several English language components, particularly vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation awareness, and understanding of informal grammatical usage. Through repeated exposure to unscripted and real-time communication, participants engaged with authentic language practices that differed considerably from the formal and structured input commonly encountered in classroom environments. In this context, livestreams functioned not as explicit instructional platforms, but rather as informal digital spaces that facilitated incidental language learning through interest-driven interaction, contextual understanding, and continuous exposure to authentic communication.

Grammar

grammar emerged as the area in which learners demonstrated the greatest uncertainty. Both participants recognized noticeable differences between the grammatical structures used in livestream communication and those commonly emphasized in formal educational settings. Participant A stated, "I don't know if it's incorrect or not, but I am sure that the grammar is different from what I know", while Participant B responded, "I don't know, maybe I heard it but I didn't realize it, I just don't know". These responses indicate that although participants were aware of deviations from formal grammatical conventions, they lacked confidence in identifying or evaluating grammatical accuracy during livestream viewing.

The findings further suggest that livestream environments exposed participants to informal and conversational forms of English that differ substantially from the standardized grammar typically taught in classrooms. De Wilde (2020) argue that informal digital environments frequently involve more casual and less structured grammatical usage, potentially encouraging learners to reconsider rigid understandings of formal grammar rules. The findings of the present study are also consistent with Tahmina (2023), who reported that many YouTube users perceived limited improvement in grammatical competence despite frequent exposure to online content. Nevertheless, the findings differ from those reported by Dabamona & Yunus (2022), who found that participants viewed YouTube positively as a medium for grammar learning. This contrast may reflect differences in content type, learner engagement, and the extent to which learners interact intentionally with grammatical features while consuming digital media.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation emerged as an area in which participants demonstrated greater awareness and perceived improvement. Both participants reported becoming increasingly attentive to pronunciation differences after repeated exposure to English-speaking streamers. Participant A provided a specific example of noticing pronunciation correction during a livestream interaction, explaining, "There is some new word that I learn from a streamer of how the word is pronounced, for example there is one streamer that says jewel and being corrected by one of the L1 English streamers that word is pronounced as jewel ('jõ(ə)l)". Similarly, Participant B stated, "Yes I do catch some different pronunciation of some word from what I initially know". These responses indicate that livestream exposure enabled participants to recognize pronunciation variation and become more sensitive to authentic pronunciation patterns used by fluent or native speakers.

The findings additionally suggest that pronunciation awareness developed through repeated exposure and active noticing rather than through explicit correction or structured pronunciation practice. Participant A's ability to recall a specific pronunciation correction demonstrates deeper cognitive processing and engagement with spoken input, likely facilitated by continuous interaction with livestream content. Such experiences support the concept of incidental learning, in which language acquisition occurs naturally through meaningful and repeated exposure without direct instruction. Even passive engagement with authentic content appeared to contribute to participants' awareness of pronunciation differences over time. This finding is consistent with Lee & Drajeti (2019), who found that learners who frequently engage with English-language digital content experience greater exposure to diverse accents and pronunciation patterns.

Similarly, Wisniewska & Mora (2020) reported that both captioned and uncaptioned videos can support pronunciation development, although excessive focus on captions may occasionally contribute to cognitive overload. Zulkflee et al. (2022) also found that YouTube plays a significant role in supporting learners' speaking ability and pronunciation development through authentic audiovisual exposure. Participants occasionally reproduced pronunciation patterns encountered during livestream viewing, often unconsciously and without deliberate practice. Such imitation reflects subconscious language learning processes that emerge naturally through engagement with appealing and meaningful content. Sardegna (2022) argues that pronunciation development can occur incidentally when learners repeatedly encounter comprehensible and engaging spoken input, even in the absence of formal pronunciation instruction. Consequently, livestreams may provide learners with opportunities to internalize pronunciation patterns through repeated exposure and spontaneous imitation within enjoyable communicative environments.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary acquisition emerged as another significant area of perceived language development. Both participants reported learning internet slang, abbreviations, and gaming-related expressions frequently used within livestream communities. Participant A mentioned "W (win), L (lose)", while Participant B identified "W, L, No cap", as examples of vocabulary acquired through livestream exposure. When asked how they understood unfamiliar slang

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expressions, Participant A explained, "I connect it with the context... live chat reaction", whereas Participant B stated, "Context... Google or read the chat". These findings indicate that participants relied heavily on contextual clues, audience interaction, and self-directed learning strategies to interpret unfamiliar vocabulary.

The findings suggest that vocabulary development occurred primarily through immersion and contextual inference rather than through intentional memorization. Through repeated interaction with livestream communities, participants gradually became familiar with recurring expressions and informal language patterns commonly used in online communication. This process aligns with Wu (2024), who found significant differences between students' pretest and post-test vocabulary scores after learning through YouTube content, suggesting that audiovisual exposure may positively contribute to vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, F. Teng, (2022) argues that videos containing definitions, visual input, and contextual information facilitate vocabulary learning by providing verbal input through both auditory and visual channels. According to Teng, audiovisual media support vocabulary acquisition by strengthening learners' comprehension, enhancing retrieval cues, and facilitating deeper understanding of target words.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated students' perceptions of the impact of YouTube livestreams on receptive English skills and language components. The findings revealed that regular exposure to authentic livestream content positively supported listening comprehension by helping students understand natural spoken English, recognize different accents, and process real-time conversations without relying heavily on subtitles. In contrast, the influence on reading comprehension was limited because participants only occasionally engaged with live chat messages and on-screen text. The study also found that livestreams contributed to vocabulary growth and pronunciation improvement, as students acquired slang, informal expressions, and common phrases while imitating streamers' speech patterns and pronunciation. However, grammar development was less evident because participants recognized differences between conversational and formal grammar but lacked confidence in evaluating grammatical accuracy. Overall, the findings suggest that YouTube livestreams provide an effective informal learning environment for developing listening skills, vocabulary, and pronunciation through authentic language exposure. However, they should complement rather than replace formal grammar instruction in EFL classrooms to ensure balanced language development across all language skills and components.

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