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YouTube for Increasing English Young Learner's Vocabulary

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of YouTube as a medium for English language instruction for young children. This study makes use of Kersten's theory of English for Young Learners, which will assist in analyzing how early childhood vocabulary is kept, approximately how much vocabulary they master, and whether or not there are additional elements that assist early childhood in acquiring English vocabulary at this stage of development. One of the ways that research data is gathered is through the use of questionnaires, which are part of the descriptive qualitative method that is utilized. It has been demonstrated, based on the findings of the questionnaire that was sent out to parents of children in the early childhood years, that there are significant changes and improvements that occur when children interact with English-language content on YouTube that is specifically designed for early childhood. The findings of the questionnaire also revealed which shows on YouTube from the children's channel they are most interested in watching. Some of the words that they frequently use are words that are associated with animals, the names of foods, short sentences, feelings, bodily parts, and the surroundings immediately surrounding them.

Keywords: YouTube, English Young Learners, vocabulary, children, technology

Introduction

An individual in early infancy is a natural learner who utilizes any provided resource as a learning resource. In the current technological era, parents frequently provide their children with YouTube

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programs as a form of educational material, as they believe that these shows can facilitate their language development more rapidly. Nevertheless, parents must remain vigilant, as not all YouTube programs are well-received by their children. YouTube shows offer a variety of benefits, including the ability to stimulate foreign language learning. However, they also have negative aspects that can be mitigated by ensuring that parents supervise their children while they watch these programs. This will prevent all of the negative effects that YouTube has to offer. The most prevalent alternative for parents to enhance their children's vocabulary, particularly in the case of English, which remains a global language, is YouTube programs. There are numerous educational programs available on the YouTube platform that parents can utilize as a resource. Conversely, YouTube Indonesia is expanding at an unprecedented pace. This is evidenced by the high ratings of numerous YouTube channels that are frequently viewed by kindergarten children. Conversely, children are frequently captivated by the language of YouTube Gamers, as well as by YouTube channels that appeal to them. Consequently, they are frequently enticed to adopt the language of the Gamers. The author mentions that nearly all of the YouTube channels can be accessed at any time, and at very productive times. Consequently, a significant number of minors are able to view without parental supervision. Regrettably, the utilization of English on YouTube is far from the standards of good and correct language. It is even certain that every YouTube program employs English slang, which is frequently inappropriate or impolite for use in everyday communication, particularly when used by young children.

Considering this context, the question that requires an answer is the extent to which YouTube shows influence the development of early childhood English, as well as the vocabulary that is frequently memorized as a result of watching these programs. The range of vocabulary that early childhood students have mastered will also be determined by this.

Literature Review

Despite the fact that there is numerous research that links YouTube with student learning, very few of these studies are related to early infancy and the language behaviour of children. Based on the findings of her research, Listiani demonstrates that YouTube has recently emerged as a learning

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partner. Nevertheless, YouTube has a greater number of bad impacts than positive ones, which is why it is essential to have complete direction from those around you in order to make it simpler to attain the language learning goals that you have set for yourself (Listiani et al., 2021). In addition, Yashinta investigated the use of YouTube as a medium for teaching English to children; however, she directed her attention primarily toward English songs (Sholichah Iman Nurchotimah et al., n.d.). As a consequence of this, a significant number of parents decide to teach their children a second language by employing English songs that are found on YouTube. According to Farahsani et al.'s research from 2020, the children's ears have become thoroughly accustomed to the songs, which means that in the future, they will have an easier time learning English (Farahsani et al., 2020).

Language Development in Early Childhood

Early childhood of English is highly engaging due to the fact that early infancy serves as the foundation for language acquisition. They can effortlessly acquire both their native language and a foreign language simultaneously. Their minds are still capable of accommodating all of their language requirements. Kersten contends that the learning environments of preschool and primary education are fundamentally distinct for children aged 3-10 years (Kersten & Rohde, 2013). In European countries, early childhood education emphasizes informal learning, which includes the acquisition of a second language informally. Additionally, there is no necessity for any unique strategies to be implemented during early childhood in order to effectively speak a foreign language. Previous research has investigated whether young learners are more adept at learning or learning at a faster pace than their senior counterparts. They excel in the acquisition of novel language materials (Singleton, 2004). In the long term, young children can achieve more in terms of the pronunciation and grammar of the second language they learn than elder learners, as demonstrated by additional studies. This substantiates the idea that young children possess a significantly greater capacity for language acquisition than their senior counterparts (Cameron, 2001; Ellis, 2008). In her research, Kersten also verified that bilingual programs in early childhood

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in preschool and primary institutions do not impose any burden on children (Kersten & Rohde, 2013). Nunan's empirical research, which employs a theoretical approach, offers a comprehensive understanding of the teaching of English as a foreign language in early infancy. He disclosed that children's proficiency in acquiring a new language is contingent upon the complex concepts of learning styles, aptitudes, and learning strategies (Hinkel, 2017). His additional research indicates that the success rate of children in mastering foreign languages is influenced by their age; the earlier they begin to acquire, the higher their success rate. Nunan (1992) explicitly asserts that foreign language instruction should commence prior to puberty (Hinkel, 2017). The period of study can be distinguished between "natural" and "educational" environments. Parents often choose natural, non-formal study for their young offspring. YouTube is frequently utilized by parents to provide their children with entertainment or to occupy spare time, beginning with the habits they established during their childhood. Certainly, parents will provide their children with appropriate channels that can simultaneously provide education and entertainment.

Language Development Pyramid



By examining the pyramid of infant language development above, it is evident that early childhood is situated in the category of attention and listening. The child's attention is directed toward objects that pique their interest and generate sound in this position. YouTube is one example of a platform

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that directly interacts with individuals, including parents, acquaintances, and other individuals. What is the reason for the attraction of early infancy to YouTube shows? due to the presence of numerous factors that are essential for the learning and development of children, beginning with the visual and auditory components. The visual and auditory components of nearly all YouTube programs that are designed for children are highly engaging. YouTube shows that captivate young children will be instantaneously visible to them, as they are attentive to sight and sound. Many individuals are aware that YouTube offers a variety of channels for both children and adults. Children's channels are abundant, with content that is both educational and entertaining, and even a combination of both. Parents will select educational or entertainment content in English that is suitable for their small children. You can envision that if each child watches these shows for a minimum of 30 minutes each day, they will inevitably become accustomed to hearing individuals speak in English. Additionally, they will likely acquire vocabulary in the language, as they are still in the listening phase and are absorbing the information necessary for communication. They are able to listen while playing at this stage, as viewing YouTube is considered a form of play for children. The information they receive from YouTube in the form of queries and responses is indirectly influenced and recorded in their brain memory. This stage is known as receptive, during which the children comprehend the content being conveyed, comprehend the purpose of the queries and responses from their viewing, and are able to articulate the information being conveyed by their viewing. The expressive stage prompts children to engage in activities such as singing, speaking, and playing in accordance with the content they are viewing. Over time, they also incorporate the practice of viewing YouTube shows into their daily lives by communicating with their parents, siblings, and friends. It is inevitable that the language behavior employed by YouTube shows will have an impact on the language development of children who frequently observe them. Consequently, they will acquire at least a few language skills that are transmitted through the YouTube channels they follow (Hartas, 2012). Beginning with the manner of speaking, the emotions conveyed, and the mimics and gestures demonstrated. The language of the YouTube channels that children view automatically dominates and influences their language skills. YouTube channels provide a diverse selection of content that prevents early childhood children from feeling

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bored, which encourages them to continue searching for the programs they desire. This has both positive and negative implications. For instance, children who are not accompanied are susceptible to exposure to languages that are not appropriate for their age, such as those that contain abusive, vulgar, and inappropriate elements (Karima, 2017). The prevalence of foreign languages on YouTube without parental supervision is actually extremely hazardous for early childhood, as they are not yet aware of the context and meaning of the language they are exposed to. Consequently, if they inadvertently hear and express it in their play environment, it will be inappropriate for them to hear. Language users are successfully influenced by a foreign language when they are able to distinguish the type of words being used or when they are able to communicate in accordance with the context of the language they have heard and practiced on YouTube (Amanda & Shareeff, 2024). The materials that are acquired as learning materials also contribute to success. The final stage of language acquisition for children is speech sound, which is the ability of children to pronounce vocabulary in a manner that is identical to that of foreign speakers. This may occur if the children consistently and avidly observe their preferred YouTube channel. Listening experience, the context of the words spoken, and the emotions exhibited by the characters in the channel can all contribute to perfect pronunciation.

Research Methodology

A qualitative descriptive methodology is implemented in this investigation, with questionnaires serving as the primary data source. To ascertain the duration of time spent watching YouTube channels, the channels that pique their interest, the vocabulary they have mastered, and the number of vocabulary words they have acquired while watching YouTube channels, the questionnaire was distributed to the parents of preschool children. The subjects of our investigation were selected from the parents of students at Al Kamilah Kindergarten due to the school's frequent collaboration with us. The number of the parents which been taken as a respondent are 44.

Findings

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This research was executed in two phases: the initial phase involved a meeting with parents to disseminate information about the study. In contrast, the subsequent phase entailed parents completing Google Forms with questionnaires to identify the underlying research issues. We implemented the socialization phase to educate parents on the significance of early childhood language acquisition, particularly in relation to second language learning. During the socialization phase, the researcher sought parental consent to distribute a questionnaire to ascertain whether the children possess their own devices. What is the duration of gadget usage among children? What is the frequency of family members accompanying them during device usage? Which YouTube channels do they frequently access? What is the average word count for the children? The study results indicated that 77.3% of respondents affirmed that the children possess their own mobile phones, whereas 22.7% stated that they do not. Individuals lacking a cell phone will borrow one from their mother or father. The second question pertains to the period children often spend engaging with electronics. The poll results indicate that 47.7% of children allocate 0–30 minutes daily, 22.7% spend 30–60 minutes, another 22.7% dedicate 1-2 hours, and only 6.9% exceed 3 hours each day. At least 95.5% of parents accompany their children while using this gadget to view YouTube. The research results indicated that the YouTube channels most favored by early childhood audiences include Cocomelon (31.8%), Vlad and Niki (25%), Pinkfong (11.4%), Blippi (18.2%), and others (27.3%).

The YouTube channels selected by these children are mostly focused on amusement and education, featuring both animated and non-animated content and specifically targeting a juvenile audience. These channels are vibrant and provide conventional children's communication in English. These channels captivate children due to their child actors and narratives centered on children's experiences. The vibrant images captivate young children, encouraging sustained attention. Similar to young infants, they concentrate on captivating sights. They observe and converse, practice their articulatory movements, and listen to the sounds of the performance and their own voices. They devote their complete focus to listening and then engaging in social contact with their environment. Children prefer listening to music and concentrating on particular objects of interest. This phase is referred to as the initial verbal stage. The second verbal stage is play,

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indicating that they are engaged in imaginative and realistic play. From this point, they will begin memorizing and practicing what they hear. This indicates that childrens have begun to comprehend the messages communicated by the programs they view, allowing them to assimilate what they observe and hear readily. When parents provide appropriate guidance and support, YouTube significantly influences children's foreign language development. The questionnaire results indicate that pupils aged 4-5 years can memorize the most common animal names, including chicken, cat, dog, pig, bird, lion, tiger, fish, snake, rhino, and horse. They can also recognize emotions in English, including sadness, happiness, anger, and sobbing. In other instances, childrens also identify words associated with verbs, such as run, walk, eat, drink, and read, as well as names of fruits, vegetables, and others. They can accurately recognize the names of objects in their vicinity. Children acquire vocabulary from the shows they watch, typically ranging from at least 5 words that parents frequently hear to as many as 30 words, including simple daily phrases such as "Let's go," "I love you," "I miss you," "I want to eat," "I want to poop," "I want to pee," and "What's your name?" The constancy and consistency of early childhood exposure to educational YouTube channels will positively influence their second language development. Children's language development can be influenced by the English YouTube channels they view, with parental support and assistance.

Conclusion

As a result of this study, it has been demonstrated that nearly all young children who regularly watch English-language educational YouTube channels have better English language proficiency than those who do not. The duration and consistency of these children can serve as an effective stimulus for language development. However, if children do not use YouTube appropriately, there is a drawback to it, namely in the areas of psychology and health. Consequently, parental advice and support are essential. More research on the negative impacts of YouTube viewing for young children is required so that parents may choose more carefully what shows to show their kids.

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