


The Use of Youtube Videos as a Learning Media to Improve EFL Students' Speaking Skill

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A B S T R A C T

Speaking skills are crucial in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL); however, many Indonesian students face challenges in fluency, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and coherence due to limited exposure to authentic English. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of YouTube videos as a learning medium for improving students' speaking skills. The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) involving twelfth-grade students of the Interior Design major at SMK Negeri 4 Kupang. Conducted in two learning cycles, the instructional procedures involved watching English vlog videos, guided discussion of language expressions, paired speaking practice, and individual oral performance. The study utilized speaking tests consisting of a pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2, as well as classroom observation sheets. Students' speaking performance was assessed based on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and coherence. The findings revealed consistent improvement across all speaking aspects. Students' scores increased from 40-78 in the pre-test to 63-84 in post-test 1 and further to 72-92 in post-test 2. Classroom observations also indicated increased student engagement, confidence, and participation during speaking activities. These findings suggest that YouTube videos effectively enhance EFL students' speaking skills while fostering an interactive and motivating learning environment.

Keywords: *Youtube Videos, Speaking Skills, EFL Students, Classroom Action Research*

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a core component of English language learning, as it allows learners to express ideas, interact with others, and participate in meaningful communication. In the era of globalization, speaking skills are no longer viewed merely as the result of classroom learning, but as a crucial skill for academic engagement, professional communication, and intercultural interaction. Akhter (2021) highlights that speaking skills reflect learners' ability to use language effectively and meaningfully in real communication situations, making it a key indicator of overall language proficiency.

However, speaking is often considered the most challenging skill for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This challenge stems from the complex nature of speaking, which requires learners to simultaneously apply various language components, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and coherence (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Learners are expected not only to produce accurate language forms but also to deliver them fluently and coherently within a limited time, which often leads to hesitation, anxiety, and low confidence in speaking.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia, these difficulties are particularly prominent. Many students experience problems related to limited vocabulary, frequent grammatical errors, unclear pronunciation, and lack of fluency, all of which have a negative impact on their oral performance (Abrar et al., 2018). Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz (2021) further argue that inadequate vocabulary mastery often leads to a decline in confidence, making students reluctant to speak. This challenge is exacerbated by minimal

exposure to English outside the classroom, where students generally communicate in their native language. As a result, opportunities to practice speaking English authentically and meaningfully remain limited.

In response to these ongoing challenges, the integration of technology into language teaching is gaining attention. Digital learning media offers opportunities to create a more engaging and student-centered learning environment, while providing access to authentic language. Among various digital platforms, YouTube has emerged as a valuable learning tool for language learning. Almurashi (2016) asserts that YouTube introduces students to authentic communication models, including natural pronunciation, intonation, speaking speed, and everyday expressions that are rarely found in conventional teaching materials.

In addition, YouTube videos allow learners to observe and imitate native and non-native speakers in realistic contexts, which supports the development of fluency and pronunciation accuracy (Riswandi, 2016). The combination of visual and auditory input also facilitates understanding by reducing cognitive load. In addition, the variety of video content available allows teachers to select material that suits students' interests, skill levels, and learning objectives, making speaking activities more engaging and meaningful.

Although previous research has shown the positive impact of YouTube on language learning, most of these studies have focused on specific language skills such as listening, pronunciation, or vocabulary development (Jalaluddin, 2016). Studies investigating speaking as an integrated skill that encompasses fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence are still limited. In addition, empirical research conducted in the context of vocational high schools is still rare, even though vocational students need practical English speaking skills to support their future professional communication.

Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by examining the effectiveness of YouTube videos in comprehensively improving EFL students' speaking skills in a vocational high school setting. Using Classroom Action Research (CAR), this study analyzes students' speaking development across multiple instructional cycles. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of YouTube-based instruction and offer practical pedagogical implications for EFL teachers, particularly in vocational education.

METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve students' speaking skills through the use of YouTube videos. Classroom Action Research was selected because it allows teachers and researchers to identify learning problems, implement targeted instructional actions, and evaluate improvements through a systematic and reflective cycle. The research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection, in accordance with the CAR model proposed by Burns (2010). Each cycle was implemented in one meeting with a duration of 45 minutes.

The research participants were twelfth-grade students at a vocational high school, specifically in the field of Interior Design. These students were selected because they demonstrated low speaking skills and lacked confidence in oral communication. Although they had studied English before, many of them had difficulty expressing ideas accurately and fluently, making them the right subjects for this classroom-based intervention.

Data collection involved speaking tests and classroom observations. The speaking tests consisted of a pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2. The pre-test was administered to determine students' initial speaking abilities before the implementation of YouTube-based instruction. Post-tests 1 and 2 were conducted at the end of each cycle to assess students' progress in speaking skills. In each test, students were required to perform an oral speaking task on the topic of daily routine. Their performance is evaluated based on five criteria: fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence. These assessment criteria are applied consistently across all tests to maintain measurement reliability.

The teaching procedures were carried out systematically in each cycle. During the planning stage, lesson plans were prepared, English vlog videos related to daily routines were selected, and teaching instruments such as observation sheets and scoring rubrics were

developed. In the action stage, students watched selected YouTube videos and were guided to observe expressions, pronunciation, and idea organization. They then practiced speaking in pairs and individually by describing their daily routines. The teacher provided guidance and encouragement to support students' confidence. During the observation stage, students' participation, attention, and responses were recorded using observation sheets. In the reflection stage, students' test results and observation data were analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the action and to plan improvements for the next cycle.

Observation data were analyzed descriptively, while speaking test scores from the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 were compared to identify improvements in students' speaking skills. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of YouTube videos in improving EFL students' speaking performance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings were obtained from analyzing students' speaking performance at three assessment stages, namely Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2. This discussion emphasizes the development of students' speaking skills after integrating YouTube videos as a learning medium, with a focus on fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence. The quantitative results of the speaking assessment are supported by qualitative classroom observation data to provide a holistic understanding of the impact of instructional intervention on student speaking development. The presentation of findings is arranged sequentially to illustrate students' initial speaking abilities, the results of the first instructional cycle, and the improvements achieved in the second cycle.

Pre-Test Results

The pre-test results show that students' initial speaking skills are relatively low. Many students often hesitate, use limited vocabulary, make grammatical errors, pronounce words inaccurately, and demonstrate weak organization of ideas. Scores ranged from 40 to 78, with most students categorized as Insufficient or Emerging. These findings indicate that students face considerable challenges in expressing ideas fluently and coherently in English.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Pre-test

No	Students	Fluency	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Coherence	Total Score	Category
1	SA	2	2	2	2	2	62	Emerging
2	SB	2	2	2	2	2	61	Emerging
3	SC	2	2	1	2	1	58	Inadequate
4	SD	2	2	1	2	1	59	Inadequate
5	SE	2	2	2	2	1	55	Inadequate
6	SF	3	3	3	3	3	65	Emerging
7	SG	1	1	1	1	1	40	Inadequate
8	SH	1	1	1	1	1	42	Inadequate
9	SI	2	2	2	2	2	64	Emerging
10	SJ	1	1	1	1	1	45	Inadequate
11	SK	4	3	4	3	4	74	Progressing
12	SL	3	4	4	3	4	76	Developing
13	SM	4	4	4	3	4	76	Developing
14	SN	4	4	4	3	4	78	Developing

Post-Test 1 Results

After the first cycle of YouTube-based learning, students showed significant improvement in their speaking skills. Post-test 1 scores ranged from 63 to 84. Improvement was seen in all aspects of speaking, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence. However, some students still had difficulty with the pronunciation of longer words and sentence variation.

Table 2. Summary of Students' Post-test 1

No	Students	Fluency	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Coherence	Total Score	Category
1	SA	3	3	3	3	4	76	Developing
2	SB	3	3	3	3	4	75	Progressing
3	SC	3	3	2	3	3	70	Progressing
4	SD	3	3	3	3	4	68	Emerging

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5	SE	2	2	2	2	2	63	Emerging
6	SF	3	3	3	3	3	65	Emerging
7	SG	4	3	4	3	4	74	Progressing
8	SH	3	3	3	3	4	76	Progressing
9	SI	4	4	4	4	4	80	Developing
10	SJ	4	3	4	3	4	74	Progressing
11	SK	3	3	3	3	4	78	Progressing
12	SL	4	4	4	3	4	84	Developing
13	SM	4	4	4	3	4	82	Developing
14	SN	4	4	3	3	4	81	Developing

Post-Test 2 Results

After the second teaching cycle, further improvement was observed. Post-test 2 scores increased to a range of 72 to 92. Most students achieved a “Developing” level, while some achieved a “Satisfactory” level. Students demonstrated improved fluency, more appropriate vocabulary use, better grammatical accuracy, clearer pronunciation, and better organization of ideas. These results indicate that continuous exposure to YouTube videos combined with structured speaking practice effectively improves students' speaking skills.

Table 3. Summary of Students' Post-test 2

No	Students	Fluency	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation	Coherence	Total Score	Category
1	SA	4	4	4	3	4	78	Developing
2	SB	4	4	4	4	4	80	Developing
3	SC	3	3	3	3	4	74	Progressing
4	SD	3	3	3	3	3	72	Progressing
5	SE	4	4	4	4	4	82	Inadequate
6	SF	4	4	4	4	4	85	Developing
7	SG	3	3	3	3	4	75	Progressing
8	SH	4	4	4	3	4	78	Developing
9	SI	4	4	3	4	4	80	Developing
10	SJ	4	4	3	4	4	80	Developing
11	SK	4	4	4	4	4	86	Developing
12	SL	5	5	4	4	5	92	Satisfactory
13	SM	4	4	4	4	4	85	Developing
14	SN	5	4	4	4	4	89	Satisfactory

Comparison of Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2 Results

Analysis of students' speaking scores from the Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2 shows a gradual and consistent improvement in speaking performance after the implementation of YouTube-based learning activities. The comparison shows that each stage of instructional intervention contributed positively to student development in all aspects of speaking that were evaluated.

The results of the Pre-Test show that students' initial speaking skills were relatively low. Total scores ranged from 40 to 78, with most students scoring below 65. At this stage, most students were classified into the “Insufficient” and “Developing” categories, indicating weak performance in speaking components such as fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence. Many students scored only 1-2 in some aspects, reflecting difficulties in expressing ideas clearly, accurately, and in a well-organized manner during oral tasks.

After implementing the first teaching method using YouTube videos, students' speaking performance showed a significant improvement on Post-Test 1. The total score increased to a range of 63 to 84, with many students achieving an increase of around 10-20 points compared to their Pre-Test results. The improvement was seen in all aspects of speaking. Students showed an increase in speaking fluency, with scores rising from 1-2 to 3-4, while their use of vocabulary and grammatical structures became more accurate and varied. Pronunciation also became clearer, and coherence scores increased to 3-4, indicating better sequencing and organization of ideas. As a result, many students moved up from the “Inadequate” category to higher levels such as, “Emerging”, “Progressing,” and “Developing” indicating that the first treatment effectively improved students' basic speaking skills.

Further progress was observed after the implementation of the second teaching method, as seen in the results of Post-Test 2. Students' total scores increased further, ranging from 72 to 92, with many students gaining an additional 5–10 points compared to Post-Test 1. This continued improvement reflects the ongoing development of students' speaking skills. Fluency in speaking showed the most significant progress, with many students achieving scores of 4–5, indicating more fluent, confident, and natural speaking abilities. In addition, students demonstrated richer vocabulary, better grammatical accuracy, clearer pronunciation, and stronger cohesion, with some students achieving scores of 4–5 in these aspects. As a result, some students achieved the “Satisfactory” category with scores above 89, while most others remained in the “Developing” category but with higher overall performance compared to the previous test.

A comparison of the Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2 results shows a steady and progressive improvement in students' speaking skills throughout the instructional intervention. Total speaking scores increased from 40–78 on the Pre-Test to 63–84 on Post-Test 1 and further to 72–92 on Post-Test 2. These findings provide strong evidence that the use of YouTube videos as a learning medium has a positive and lasting effect on improving EFL students' speaking skills in all aspects assessed.

Class Observation Results

Observation data supports the test results. Students showed higher motivation, attention, and participation during lessons involving YouTube videos. They actively imitated pronunciation models, applied newly learned vocabulary, and participated more confidently in speaking activities. Overall, the classroom atmosphere became more interactive and student-centered.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the integration of YouTube videos as a learning medium effectively improved the speaking skills of EFL students. The consistent increase in students' scores from the pre-test to post-test 1 and post-test 2 demonstrates that audiovisual-based instruction supports the development of oral communication skills. Improvement was observed across all assessed speaking components, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence. This suggests that YouTube videos contribute to the holistic development of speaking skills rather than improving isolated language elements.

One reason behind this improvement lies in the nature of YouTube videos as a source of authentic language input. Through English-language vlog videos, students are exposed to the use of language in real life, including natural pronunciation, intonation, speaking speed, and everyday expressions. Çakir (2006) argues that video materials expose students to authentic communicative contexts, allowing them to experience language as it is naturally used in real-life situations. Through video-based instruction, students can observe the appropriate use of vocabulary, grammar patterns, and discourse organization. This insight helps explain the improvement in students' vocabulary mastery, grammatical accuracy, and coherence after the application of YouTube videos in this study.

Another factor contributing to the improvement of speaking skills is the application of multimedia learning principles. Berk (2009) explains that audiovisual materials enhance learning by combining visual and auditory input, which helps learners process information more effectively and reduces cognitive load. In this study, students benefited from visual cues such as gestures, facial expressions, and situational context, alongside spoken language. This combination supported students' comprehension and retention, which in turn facilitated improvements in fluency and pronunciation. The gradual increase in post-test scores reflects how repeated exposure to multimedia input can strengthen learners' speaking performance over time.

Furthermore, YouTube videos played a significant role in increasing students' motivation and confidence in speaking. Kabooha and Elyas (2018) found that YouTube functions as an effective learning resource that enhances students' willingness to communicate while reducing speaking anxiety. This finding aligns with the classroom observations in this study, which showed that students became more confident, participated more actively, and

relied less on their first language during speaking activities. As students repeatedly observed and imitated language models from the videos, they were able to reduce hesitation and produce clearer and more fluent speech.

Findings from classroom observations further reinforce these results. During YouTube-based learning activities, students demonstrated higher levels of attention, participation, and confidence compared to conventional speaking instruction. The use of videos created a more interactive and engaging classroom atmosphere, which helped reduce student anxiety and encouraged active engagement in speaking practice. These results support previous research suggesting that digital media increases student motivation and engagement in language learning.

Overall, this discussion highlights that YouTube videos can be an effective instructional medium for improving EFL students' speaking skills if they are applied systematically and well planned. The gradual improvement observed throughout the research cycle emphasizes the importance of consistent integration of audiovisual media to achieve meaningful and sustainable learning outcomes. These findings reinforce existing evidence regarding the pedagogical benefits of digital media in EFL classrooms, particularly in the development of speaking skills.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the effectiveness of using YouTube videos as a learning medium to improve EFL students' speaking skills through Classroom Action Research (CAR), and the findings indicate consistent and measurable improvements in students' speaking performance from the Pre-Test to Post-Test 1 and further to Post-Test 2, demonstrating that the instructional intervention successfully achieved the research objectives. Improvements were evident across all assessed speaking components, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and coherence, suggesting that YouTube videos effectively support speaking as an integrated skill by providing authentic language input, contextualized learning experiences, and engaging activities. In addition, students showed increased confidence and active participation in speaking tasks, indicating that YouTube functions not only as a source of linguistic input but also as a motivating medium in EFL classrooms. Theoretically, this study reinforces the role of audiovisual media in language learning when integrated into communicative and reflective teaching practices, while the use of Classroom Action Research highlights the importance of continuous reflection and adaptive instructional strategies, particularly in the context of vocational high schools where practical English communication skills are essential. Practically, the findings encourage English teachers to integrate YouTube videos, especially English vlogs, into speaking instruction alongside guided practice, peer interaction, and reflective feedback to create a more engaging and less anxiety-provoking learning environment. However, the study is limited by its small sample size, single research setting, and short duration of only two instructional cycles, which may restrict the generalizability and long-term interpretation of the results; therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, extend the duration of the intervention, and explore different types of YouTube content as well as their impact on other language skills and affective factors such as motivation and speaking anxiety.

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