



**STUDY TITLE EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNING VOCABULARY
USING YOUTUBE SHORTS IN CARO KOWANZ ENGLISH CHANNEL**

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Abstract: This study explored EFL students' perceptions of using YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English Channel for vocabulary learning and identified the challenges they faced. A qualitative case study was conducted at Prima Bangsa Institute through classroom observation, a Google Forms vocabulary test and semi-structured interviews. Ten YouTube Shorts were used and seven second semester students participated in the interviews. The data were analyzed by comparing the information from each source. The students viewed YouTube Shorts positively because the videos were useful, accessible, relevant and interesting. Humor, stories, subtitles, replay and playback speed helped them learn vocabulary. However unstable internet connections and fast speech caused difficulties. Students solved these problems by replaying videos, using subtitles, adjusting the speed and discussing difficult parts with friends. The findings suggest that YouTube Shorts can be used as additional material for classroom or independent vocabulary learning. Teachers should choose suitable videos and guide students in using the available features. This study shows that short videos from a specific English channel can support vocabulary learning when students receive proper guidance.

Keywords: Students' Perception, Youtube Short, Caro Kowanz English Channel, Learning Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has changed how students get information and learn languages. Learning is no longer limited to textbooks, classroom explanations and other traditional materials. Social media is also part of students' daily lives and can support informal learning. Mulyono (2021) states that social media can help students access information, communicate and learn. In language learning, students can use social media to find English materials outside the classroom and study at a convenient time and place. One platform that offers this opportunity is YouTube, especially its short video feature, YouTube Shorts.

For EFL students, vocabulary is an important part of learning English because it supports other language skills. Vocabulary does not only mean knowing the meaning of a word. It also includes pronunciation, spelling and the correct use of words (Schmitt & Schmitt, 2020). However, vocabulary learning can be difficult for students who do not often use English in their daily lives. Silalahi et al. (2022) found that students may have difficulties because of limited basic knowledge, low interest, unsupportive learning environments and limited chances to practice. In addition differences between English and Indonesian sounds, words with similar forms but different meanings, limited exposure to English and difficulty remembering words can make vocabulary learning more challenging (Rosyada-AS & Akopo, 2023). Therefore, students need learning resources that are informative, interesting and easy to access.

YouTube has become one of the digital resources that can support English learning. Previous studies have generally shown positive student responses to the use of YouTube in language learning. Tahmina (2023) for example found that students considered YouTube useful for learning vocabulary and improving other English skills such as speaking and listening. Similarly, Novadiana et al. (2024) reported that students considered YouTube an interesting and memorable medium for learning vocabulary. Their study also showed that subtitles and visual presentations could help students learn vocabulary. Saputra (2022) also found that students had positive perceptions of using YouTube to improve their vocabulary.

The benefits of YouTube are not limited to vocabulary learning. Kim and Kim (2021) found that YouTube could support English development, academic involvement and cultural awareness. Mulyani et al. (2023) also reported that students responded positively to YouTube videos for pronunciation learning because the videos increased their motivation and encouraged independent learning. Ly et al. (2024) found that students considered YouTube useful for English learning and felt that it gave them more control over their learning. Masuram and Lizy (2023) also found that YouTube storytelling could help improve vocabulary. Students who learned through YouTube storytelling performed better in vocabulary tests than the comparison group. These studies show that YouTube can be a useful resource for language learning.

Recent studies have also examined short form videos. Rahmawati and Purwananti (2023) found that students and teachers responded positively to the use of YouTube Shorts for teaching idiomatic translation. The students became more interested and active during the learning process.

Zahro (2022) also reported that YouTube videos used as additional vocabulary materials increased students' enthusiasm, attention and involvement. These findings show that videos can combine spoken language, written information and visual elements. As a result, students can receive language input in different ways. Mayer (2002) states that people can learn more deeply from a combination of words and pictures than from words alone.

Although these studies provide useful information about YouTube and language learning, there is still a gap that needs to be studied. Most previous studies have examined YouTube as a general platform or have focused on specific language skills such as pronunciation, idiomatic translation, or vocabulary learning in general. Some studies have examined short videos, but they have not specifically focused on "EFL students' perceptions of learning vocabulary through YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel". This is important because short form videos have their own characteristics. Their short duration can make learning easier to access, but the limited time may also make the vocabulary appear too quickly. Students may also have different responses depending on the relevance of the vocabulary, the use of subtitles, the speaker's pronunciation and speed, and their English proficiency. Therefore the gap in this study is not only about whether YouTube can be used to learn English, but also about how students experience a specific short form English learning channel and what difficulties they face. Previous research has not specifically examined YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel for vocabulary learning.

The novelty of this study is its focus on students' perceptions and challenges in learning vocabulary through YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel. Instead of studying YouTube as a general learning platform, this study examines students' experiences with short English-learning videos. It focuses on their perceptions of the usefulness, ease of use, motivation, content relevance and learning features of the videos. It also examines the challenges students may face when learning through short form content. This is important because students may have positive opinions about a digital learning tool while still experiencing practical or language related difficulties. Studying both perceptions and challenges can provide a clear understanding of the use of YouTube Shorts in EFL vocabulary learning.

Based on this background, the research problem is related to how EFL students perceive the use of YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel for vocabulary learning and what challenges they face when using it. This study does not assume that short form videos are automatically effective because they are attractive or easy to access. Instead, it examines students' real experiences and perceptions to understand how this medium works from the learners' point of view.

Therefore this study aims to explore EFL students' perceptions of using YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel for vocabulary learning and to identify the challenges they face during the learning process. By examining these two aspects, this study is expected to provide a clearer understanding of how short form digital content can be used as an additional resource for vocabulary learning and what factors should be considered when using YouTube Shorts in EFL learning.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study focused on students' experiences, perceptions, and challenges when using YouTube Shorts to learn English vocabulary. The study did not focus on measuring the effectiveness of the videos through numerical results. Instead, it looked at how students experienced the learning process and responded to the videos. Creswell (2018) states that

qualitative research is useful for understanding how individuals or groups view a problem in their own context. A case study design was used because the study focused on a specific group of students and a specific learning situation. This allowed the researcher to understand the situation more closely (Creswell, 2018).

The case in this study was the use of YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English channel as additional material for vocabulary learning. The study focused on three main parts of students' experiences: their perceptions of YouTube Shorts, their participation and use of the videos and platform features and the challenges they faced during the learning process.

The study was conducted at Prima Bangsa Institute, Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia, from April to June 2025. The participants were second semester students from the English Education Department. At the beginning of the study, 44 students from a speaking class were involved in the observation. From these students, seven were selected to take part in the interviews.

The participants were selected through purposive sampling. This method was used because the study needed students who had experience related to the topic. The criteria were: (1) being a second-semester student at Prima Bangsa Institute, (2) having experience using YouTube Shorts to learn English, (3) getting relatively high scores on the vocabulary test after watching the videos, and (4) being willing to participate in the interview. The seven students were referred to as S1 to S7 in the research report to protect their privacy. Pseudonyms were used so that their answers could be discussed without showing their real identities.

The data were collected through non-participant observation, a vocabulary test, and semi structured interviews. The researcher was the main instrument and was supported by an observation checklist, interview questions, field notes and audio recordings. In qualitative research, the researcher is the main instrument because the researcher directly observes the participants, asks questions, listens to their answers and interprets the data (Alhamid & Anufia, 2019).

The observation was conducted first. The researcher introduced YouTube Shorts and showed ten selected videos from the Caro Kowanz English channel. The videos mainly contained vocabulary related to everyday situations. During the activity, the researcher observed students' attention, reactions, participation and interaction with the videos. The researcher also paid attention to how students used subtitles and other YouTube features, their interest in the videos, their responses to new vocabulary and any technical problems they experienced.

After watching the videos, the students completed a vocabulary test using Google Forms. Some of the vocabulary in the test was taken from the selected YouTube Shorts. The test was used to see the students' understanding and retention of the vocabulary. The test results were also used as one of the considerations for selecting the seven students for the interview.

The interviews were conducted after the video watching and testing activities. Seven students took part in the semi-structured interviews. Open ended questions were used so that the students could explain their experiences in their own words. The questions asked about the ease of using YouTube Shorts, the usefulness of subtitles and replay, the short length of the videos, vocabulary improvement, motivation, relevance of the content, technical problems and difficulties in understanding the videos.

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative method. The interview recordings were transcribed and read several times so that the researcher could understand the students' answers.

The observation notes and interview transcripts were then compared to find common ideas and patterns related to students' perceptions and challenges.

The analysis was carried out in several stages. First, the researcher organized the interview transcripts and observation notes. Second, important statements were identified and given initial codes. Third, similar codes were grouped into categories. Finally, the categories were developed into themes that represented the main findings. The themes were then connected to the research questions and related literature. This process helped the researcher present findings based on the students' experiences rather than personal assumptions.

To support the credibility of the findings, the researcher used triangulation by comparing the information from the interviews and observations. Similarities and differences between the two sources were considered during the analysis. Using both observation and interview data helped provide a clearer picture of students' responses to YouTube Shorts and the challenges they experienced while learning vocabulary.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

The findings were obtained from classroom observations, a vocabulary test and semi-structured interviews with seven second semester students of Prima Bangsa Institute. Before the interviews, the researcher showed ten selected YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English Channel to a class of 44 students. The observation focused on students' attention, participation, responses to the videos and their use of YouTube Shorts features. Seven students were then selected for in depth interviews based on the predetermined criteria and vocabulary test results.

The analysis resulted in two main areas: students' perceptions of using YouTube Shorts for vocabulary learning and the challenges they experienced. The first area consisted of six related aspects: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, behavioral intention, technological knowledge, content relevance and pedagogical strategy. The second area consisted mainly of technical problems and difficulties in understanding the video content.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Perceptions and Challenges

Aspect	Main Finding
Perceived usefulness	Students considered YouTube Shorts useful for learning and enriching vocabulary.
Perceived ease of use	Students found the platform familiar, simple and practical to navigate.
Behavioral intention	Most students were interested in continuing to use YouTube Shorts for vocabulary learning.
Technological knowledge	Most students were familiar with features such as subtitles, replay, saving and sharing.
Content relevance	Students considered the vocabulary relevant to their academic and everyday communication needs.
Pedagogical strategy	Humor, conversation, storytelling, visual presentation, and the creator's expressive delivery increased students' interest.
Technical challenge	Unstable internet connections sometimes interrupted the learning process.
Comprehension challenge	The speaking pace was sometimes too fast, while subtitles were helpful but not always sufficient.

The first finding was that students generally perceived YouTube Shorts as useful for vocabulary learning. All interviewed students gave positive responses and reported that they encountered new vocabulary through the videos. Some students also noticed that they could understand how particular words or expressions were used in real situations. For example, S5 mentioned learning expressions such as “come up with” and “figure out” and explained that seeing them in real examples helped her understand how the expressions were naturally used. During observation, students were also seen taking notes and repeating newly introduced words.

The second finding concerned ease of use. Students were already familiar with YouTube Shorts and did not need much explanation about how to operate the platform. They appreciated features such as automatic playback, swipe navigation, subtitles, replay, saving and comments. S3 for example, described the automatic playback and swipe function as practical for quick learning. The observation also showed that students could immediately focus on the videos without asking how the platform worked.

Students also showed a willingness to continue using YouTube Shorts as a learning resource. Their interest was visible during the observation through smiling, laughing, paying attention and responding to the content. However this intention was not completely uniform. Some students preferred other short video platforms depending on their personal learning preferences.

Another finding was that students’ familiarity with YouTube Shorts supported the learning process. Most participants were able to use subtitles, replay, saving and other features without technical guidance. S4 stated that she understood the application well because she used it almost every day, while S5 said that she was confident searching for content, replying to comments and following useful channels.

Content relevance was another strong point. Students considered the vocabulary presented in the videos useful for both academic purposes and everyday communication. S1 explained that the conversational presentation helped her understand how vocabulary could be used in daily situations. S3 similarly stated that the vocabulary was useful for improving speaking and understanding everyday expressions.

The final perception finding concerned the way the material was delivered. Students were attracted by the creator’s use of humor, conversation, visual presentation and storylines. S1 appreciated the conversational and humorous style, while S3 highlighted the hook and storyline as reasons for watching the videos until the end. Classroom observation supported these responses, as students showed curiosity, smiled, nodded and maintained attention while watching the videos. Despite these positive perceptions two main challenges were identified. The first was unstable internet connectivity, which could interrupt the videos and disturb students’ concentration. The second was comprehension difficulty caused mainly by the fast speaking pace. S2 specifically described the videos as sometimes too fast but also recognized that playback speed could be adjusted. Other students used subtitles, replayed the videos or discussed unclear parts with classmates to overcome these difficulties.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that students’ positive perceptions were closely related to the practical nature of YouTube Shorts. The results are consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model proposed by Davis (1989) particularly the concepts of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. When students feel that a technology is easy to operate and useful for achieving their learning goals, they are more likely to develop an intention to continue using it. This pattern was

visible in the present study: students found YouTube Shorts familiar and easy to navigate, while at the same time perceiving the videos as useful for learning new vocabulary.

The finding also agrees with Tahmina (2023) who reported that students perceived YouTube as useful for vocabulary learning and considered English learning through the platform more engaging. Similarly Novadiana et al. (2024) found that students responded positively to YouTube for vocabulary learning, particularly when videos included subtitles, visual elements and relevant learning content. The present study extends these findings by showing that the same positive response can also occur in short form content, specifically through the Caro Kowanz English Channel.

The relevance of the vocabulary is also important. Students did not only value learning new words, they valued being able to see those words in conversations and everyday contexts. This may explain why students reported that the vocabulary was easier to understand and apply. The result is in line with Saputra (2022) whose study also found positive student perceptions toward YouTube as a medium for English learning.

The role of presentation style should not be overlooked. Humor, storytelling, visual elements and an expressive teaching style made the videos feel less monotonous. This finding is consistent with Iman et al. (2024) who reported that YouTube based instructional videos could increase students' motivation to learn English. It also supports the findings of Mulyani et al. (2023), which showed positive student responses to YouTube videos in English learning. In this study, however the important point is that motivation was not produced by the platform alone. It was also connected to how the vocabulary was presented.

At the same time, the study shows that positive perceptions do not mean that YouTube Shorts are free from limitations. Unstable internet connections can interrupt the learning process, while fast speech can make authentic English difficult to follow. The technical finding is consistent with Alpianoor and Wardhani (2023) who emphasized the importance of adequate internet speed in supporting online learning.

The difficulty with speaking speed is particularly relevant for EFL learners because students may need more time to process unfamiliar spoken vocabulary. Interestingly the participants did not simply stop when they encountered difficulties. They replayed videos, used subtitles, adjusted playback speed and discussed unclear parts with classmates. This suggests that YouTube Shorts gave students some control over their own learning. Therefore, the findings do not indicate that short videos are automatically effective for all learners. Instead their usefulness depends on appropriate content, students' proficiency and the ability to use supporting features such as subtitles and replay.

Overall the findings support previous research showing that YouTube can be a useful resource for EFL learning (Tahmina, 2023; Novadiana et al., 2024; Saputra, 2022) while adding a more specific perspective on short form vocabulary learning. The results suggest that YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English Channel can function as a useful supplementary resource because students found the content practical, relevant and enjoyable. Nevertheless, teachers and learners should remain aware of limitations related to internet access and speaking speed. In this sense, YouTube Shorts are most useful when students are guided to use the available features and when the selected content matches their language level and learning needs.

CONCLUSION

This study explored EFL students' perceptions of using YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English Channel for vocabulary learning and identified the challenges they experienced

during the learning process. Based on the findings from observations, a vocabulary test and interviews with seven second-semester students, the study achieved both of its research objectives.

The findings show that students generally had a positive perception of using YouTube Shorts for learning vocabulary. They considered the videos easy to access, practical and useful for learning new vocabulary. The short duration of the videos did not prevent students from learning instead the combination of conversation, humor, visual presentation and relevant vocabulary made the learning process more interesting. Students also appreciated features such as subtitles, replay and playback speed because these features allowed them to review the material according to their own needs. Their willingness to continue using YouTube Shorts also suggests that the platform can encourage students to learn vocabulary independently.

However the study also found that students faced several challenges. The main challenges were unstable internet connections and difficulties understanding videos when the speaker talked too quickly. Subtitles could help students understand unfamiliar words but they were not always sufficient. To deal with these difficulties, students used strategies such as replaying videos, using subtitles, adjusting playback speed and discussing unclear vocabulary with their classmates.

Overall YouTube Shorts from the Caro Kowanz English Channel can be considered a useful supplementary resource for EFL vocabulary learning. The findings suggest that its value does not come only from the platform itself but also from the relevance of the content and the way students use its available features. Therefore YouTube Shorts can support vocabulary learning when the selected content is appropriate for students' proficiency levels and learning needs. At the same time, teachers should provide appropriate guidance so that students can overcome difficulties related to speaking speed, unfamiliar vocabulary and technical limitations.

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