The Effectiveness of Using Youtube for Vocabulary Mastery

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Abstract

The study is to examine the improvement in vocabulary comprehension and maintenance of English as foreign language students at SMK Maárif 1 of Kebumen because of this of integrating YouTube in their reading classes. The study also investigated the perceptions of both students as well as teachers towards the inclusion of YouTube on the development of vocabulary. One hundred intermediate level learners aged between 14-17 years old participated in the study. Students were divided into two organizations: an experimental group who watched YouTube during the reading activities and a control group who was not exposed to the videos. Data were collected using pre-tests and post-tests in addition to questionnaires. The findings of the analysis reveal that the group who viewed the YouTube clips outperformed the group who was simply not subjected to YouTube videos in the posttest. The results clearly show that YouTube offered statistically significant effects on the students' vocabulary acquisition. The findings of the study indicate that the participants positively viewed the use of YouTube in their lessons. The findings also exposed significant improvement in the students' vocabulary achievement. The implications of the findings are discussed within the context of foreign language learning and teaching.

Keywords: *YouTube, EFL, vocabulary teaching and learning, multimedia instruction, technology and language learning*

Introduction

It has been argued that the more one considers the matter, the more reasonable it seems to suppose that lexis is where we need to start from, the syntax needs to be put to the program of words, and not the other way around. Acquiring a second/ foreign language requires a number of competencies, skills, and constituents. Vocabulary is one of those essential parts in foreign language learning. The root of the matter is that without plenty of vocabulary, the English language learners cannot comprehend written texts; nor can they convey communications to others. Relating to Harmer, vocabulary is the core of vocabulary, he further suggests that if language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh. Thornburry believes that if learners spend a great amount of time studying grammar, they will

not be able to make much progress in their language learning, but learning more vocabulary and phrases will help them make more improvement as they can say very little with grammar, but you can almost communicate everything with words. Recent studies on vocabulary and its part in EFL teaching and learning are centred on numerous strategies used by students to learn vocabulary. In addition, there are other studies that investigated the use of technology like Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) software to help college students acquire targeted vocabulary. The social media in recent years has been considered an effective tool to supplement the traditional teaching methods. One of these systems that teachers use is definitely YouTube. Bonk argues that YouTube is the tool of the culture and it is one that instructors from K-12 to higher education to corporate training need to begin experimenting with within their classes. Because YouTube can be to a particular extent a new phenomenon, scholars and researchers in second vocabulary acquisition are increasingly concerned about its effectiveness in the EFL/ESL classrooms. YouTube supplies limitless opportunities to maximize learning designed for EFL/ESL students and gets the potential to anchored instruction in this kind of rich learning contexts. The combination of the aural input with the visual images on YouTube has encouraged many educators to adopt it while a teaching tool in their classes (Kuo, 2009). The language learners can receive the utterance and visual stimuli simultaneously, which can enhance their language learning skills as well as their vocabulary comprehension. In addition, using videos to improve students' vocabulary acknowledgement and comprehension provides language learners the exposure to authentic content and context, thus the learners can improve their language abilities (Ktoridou, Yiangou, & Zarpetea, 2002). Study on the application of YouTube in language classrooms has demonstrated significant findings that encourage its use with systematic planning. However, studies on the effectiveness of YouTube in vocabulary teaching and learning are very limited. Therefore, the primary aim of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of YouTube on EFL students' vocabulary mastery. This will add to the existing knowledge foundation of integration YouTube technology in language classroom. The study sought to answer the following questions

1) To what extent does the use of YouTube in EFL classes improve the vocabulary mastery of students?

2) How do the students view the usage of YouTube in their class as a tool to enhance their vocabulary mastery?
3) How do the teachers perceive the use of YouTube as an instrument to improve students' vocabulary mastery?

Literature Review

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML)

This theory was studied comprehensive by Mayer and other cognitive researchers who argued that multimedia supports just how that the individual`s brain functions. Quite simply, the assertion of the theory is that individuals learn better or more when they are given both pictures and words than deeply with words alone. Multimedia is defined as a mixture of text and pictures or visuals generally and sounds or any mixture of auditory and visual cues. The theory is based on the theory that also learners try to build meaningful connections between images and words and they learn more than they could have with terms or pictures alone deeply. Based on the theory, one of the primary aims of teaching using multimedia is to motivate the learner to create a coherent mental representation from the presented materials. The learner must seem sensible of the presented material as a dynamic participant, which leads to the structure of new knowledge. Mayer argues that meaningful learning from pictures and words happens when the learner participates in five cognitive processes. Included in these are selecting relevant terms for digesting in verbal functioning memory as well as relevant pictures for processing in visual functioning memory, organizing selected phrases into a verbal model and also selected images right into a pictorial model and lastly integrating the verbal and pictorial representations with one another and with prior knowledge

The Use of Multimedia in Vocabulary Acquisition

Many second language acquisition researchers studied the result of multimedia instruction on vocabulary development. They have found that the utilization of supplementary prompts such as videos and pictures enhances vocabulary learning. Chun & Plass (1996) argued that supporting vocabulary learning with pictorial and verbal cues can help increase the retention and recall of the lexical products. Al-Seghayer (2001) conducted a study that investigated the impact of different settings of multimedia: “the printed text definition alone, imprinted text definition in conjunction with still pictures, and printed

text message definition coupled with videos" (Al-Seghayer, 2001, p.202). The findings of the study indicated that the use of video clips with a text description is more creative in the acquisition of new English vocabulary than the use of picture with a text designation. Students in the study were able to learn and memorize more vocabulary when videos were old than when pictures were given. The application of different following cues can supply meaningful learning knowledge.

Using Videos/YouTube in Language Learning and Teaching

YouTube technology can be considered as a valuable learning tool. A growing body of research has shown significant findings that encourage the integration of YouTube video clips in education. Mayer stresses that the use of videos is greatly effective especially for introductory courses as it can facilitate difficult concepts, and attract the attention of weak students as well as visual/ special students. YouTube is a multidimensional source that offers videos in all fields of knowledge that can be accessed effortlessly. In addition, video clips on YouTube are limited in lengths; this makes them suitable for the constricted classroom`s time. Studies have also examined how YouTube can be part of a learning system to support independent learning, and language learning. Studies demonstrate how YouTube can increase college students' involvement and participation in the classroom and learning strategies. Relating to Balcikanli, YouTube may be valuable to address students` interests and needs for real life language by providing authentic discourse. Moreover, YouTube offers a myriad of opportunities for learning a second language while a learner can watch as well as listen to different kinds of spoken material (formal, informal), genres (songs, debates, talk shows, film clips); therefore, learning fresh vocabulary or any additional language skills. McKinnon remarks that the scenes, movements, feelings, and gestures presented in YouTube video segments present significant visual impetus for language learning. As the literature is varied in conditions of the importance of integrating dynamic videos and/or YouTube in education generally and in the vocabulary classroom in particular, there has not been any considerable research conducted to study the consequences of using YouTube in Saudi EFL classrooms to improve EFL students' vocabulary recognition and retention. The existing study attempts to fill up this gap in the literature.

Methodology

Participants

The study consisted of 100 students studying English as a Foreign Language in the SMK Maárif 1 of Kebumen, Indonesia. They ranged in age between 14 and 17. Four classrooms with 25 college students in each were utilized. The students were all at their pre-intermediate level of proficiency in the English language. The study also included 4 non-native speakers of English teachers.

Research Design

This experimental study utilized pre-tests-post-test and control group style was use in the study. The training students in addition to teachers were required to finish a questionnaire. The students were randomly designated into two groups: the experimental group who all watched YouTube throughout their reading course and the control group who also weren't exposed to YouTube. Both combined organizations did the pre-tests-post-tests, a complete week before and following the treatment. The main goal of the pre-tests was to assess students' understanding of the new vocabulary as the post-tests targeted at examining the learners' recognition of the target vocabulary. The analysis was completed over one module (seven weeks) based on the educational system of the context of the existing study.

Methods of Data Collection

The study used the results of pre-tests and post-tests along with two different questionnaires to answer the research questions. The VKS test, which was developed by Wesche and Paribbakht, was utilized in the study as the pre-check and post-test measure that aimed at assessing the learners` knowledge of the prospective vocabulary. The study also utilized a questionnaire to assess the college students' perception of using YouTube movies in their classes. The second questionnaire was used to record the teachers' perception of using YouTube videos in their classes. Questionnaires were only administered to the experimental group

The Procedure

All the participants in the study were required to take the pre-test VKS to determine their background knowledge of the target words. The researcher followed the actions suggested by Berk (2009) for using video clips in teaching. The participants in the study were initially informed about the fact that their participation in the study was voluntary. When participants had given consent to participate, they were required to take the pre-test Vocabulary Knowledge Scale to determine their background knowledge of the target terms. The teachers were given explicit instructions on how to conduct the

activity for the duration of the study. They were provided with the instructions and materials to teach the students. A week after the pre-test was administered, the teachers introduced the topic and the new vocabulary to the students using a PowerPoint display provided to them by the researcher. The presentation slides illustrated the prospective vocabulary with some pictures to help facilitate the students' understanding of the brand new words. This activity was the same for both the experimental and control organizations. Once this was done, students in the experimental group classes were divided into groups and were told that they were going to watch a two –minute YouTube video and this issue of the video was briefly explained to them. Before they watched the video, the teachers were asked to write one or two general questions on the board related to the video, such as "what is the message of the clip?", "what is your opinion of what the people are doing in this video?" Once they finished viewing the video, these were given a few minutes to discuss their answers with their group members. After that, one representative in each group was asked to provide the answers.

Results

Comparing Pre-test results between the Experimental and Control Groups

In order to find out if the students made significant improvement in their vocabulary recognition skills due to their learning for the duration of 1 module (7 weeks), a paired sample t-test was conducted comparing means of the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) test carried out before the lessons were taught and those conducted after . The results present that there was a significant difference in the result would suggest that the study was inconclusive. The following table gives the results:

Table 1. Pre-test independent sample t-test

Group	N	M	SD	T	p
Experimental	75	22.6	7.5	-.495	0.622
Control	25	23.4	8.3		

The results reveal that there was no significant difference (t (98) = -.495, p > 0.05) between the pre-test scores of the experimental group (M=22.6, SD=7.5) and the pre-test scores of the control group (M=23.4, SD=8.3). This demonstrates both groups were at the same level of proficiency before the module began thereby indicating that the sample of the population chosen for the study was fair.

Comparing Post-test results between the Experimental and Control Groups

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the post-test scores

of the experimental group and the control group. The results reveal that the post-test ratings of the learners in the experimental group (M= 46.5, SD= 8.6) were significantly higher (t (98) = 7.515, p < 0.05) when compared to the scores of the students in the control group (M= 31.3, SD= 9.2). This indicates that the integration of YouTube had a powerful effect on the students' ability to recognize and understand the prospective vocabulary. The results are given in Table 2:

Table 2. Post-test independent sample t-test

Group	N	M	SD	T	p
Experimental	75	46.5	8.6	7.515	0.000
Control	25	31.3	9.2		

Pre-test versus Post-test Results of the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)

In order to find out if the students made significant improvement in their vocabulary recognition skills as a result of their learning for the duration of one module (seven weeks), a paired sample t-test was conducted comparing means of the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) test carried out before the lessons were taught and those conducted after. The results show that there was a significant improvement (t (99) = -17.021, p < 0.05) in vocabulary acknowledgement and understanding among the learners when comparing the scores of the students about the tests completed before (M= 22.8, SD= 7.7) and after (M= 42.7, SD= 10.9) the lessons were

conducted. This suggests that the current established lesson plan outcomes in the students being able to recognize and understand the target vocabulary.

Table 3. General paired sample t-test to see if significant improvement has occurred in vocabulary recognition
and understanding

Scores	N	M	SD	T	p
Pre-Test	100	22.8	7.7	-17.021	.00
Post-Test	100	42.7	10.9		

Questionnaires

It can be seen that generally, the use of YouTube movies in classroom activities were considered to be useful in helping the students acquire the new vocabulary. When they were asked about if using YouTube enriched their vocabulary knowledge, (96%) of the students agreed to the statement whereas only (4%) of the college students were undecided on the stand. When asked if using YouTube videos has enhanced their vocabulary understanding and improved the quality of the assignments that they submitted, (83%) of the college students agreed that YouTube videos helped them create better

assignments whereas (5%) of the learners disagreed. (12%) of the students remained undecided. When asked if YouTube videos made it easier to learn English vocabulary, (89%

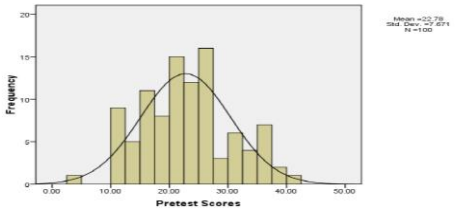

Figure 1. Distribution of pre-test scores

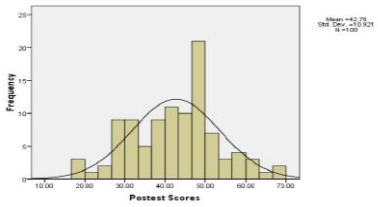

Figure 2. Distribution of post-test scores

students concurred while the rest of the students were undecided. On the query of whether YouTube helped in learning correct pronunciation, (81%) of the students agreed while (7%) of the learners disagreed and (12 %) of the students remained undecided.

The majority of the students considered YouTube to be an attractive learning tool that will help them learn the English vocabulary, but 3 percent of the students disagreed. About (24%) of the students did not answer either way. (71%) of the students loved using YouTube to learn the English language. (5%) of the students did not find it attractive while (24%) of the students didn't give an answer either way. When asked if they enjoyed using YouTube video clips to understand English vocabulary (77%) of the students agreed while (3%) of the college students disagreed and (20%) of the learners remained undecided.

Discussion

From the findings of the current study, it can be seen that both students as well as teachers believe YouTube technology to be an effective tool that can help the students understand and comprehend the English language or in this case, the mark English vocabulary better. The majority of the students found YouTube to be helpful in improving their comprehension of the English vocabulary. In addition, the significant difference in the scores of the pre-tests and post-tests demonstrates integrating YouTube has improved the students' ability to recognize and comprehend the target vocabulary better. The cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning theory gives a good explanation as to why videos help the college students to learn better. The theory suggests that presenting information in video format caters to both the visual and also auditory senses and that provides a more effective method of teaching than just through either of those senses alone (Mayer, 2001).

The majority of the students in the study strongly agreed that the use YouTube in their classrooms for learning new vocabulary provided an attractive and interesting learning environment and that it motivated them to lean faster and better. Terantino (2011) contends that YouTube gives learners with access to language and culture-centered videos while being fun and interesting. Additionally, it also gives the students an avenue to get information and instruction from all over the world thus providing them 'an opportunity to engage meaningfully in the target language' (Terantino 2011, p. 11). The college students of the current study agreed that integrating YouTube videos as part of the classroom activities motivates them to study as well as raises their interest because it is attractive 73% and enjoyable 77%. All the teachers also support this strongly. This is one of the top reasons for using YouTube video clips in the classroom relating to several studies including that of Alimemaj (2010) who believes that YouTube provides motivation to both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated students since it is a technology that deals with the present popular culture. Another research conducted by Alwehaibi (2013) shows that the enjoyable and entertaining atmosphere that is brought on by using videos in classrooms result in the students being motivated to learn.

The results show that the students of the current study found YouTube to be helpful in learning as well as remembering new vocabulary 71%. The teachers also thought that YouTube improved college students' ability to retain and comprehend the prospective vocabulary. This has been supported by several studies including that of Balcikanli (2011) who believes that as YouTube provides several videos on any presented subject, the students are able to retain the words that they learn in their memory without having to get bored. All the teachers in the experimental group strongly agreed that the integration of YouTube within their classrooms increased students' involvement and engagement in the activities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study as well as review of previous literatures, it can be deduced that teachers should be encouraged to use technology in their classrooms. In this generation of digital natives, using technology is not merely a prop in the teachers' bag of tricks, but a necessity to foster and capture the attention of the fast-paced attention span of the learners of the digital age. Teachers need to be selective about the movies they decide to use in their

classrooms in order to achieve maximum effectiveness regarding the improvement of students' ability to learn and retain any part of the language they are trying to teach. YouTube videos selected for the use in language classrooms ought to be based on certain criteria including proficiency level of the students, their cultural context, and the lesson`s objectives. Therefore, teachers can make full utilization of the pedagogical implications of using YouTube videos in the classroom. The current study should be taken as a basis for other studies that need to be conducted for further validation and referencing. Research in the future could investigate the same experiment on a mixed gender people on a larger scale. Future research should also consider using a collection of English language institutions instead of just one institution like the current study.

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