

YouTube application in supporting students' Arabic listening skills

Aplicación de YouTube para apoyar las habilidades de escucha en árabe de los estudiantes

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the level of YouTube application usage to teach Arabic listening skills and identify respondents' perceptions on categories of materials in YouTube application that have been selected and collected. This study was a survey study using a questionnaire instrument to measure the level of YouTube application usage to teach Arabic listening skills to students and to investigate students' perceptions on the selected materials. The research sample was 70 students of one public university in Malaysia who were selected using random sampling method. The data collection was done using a set of questionnaires covering various items of YouTube application usage in T&L Arabic language skills. The questionnaire was modified and adapted from Aziah Abdol Aziz & Parilah Mohd Shah (2014) study and has gone through the validity process with high alpha Cronbach value of 0.98. The findings show that the level of YouTube application usage in teaching Arabic listening skills is at a high level. Subsequently, students are likely to be attracted to the materials that feature interesting forms, graphics, audios and visuals, appropriate timeframes and the use of standard language (fusha).

Keywords: YouTube application; teaching aid; Arabic language; listening skills.

RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar el nivel de uso de la aplicación de YouTube para enseñar habilidades de escucha en árabe e identificar las percepciones de los encuestados sobre las categorías de materiales en la aplicación de YouTube que se han seleccionado y recopilado. Este estudio fue un estudio de encuesta que utilizó un instrumento de cuestionario para medir el nivel de uso de la aplicación de YouTube para enseñar a los estudiantes habilidades de escucha en árabe e investigar las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre los materiales seleccionados. La muestra de investigación fue de 70 estudiantes de una universidad pública en Malasia que fueron seleccionados utilizando un método de muestreo aleatorio. La recopilación de datos se realizó mediante un conjunto de cuestionarios que cubren varios elementos del uso de la aplicación de YouTube en las habilidades del idioma árabe T&L. El cuestionario fue modificado y adaptado del estudio de Aziah Abdol Aziz y Parilah Mohd Shah (2014) y ha pasado por el proceso de validez con un alto valor alfa de Cronbach de 0,98. Los resultados muestran que el nivel de uso de la aplicación de YouTube en la enseñanza de las habilidades de escucha en árabe es de alto nivel. Posteriormente, es probable que los estudiantes se sientan atraídos por los materiales que presentan formas interesantes, gráficos, audios y visuales, plazos adecuados y el uso de lenguaje estándar (fusha).

Palabras clave: aplicación de YouTube; ayuda para enseñar; Lenguaje árabe; habilidades de escuchar.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Second and foreign language teachers often seek to utilize potential technology in teaching and learning (T&L) in order to promote students' autonomy and make their teaching to be interesting. Several studies have shown the widely use of multimedia-related materials in various subjects including History, English and Malay. However, some studies show that language teaching that involves listening skills, especially in the second / foreign language, specifically, Arabic language T&L process, is usually tied to the provided materials and uses teaching aids in the forms of audio or tape recording devices in language lab.

The development of this latest social media landscape is very rapid with statistics showing more than 75% of Internet users using social media. Social media like Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have become trendy, cheap and easy to access for the youths from the category of Generation Y (Shiratudin N, Sani MA, Hassan S, Ahmad MK, Talib KA, Ahmad NS, 2016)]. Several of studies findings revealed that students perceived that mobile social learning could assist them in terms of accessing information quickly, enhance communication between classmates and instructors, as well as offer situated and contextualized learning. Findings also indicated that students had issues with mobile devices which led to frustration and issues with devices as a distraction (i.e. mobile devices causing them to be distracted with activities not associated with learning such as instant messaging among classmates) (Norman H, Nordin N, Din R, Ally M, Dogan H, 2015).

This phenomenon seems to force students and teachers to restructure their T&L designs and among the strategies to think about is to try to leverage on effective audio-visual resources in learning classes. Some recent studies have proven that the use of audio-visual sources such as *YouTube* is a great help to learning foreign languages. Master of education emphasizes two important points in the use of audio-visual resources that utilize visual and auditory as students will directly focus their vision and hearing. The use of this audio-visual resource is informally capable of reflecting the concept of knowledge, stimulating active learning activities, and motivating students (Ghazali, Yusri. & Nik Mohd Rahimi, NY, 2010; Mills, 2011; Chen et al., 2018).

Youtube in Language Learning

The use of the *YouTube* application in the classroom aims to provide broad exposure to linguistic learning and create more autonomous and student-centred learning (Leung KM. 2004). When students often use multiple media for second / foreign language learning, they are actually able to achieve a better level of second / foreign language. Furthermore, the diversity of resources and materials used to improve the input of second / foreign language also has a positive impact on the language procurement process. In addition, using technology in classroom learning, especially in learning the second / foreign language is a way for students to feel the real reality of communicating (Li Wa, 2005; Aisyah A, 2017). This is very different from the situation and the atmosphere of language classes that are more concerned with abstract concepts and language learning theories. The effort to bring technology into the classroom especially among low proficiency students is able to develop student autonomy and nurture lifelong learning skills.

Apart from linguistic and al learning goals, foreign language learning can be enhanced by examining the information and culture of the native speakers of a language learned. Through *YouTube* clips, the information of a language can be dashed through the culture of a local community. Knowledge about culture serves as a valuable resource in foreign language learning to empower language of a nation and civilization. Furthermore, learning YouTube-based Arabic dialect can foster students' interest to learn Arabic and get started to apply it in everyday life, especially for students who are Muslim where the Arabic language is made a sacred language and impact the fundamental of Islamic knowledge and appreciation of the worship that is taken on implications for their faith will grow better (Albantani AM, Madkur A, 2017). Many of the oral communication features of a language cannot be formally studied in the classroom because the resources are very limited. The supra-segmental is a speech element in phonetic that has features such as tone, pause, pressure and intonation which are difficult to learn except through exposure and interaction of the real situations. These features cannot be learned from textbooks, dictionaries or rely on formal teaching in the classroom. Therefore, the sharing of information and culture of a nation through *YouTube* clips is at least capable of giving minimum exposure to the target language and interactions with native speakers.

The strongest reason for using *YouTube* clips in foreign language learning is that they can enhance students' communication skills especially in terms of phonetic and non-verbal language. In the Arabic language issue as a foreign language or third language (B3), students often have no platforms to communicate (Ballman, T, et. al, 2001; Zamri, M., et. al, 2014)). Lack of opportunities to practice phonetics and pronunciation is another problem that arises and disrupts the mastery of the language well. Some studies on the accuracy of students' pronunciation revealed that students with lack of exposure and communication experience in the target language countries are deficient in their pronunciation. In some studies, language experience means the opportunity to use the language in everyday life. One of the factors contributing to students' difficulty in mastering the Arabic language is probably poor pedagogical strategies especially in teaching syntax and morphology (M. N. Linamalini, & S. M. T. Kamarul, 2014; Mohd, Z. I., & Kaseh, A. B. 2016). Arabic language students at tertiary level were still very dependent on lecturers (N. J. Harun, & N. M. I. Siti (2014); Harun, B. & Zawawi, I. (2014).

Students could become more active learners if the teaching process encouraged active involvement. One way is by the use of interactive multimedia. Users could become more interested in learning if they used interactive multimedia. Due to the economic and financial constraints to have opportunities to practise language in target language countries, the language experience is actually available through the benefits of audio-visual resources like *YouTube* and it is found to be an effective method.

Even though the *YouTube* application has started to grow rapidly and has gone viral on the internet but the impact on learning in language classes is rarely presented in the form of scientific and empirical studies (Berk, R. A., 2009) has studied the use of video clips in the classroom and provides detailed rationale for these practices. However, Berk's research focus

is too general as he only focused on all areas of education rather than specific areas that would impact the second / foreign language learning. Nevertheless, he succeeded in listing the learning outcomes and exploring the interesting neuro-cognitive secrets and enlightening the language educators to consider using video clips in their class.

The teachers and students who love acting, movie and video storytelling will actually be satisfied with the content of the materials presented by the *YouTube* application as they can be utilized in the learning of second / foreign language. Along with the advancement of the materials, the content provided in the *YouTube* application through the clips and scenes from tons of movies, advertisements, dramas and animations are able to attract the attention of those involved in T&L of a language. With the *YouTube* application, students and teachers can carefully review any scene in the movie with great focus on rhythm and speech intonation, voice styles, grammar nuances, conversations of each character and roles, or almost all the topics being learned in the language classes.

Since *YouTube* and other online videos appear in the virtual world, the potential that users get is the potential of visuals and audio offered through the materials contained in the *YouTube* application. Creative teachers and learners can find new ways and techniques on *YouTube* channels to help and support their language learning. The language skills that have seen most benefiting from *YouTube* are listening and speaking skills (Raj, S. A. P. S, et. al., 2019). Among the activities that have great potentials when using *YouTube* in second / foreign language learning, specifically when learning listening and speaking skills, are analysing script, dialogues and conversations, re-enactment, dubbing, vlog writing activities and so on.

There is often a question of who is more responsible in determining the direction of approach in language learning; teacher or student? For teachers who are interested in encouraging autonomous students and student-centered learning, *YouTube* once again has the answer. The term autonomous student usually involves debates associated with any of these five ideas, namely: 1) the responsibility for expanding the language potential is located on the shoulders of the students, 2) the students are entitled to explore any of the learning skills they want, 3) the students always have the opportunity to learn independently and independently, 4) students have the right to choose to explore any areas of language learning and development more specifically, and 5) students are entitled to caveat the form of education and learning in their own molds in spite of the different forms of education offered by their educational institution.

Every idea on the concept of autonomous students can be attributed to the use of *YouTube* application. Firstly, students may choose to view *YouTube* clips in target languages according to their timing, evaluate their own level of understanding ability and ultimately be entitled to either continue learning focusing on the topic or to stop and move on to another topic. Secondly, after being exposed to *YouTube* clips, well-developed and linguistic level students can define themselves what elements of the language they want to pursue, especially phonetics and pronunciation in conversations and then strive to master them. Thirdly, students can scan and search millions of video clips available on the *YouTube* application without the help of any teacher or friend. Fourthly, if students find an interesting and useful clip for language learning from *YouTube* channel, they are free to explore all those clips without restrictions. Lastly, if students feel that learning materials provided in the classroom are useless, then students can explore, improve and evaluate their own learning by using materials from *YouTube* channels.

YouTube is a social application that enables clients to share and shape networks around their substance. It pulls in content clients, for example, understudies who get writing in a reasonable learning process in visual shape. In the 21st century Arabic learning isn't just done in relevant or customary route, by following the advancement of the period and exploration of learning, Arabic dialect can be produced in contemporary with online life that exists today, so learning can be conveyed particularly additionally take after the stream of improvement without investigating the substance of the learning itself [Albantani AM, Madkur A, 2017]. Therefore, this study aims to: (1) identify the level of *YouTube* application usage in helping students with Arabic listening skills, (2) identify the audio-visual materials in *YouTube* that are intended for Arabic listening skills and (3) identify respondents' perceptions on the categories of materials collected in *YouTube* application.

2. METHODOLOGY

Cross sectional survey research as a quantitative research approach has been used in this study as the data had been collected once in a short period of time. The participants of the study were 70 students under the Arabic language master's degree program in one public university in Peninsular Malaysia. All participants are full time students with diverse backgrounds and learning experiences. They were selected using purposeful random sampling technique. This study used the questionnaire adapted from Aziah Abdol Aziz & Parilah Mohd Shah (2014). The questionnaire consists of three parts, namely Part A, Part B and Part C. Part A contains of respondents' background, Part B contains of items related to the use of *YouTube* application in Arabic listening skills, while Part C contains of statements on the suitability of selected materials from *YouTube* application to learn Arabic listening skills. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure all the three parts. The scales ranged from "1" – strongly disagree to "5" – strongly agree were adapted from previous study (Mayora CA, 2009). Questionnaire items were examined by three assessors from various areas of expertise (Education, Arabic and ICT) and converted into 'google form' form before conducting a pilot study to 30 respondents in two other public universities. The respondents' characteristics are similar to the study population in which the students have 3 years or more experiences of studying Arabic and are currently studying Arabic. The final version of the questionnaire was sent via e-mail to the respondents. The entire *Cronbach's Alpha* value was derived for the reliability value of .98. Results from the questionnaire were collected and then coded, calculated and processed using the SPSS version 15 software, where mean descriptive statistics and standard deviation were used.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' perception of the benefits of *YouTube* application in supporting students' Arabic listening skills is at a high level based on the acquired mean value. Table 1 shows the percentage and mean value for the benefits of using the entire item in using *YouTube* application for Arabic listening skills. The findings have shown that there are 7 items referring to the benefits of *YouTube* usage that have high mean value while 3 items are at moderate level mean value. This shows the mean value of the benefits of using *YouTube* application to help students' Arabic listening skills as a whole is at a high level of $\text{min} = 3.75$.

The findings are found to be consistent with the findings of the study of *YouTube* application as a teaching material in the History subject which has attracted the respondents to participate in teaching and learning session. Majority of respondents agreed on the use of *YouTube* videos in teaching and learning process. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Aziah Abdol Aziz & Parilah Mohd Shah, (2014) that students agreed on the use of *YouTube* application in providing benefits in terms of improving, enriching and learning new vocabularies. The findings from Ghazali Yusri, Nik Mohd Rahimi, NY, Parilah M. S., (2010) also prove that this *YouTube* application is a suitable material in language learning as well as in writing. Additionally, the use of *YouTube* videos can increase students' interest to follow the process of teaching and learning (Albantani AM, Madkur A, 2017).

Only three items are found to be at the moderate mean value which are the language feature used in *YouTube* material that is easy to understand, the words used are clearly heard and the atmosphere is interactive. Based on these three items, students have problems with the language used in *YouTube* materials due to the lack of emphasis on Arabic listening skills [Albantani AM, Madkur A 2017; Ghazali Yusri, Nik Mohd Rahimi, NY, Parilah M. S, (2010).

Table 1: The Benefits of Using *YouTube* Application in Supporting Students' Arabic Listening Skills

<i>Youtube</i> Application Usage	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
The usage of <i>YouTube</i> in class benefits the learning of Arabic language	0	7.1	22.9	30	40	4.03
<i>YouTube</i> application would increase students' Arabic vocabularies	0	5.7	11.4	58.6	24.3	4.01
The continuous usage of <i>YouTube</i> would motivate students to learn	7.	4.3	14.3	37.1	37.1	3.93
<i>YouTube</i> materials are in accordance to the level of listening skills	1.4	10	18.6	37.1	32.9	3.90
<i>YouTube</i> application is suitable to be used outside of the class to support students' listening skills	0	11.4	10	58.6	20	3.87
<i>YouTube</i> helps to attract students' interest to learn listening skills	0	11.4	10	61.4	17.1	3.84
<i>YouTube</i> materials are relevant in class	1.4	11.4	12.9	55.7	18.6	3.79
The language used in <i>YouTube</i> is understandable	7.1	7.1	27.1	38.6	20	3.57
The pronunciation in <i>YouTube</i> is clear	4.3	24.3	17.1	42.9	11.4	3.33
The language used in <i>YouTube</i> helps to improve students' interactivity	2.9	24.3	28.6	34.3	10	3.24

Overall Mean = 3.75

Table 2 shows the mean value of students' consent to nine categories of selected materials for Arabic listening skills in the *YouTube* application. The categories that are shared with the overall mean of the students' perception are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Categories of *YouTube* Materials

No.	Material	Overall Mean	Level
1.	Song (Kun Anta)	4.07	High
2.	Animation (Upin Ipin)	4.07	High
3.	Top 25 must know Arabic phrases	3.95	High
4.	Learn Arabic / arabicpod101.com in 3 minutes	3.80	High
5.	Individual conversations and texts	3.76	High
6.	Theme song (<i>Khawater</i> Show)	3.73	High
7.	Television (<i>Khawater</i> Show)	3.72	High
8.	Learning lessons (audio & images)	3.55	Moderate
9.	Audio (Connections/Audio Lesson) Eng & Arabic	3.44	Moderate

There are seven selected materials that got high mean values while only two materials got moderate mean values. The seven materials with high mean values indicate that students tend to be interested in songs and animated materials that

are close to their interests. '*Kun Anta*' songs, *Upin & Ipin* animations and *khawater* show are materials that are close to Malaysian society as they are often played in mass media such as radio and television (Salasiah Hanin Hamjah, 2009). This is quite different from less popular materials such as materials 8 and 9 with moderate mean values.

This situation is further reinforced by a separate analysis of three materials namely '*Kun Anta*', *Upin & Ipin* animation and audio materials (connections / audio lessons). This analysis aims to determine students' perceptions of materials that have been selected as materials to learn Arabic listening skills. Analyses were conducted based on 10 assessment items to see the features available on the materials including their attractiveness, shapes, visuals and graphics, easy to understand content, audio and voice quality, duration of the material and language use. Based on the findings of mean value, audio material (connections / audio lessons) obtained a moderate mean value of $\text{min} = 3.44$. The findings show that only four items have high mean values, hence it means these materials are easy to understand and are able to attract students' interest to learn Arabic. The rest of the items indicates that the materials possess high mean value. Based on the items that earn a moderate mean value, the materials are less graphical, contain less visual, not attractive to be used as listening materials, less attractive audio system, and a relatively lengthy material as compared to other materials.

Next is the mean value of the song material (*Kun Anta*) which is at a high level of $\text{mean} = 4.07$. There are seven features determining one material to get high mean value which are, the materials are interesting for Arabic learning to be specific, Arabic listening, contain interesting visuals and graphics, easy-to-understand, and able to stimulate interest. While there are only 3 features that cause one material to get a moderate mean value. Based on the items, the materials are illustrated as not using the standard language (*fusha*), the length of the materials is too long and the use of visuals are less attractive and appropriate. Students' perception of the characteristics of *Upin & Ipin* animated material is at a high level of $\text{mean} = 4.07$. There are nine features that causing this material to get high mean value that are it is an interesting material for learning Arabic listening, contains attractive visuals and graphics, easy-to-understand, and able to stimulate interest. While there is only one feature that gets a moderate mean value which is the material does not use the standard language (*fusha*).

Based on the analysis of the three materials, students' perception on the materials selected from *YouTube* application as students' learning aid was positive. The multimedia elements used in the materials include text, graphics, voice, visuals and animations. These elements have a positive impact on students' learning activities as well as attracting students' learning interest (Abdul Razak Ahmad, Ahmad Ali Seman & Letchumanar a/l Narayanasamy, 2009). In fact, teachers and students prefer wider exposure to movies and videos in the target language contained in *YouTube* (Yuen FY., 2015). *YouTube* and multimedia technology in teaching bring positive perception in their use and are able to train more professional teachers in education field (Mohamad M, Ismail IS, Wahab N, Mamat S. 2016). However, the lack of sensitivity and exposure to the prosodic elements cause students to experience problems with informal (*ammiah*) language, stress, rhythmic, intonation and so on. Research findings demonstrate the difficulties and challenges faced by students are time constraints, communication problems, verbal exchange issues, technical difficulties, and the shortage of creativity and confidence (Watkins J, Wilkins M., 2011). Thus, suprasegmental or prosodic capabilities in Arabic can be overcome by examining carefully any material in *YouTube* by focusing on discourse intonation, code changes, syntactic tones and discussion parts (Silviyanti TM., 2014). Students seem to be interested in video content on *YouTube*, however the defect point appeared when students had to watch and listen to the audio system who spoke Arabic very speedy. This made their untrained ears to sometimes almost surrender in trying to observe the thoughts and ideas. To address this problem, they had to work in group and team to assist each other recognize the material better because this allowed them to share thoughts, ideas and experiences among them ((Silviyanti TM., 2014).

4. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to examine the perception of the students on the benefits of *YouTube* as a learning aid to learn Arabic listening skills. The findings have shown that the use of *YouTube* is beneficial in general to Arab listening skills, interesting, relevant, and motivating, also it has been found that students expressed their enthusiasm with audio-visual materials. The results of the study have shown that this application is able to help students in improving their Arabic language proficiency. Looking at the current development, *YouTube*, a social communication platform should be utilized and incorporated into Arabic language T&L planning so that some potential activities for language learning can be implemented. Be that as it may, there are additionally less-known video material among them due to videos do not contain intriguing illustrations and sound, don't utilize *fusha* dialect, quick discussions et cetera. Nonetheless, there are a few constraints to this study. It just announced the students' interest toward listening practice by utilizing movie videos on *YouTube*. This research did not cover the T&L practices that occurred in the classroom, such as the procedure of arrangement and collaborative work. Moreover, the students' performance in enhancing their listening ability after using *YouTube* movie videos were likewise not explored. Therefore, it is recommended that other researchers who are additionally keen on instructive innovation to direct further inside and out research on these issues.

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