



IT-Based YouTube Integration for Early Childhood English Vocabulary Learning: Teacher Perspectives

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Abstract: English vocabulary acquisition forms the foundation for language development in early childhood. While Information Technology (IT) platforms like YouTube offer multimedia resources for language learning, research examining teacher perspectives on YouTube's role in vocabulary development remains limited. This phenomenological study explores how early childhood educators perceive and integrate YouTube for English vocabulary instruction. Twenty teachers from 18 institutions across three Indonesian provinces participated through interviews and documentation analysis. Data analysis employed open coding and axial coding to identify patterns and themes. Findings reveal two main themes: teachers recognize YouTube's effectiveness for vocabulary recognition and contextual usage, yet emphasize the need for structured implementation. Teachers perceive YouTube as effective when combined with three strategies: selecting age-appropriate content, providing active guidance during viewing, and implementing reinforcement activities such as storytelling and interactive games. This study contributes phenomenological insights into teacher experiences with IT-mediated language instruction and offers practical frameworks for integrating digital platforms into early childhood vocabulary development.

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Abstrak: Perolehan kosakata bahasa Inggris merupakan fondasi penting dalam perkembangan bahasa anak usia dini. Meskipun platform Teknologi Informasi (TI) seperti YouTube menyediakan sumber pembelajaran berbasis multimedia yang potensial, kajian yang menelaah perspektif guru terhadap peran YouTube dalam pengembangan kosakata masih terbatas. Penelitian fenomenologis ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana pendidik anak usia dini memaknai dan mengintegrasikan YouTube dalam pembelajaran kosakata bahasa Inggris. Sebanyak dua puluh guru dari delapan belas lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini diteliti di provinsi di Indonesia berpartisipasi melalui wawancara mendalam dan analisis dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan teknik open coding dan axial coding untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan tema

utama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan dua tema pokok, yaitu guru memandang YouTube efektif dalam membantu pengenalan kosakata dan penggunaan kata dalam konteks, namun menekankan pentingnya penerapan yang terstruktur. Guru menilai YouTube efektif apabila dipadukan dengan tiga strategi utama: pemilihan konten yang sesuai dengan usia anak, pemberian pendampingan aktif selama kegiatan menonton, serta pelaksanaan aktivitas penguatan seperti bercerita dan permainan interaktif. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi berupa pemahaman fenomenologis terhadap pengalaman guru dalam pembelajaran bahasa berbasis teknologi, sekaligus menawarkan kerangka praktis bagi integrasi platform digital dalam pengembangan kosakata anak usia dini.

Keywords: Teacher Perception, YouTube, English Vocabulary Acquisition, Information Technology, Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION

English vocabulary acquisition provides the foundation for language and cognitive development in early childhood (Nguyen et al., 2021; Warmansyah et al., 2024). Research demonstrates that broader vocabulary at early ages predicts stronger academic performance, particularly in literacy and reading comprehension (Suggate, 2016; Utomo et al., 2017). Strong vocabulary enhances communication effectiveness, idea expression, and social skill development (Ilham et al., 2023). Early English learning provides access to information and engagement with the global community.

Vocabulary acquisition connects strongly to overall language and cognitive development. Justice et al., (2017) found that bilingual education exposure, including English, enhanced problem-solving skills and cognitive flexibility. These learners demonstrated superior creative thinking and rapid decision-making adaptation. English vocabulary mastery aids digital literacy development, an essential skill in technology-driven context (Purba et al., 2024).

Language-rich learning environments play a central role in English vocabulary development. Research indicates that exposure

to quality digital media and direct adult interaction correlates with stronger vocabulary skills (Bisma et al., 2023; Koeswanti, 2021; Rulismi et al., 2023; Syarfina et al., 2024). Interactive, exploration-based approaches prove more effective for enhancing language abilities (Munir & Warmansyah, 2023). Mastering English vocabulary during early childhood extends beyond language development. Xu & Gao, (2021) found that early foreign language learning enhances abstract concept comprehension and critical thinking engagement, providing foundations for navigating academic and social challenges. Therefore, prioritizing the development of English vocabulary in early childhood education is crucial for preparing children for future success.

The current Industrial Revolution 4.0 era is characterized by the increasing replacement of human roles with technology (Kurniawan et al., 2024). Information Technology (IT) integration has transformed educational practices across multiple fields (Fears & Lockman, 2020). Digital platforms have become integral to learning, business, and communication (Alizkan et al., 2021). Social networks, used extensively by

educational institutions, support service promotion and improvement (Shanmugasundaram & Tamilarasu, 2023). This technological shift highlights modern society's incorporation of advanced tools into educational practices, making learning more engaging. The habitual use of these networks allows users to easily access a wealth of information, fostering learning in the process. As a result, the growth and widespread adoption of language usage, particularly through digital platforms, have increased significantly (Rulismi et al., 2023). This highlights the emergence of modern society, where advanced and innovative tools are being incorporated into educational practices, making learning more engaging and enjoyable.

The digitalization era necessitates IT integration in education, enhancing teaching and learning processes (Desmita et al., 2023; Mahriza et al., 2023; Murro Nuril Chasanah & Hasibuan, 2024; Warmansyah, Nurlaila, et al., 2023). IT provides vast information access (Idhartono, 2022), expanding knowledge rapidly (A. P. Sari, 2020). Information availability anytime and anywhere, given internet connectivity, represents a key advantage (Utomo et al., 2017). Teachers can optimize student learning by effectively utilizing IT in conjunction with appropriate teaching methods.

YouTube exemplifies IT-mediated learning environments (Nurhayati et al., 2022). YouTube serves as an educational tool designed to meet learning needs and facilitate improvement through media based on its platform (Jannah & Atmojo, 2022). A study conducted in Vietnam examined both the advantages and disadvantages of using YouTube for foreign language learning (Luy, 2022). This platform provides accessible information on various topics (Donthu et al., 2022). However, one downside is that slow internet connections can result in poor video

quality, with low-resolution images when videos are downloaded in small file sizes (Maharani & Budiarti, 2022). Additionally, students may find the learning process tedious when the tutorial videos are unengaging and repetitive. Due to potential network limitations, teachers are often required to download instructional videos prior to class to ensure smooth playback. YouTube is a service by Google that enables users to upload and share videos, providing free access to users worldwide (Dasopang et al., 2022). Educators can leverage YouTube by creating interactive learning videos and uploading them to the platform (Pertiwi et al., 2022). Children can then easily access and watch these educational videos shared by teachers via YouTube (Jasiah et al., 2023). As a learning resource, YouTube is highly valuable for young learners, offering useful English learning content (Puspita & Edvra, 2022). Additionally, it encourages teachers to be more creative in producing innovative and engaging videos to captivate children's interest and enhance their learning experience.

Existing research highlights the increasing importance of digital platforms, such as YouTube, in facilitating language acquisition, particularly in early childhood education. However, while prior studies have established the effectiveness of digital media in enhancing language development, there remains a gap in understanding the specific impact of YouTube on improving children's English vocabulary. Most research has concentrated on the overall advantages of bilingual education or digital literacy, with limited examination of educators' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of YouTube as a tool for vocabulary enrichment. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring teachers' perceptions of YouTube as a resource for enhancing English vocabulary skills in early childhood education, while also

providing insights on how the platform can be effectively utilized in classroom settings.

METHODS

Research Type

This study employs a qualitative approach with phenomenological methodology to understand early childhood education teacher experiences in utilizing YouTube for vocabulary learning. Phenomenology was selected over alternative qualitative approaches (case study, narrative inquiry) because it enables in-depth exploration of lived experiences through direct participant descriptions (Creswell, 2014), capturing the essence of teacher perceptions and practices. The study was conducted over four months (August–November 2024) to observe the progress of online learning in Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) institutions in Indonesia.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study participants consist of 20 PAUD teachers from 18 PAUD institutions across four provinces: Jambi, Bengkulu and West Sumatra. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on relevance to the research objectives without considering data generalization (Patton, 1990). Selection criteria include: 29–30 years old, bachelor's degree in early childhood education, 5–7 years teaching experience, teaching in private institutions, and ability to use and design video-based learning materials.

Data Collection

Data triangulation was achieved through multiple sources. Documentation observations included photos and videos of classroom YouTube implementation. In-depth interviews with 20 teachers were conducted in Indonesian via online applications (Zoom), with each interview lasting 45-60 minutes.

Interview questions focused on perceptions of YouTube effectiveness, content selection strategies, classroom implementation approaches, and challenges encountered. Prior notification and informed consent were obtained from all participants. Documentation provided visual evidence of YouTube integration practices, while interviews captured detailed teacher experiences and reflections.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using open coding and axial coding techniques (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Analysis steps include: (1) preparing transcript templates to organize and store data, (2) managing data through dialogue line numbering systems to facilitate information tracking, (3) processing data by considering linguistic elements such as intonation and pauses to maintain discourse authenticity, and (4) ensuring ethical considerations by maintaining participant anonymity according to provided consent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This study covers two research themes: 1) Perceptions of early childhood educators regarding the integration of YouTube as a learning tool for English vocabulary development; and 2) Strategies for effectively utilizing YouTube to enhance young children's vocabulary acquisition.

Theme 1. Perceptions of Early Childhood Educators Regarding the Integration of YouTube as a Learning Tool for English Vocabulary Development

Rationale for Integrating YouTube in Early Childhood English Learning

The study reveals a strong consensus among early childhood educators on the

importance of integrating YouTube as a learning tool for enhancing English vocabulary development. In-service teachers recognize the potential of YouTube in providing engaging and interactive learning experiences that support children's vocabulary acquisition. However, they also highlight that the current use of YouTube in early childhood education is often suboptimal, as many educators lack sufficient digital literacy skills to effectively select and utilize appropriate content.

Furthermore, teachers note that YouTube can enhance children's interest in learning new words through visually appealing and contextually relevant videos. This approach not only makes vocabulary learning more meaningful but also supports multiple learning styles by integrating auditory and visual elements. Additionally, educators emphasize that incorporating YouTube as a learning tool encourages independent exploration, fosters curiosity, and provides exposure to native English pronunciation, which is crucial for young learners. However, they also stress the need for careful content selection to ensure age-appropriateness and alignment with educational goals.

"By implementing YouTube-based learning and integrating it into English vocabulary development, children can benefit from both aspects within a single learning concept. For example, through interactive educational videos, children not only learn and understand new vocabulary but also hear correct pronunciation directly from native speakers, thereby enhancing their language skills. (GT7, interview, Zoom)"

Early childhood educators recognize the importance of integrating YouTube as a learning tool for English vocabulary development, highlighting several key reasons. They emphasize that children need to

develop critical thinking skills, imagination, and creativity, which are essential in the language learning process. Additionally, teachers believe that using YouTube not only enriches children's vocabulary but also helps them understand the context of word usage more broadly through engaging and interactive visual content.

The flexibility of YouTube content allows children to learn vocabulary through various methods, including listening to native speakers' pronunciation, observing illustrations that support word comprehension, and interacting with enjoyable songs and stories. Through this approach, children can naturally and effectively develop their language skills. Furthermore, teachers stress the importance of guidance in using YouTube to ensure that the content accessed is appropriate for children's age and developmental needs.

"Because by using more enjoyable learning methods and incorporating YouTube as a learning tool, children not only expand their vocabulary, but also, when they enjoy the learning process, new words and language structures are more easily absorbed. Making learning fun is crucial, especially when introduced from an early age. (GT3, interview, Zoom)"

Both experienced and new early childhood educators demonstrated a strong understanding of the need to integrate YouTube as a learning tool for English vocabulary development. This aligns with findings from other studies, such as R. K. Sari et al., (2022), which indicate that educators are becoming increasingly proficient in utilizing digital media for language learning. Specifically, research by Mahardhika et al., (2023) reveals that nearly 50% of teachers are already familiar with the use of YouTube for

educational purposes, particularly in subjects like Language, Literacy, and Communication, while over 50% believe that YouTube is an effective tool for vocabulary development in early childhood education.

Additional studies, such as those by Imroatun et al., (2021), indicate that teachers have successfully integrated YouTube as a learning tool for language instruction, although these studies were conducted outside the context of early childhood education. Jasiah et al., (2023) further highlight that most teachers perceive the use of YouTube in language learning as a process of building interconnectedness, where digital media and linguistic concepts are combined into a cohesive whole. Some educators equate this integration with holistic learning, suggesting that it should encompass various aspects of language skills to provide a more meaningful learning experience for children.

When focusing on the experiences of early childhood educators, these findings align with research by Cahyono & Perdhani, (2022), which explored teachers' experiences in using digital media for language instruction. Warmansyah, et al., (2023) found that teachers often faced concerns and challenges in selecting and presenting appropriate content for young learners. They recognized that their personal experiences with technology influenced their teaching practices. Additionally, teachers identified certain aspects of their training and teaching experiences as crucial in supporting their use of digital media. These insights suggest that while educators acknowledge the importance of YouTube as a tool for English vocabulary development, they may also encounter similar challenges, such as anxiety in selecting suitable content and the need for adequate training support.

Beyond the context of language learning, Saleha et al., (2022) reported that

teachers are already capable of integrating digital technology into early childhood education in general. This indicates a broader trend in which educators increasingly embrace the use of digital media in various educational settings, further reinforcing the relevance of YouTube as a learning tool for vocabulary development in early childhood education.

Integrating YouTube in English Vocabulary Development

The findings indicate a shared belief among early childhood educators regarding the significance of utilizing YouTube as a tool for developing children's English vocabulary. Teachers emphasized that integrating YouTube into the learning process enhances children's engagement, making vocabulary acquisition more interactive and enjoyable.

By incorporating YouTube into language learning, children not only expand their vocabulary but also develop listening and pronunciation skills through exposure to authentic language use. Educators highlighted that YouTube provides access to diverse multimedia resources, such as songs, animated stories, and educational videos, which facilitate a more immersive learning experience.

"By using YouTube, children can engage with words in a fun and meaningful way. They listen, watch, and repeat, making the learning process more effective." (IT6, interview, Zoom)

Early childhood educators emphasize that using YouTube in English vocabulary learning makes the process more engaging, active, and enjoyable. They believe that exploring children's curiosity through interactive videos not only enhances language skills but also helps them internalize new vocabulary more effectively. Additionally, this approach fosters a fun learning habit and

increases children's motivation to continue learning.

"Just like in language learning, we can integrate YouTube by highlighting various new vocabulary words through songs, stories, and engaging animations." (PT8, interview, Zoom)

This perspective aligns with Dewi & Anggraeni, (2023), who emphasizes that schools and teachers can effectively integrate digital technology into language education. With proper guidance and the right implementation methods, using YouTube in language learning can strengthen children's vocabulary comprehension and improve their communication skills. This strategy reflects a holistic approach that not only enriches cognitive aspects but also supports children's social and emotional development in the process of learning English.

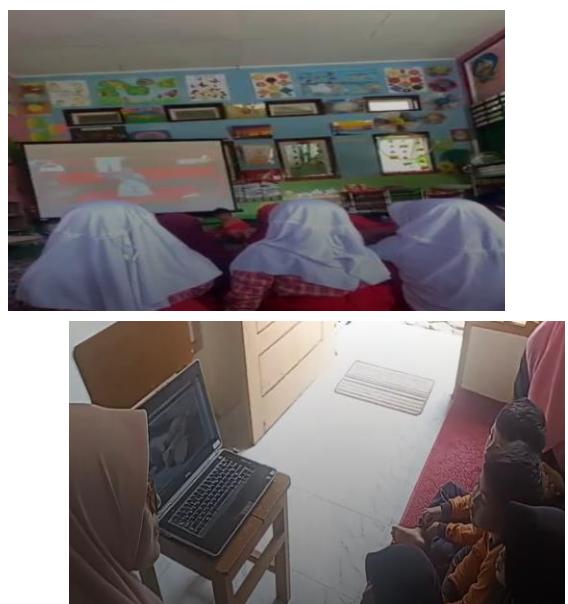


Figure 1. Teachers use YouTube to develop children's English vocabulary.

Theme 2. Strategies for Effectively Utilizing YouTube to Enhance Young Children's Vocabulary Acquisition

Selecting YouTube Content Appropriate for Early Childhood

Early childhood educators emphasize the importance of employing appropriate strategies when using YouTube as a tool for teaching English vocabulary to young children. One of the primary approaches they use is selecting videos that align with children's developmental levels, feature interactive content, and incorporate animations and educational songs to enhance engagement in learning. Additionally, they design supporting activities to reinforce children's understanding after watching the videos, such as encouraging them to repeat new words, engaging in vocabulary-based games, and using visual cues to strengthen their memory of the learned words. For example, teachers guide children in understanding vocabulary by showing pictures, asking simple questions, and linking the newly learned words to objects or situations in their surroundings.

"By showing videos with interactive songs and colorful animations, children can more easily understand and retain new vocabulary." (IT4, interview, Zoom")

Teachers also suggest strategies such as combining YouTube videos with interactive activities, such as mimicking movements from songs in the videos or engaging children in word-guessing games based on newly learned vocabulary. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of providing guidance while children watch, ensuring they comprehend the video content, and reinforcing their learning through enjoyable activities after the viewing session.

Early childhood educators recognize that the visual and auditory elements of YouTube make it an effective tool for helping young children acquire new vocabulary. The use of animated content, educational songs, and interactive storytelling enhances language learning in an engaging and memorable way.

"By showing videos with interactive songs and colorful animations, children find it easier to understand and remember new vocabulary." (IT4, interview, Zoom)

These findings align with the study by Sulaiman et al., (2024), which revealed that while traditional curricula do not explicitly integrate digital media as a primary learning tool, educators acknowledge its influence on children's language development. Additionally, Resti Citra Dewi et al., (2024) emphasized the importance of teacher training in effectively incorporating digital resources into teaching strategies, ensuring that children benefit from a combination of structured guidance and interactive content.

Furthermore Fajriyah et al., (2023), found that despite challenges in integrating digital media with conventional learning methods, educators who strategically utilize these tools create a more dynamic and immersive learning environment. Therefore, selecting appropriate YouTube content and combining it with interactive teaching methods can enhance vocabulary retention and actively engage children in the language learning process.

The Role of Teachers in Guiding Children During Learning Through YouTube

Early childhood teachers emphasize the importance of active guidance while children watch educational videos on YouTube. They not only select appropriate videos but also manage interactions with children throughout

the viewing process. Strategies include pausing the video at certain points to provide additional explanations, asking questions, and encouraging children to repeat new vocabulary or concepts.

Teachers ensure that children remain focused by engaging them in mimicking movements from the video or guessing the meaning of words based on visual context. Additionally, they use facial expressions and voice intonation to capture children's attention and clarify word meanings in the video.

"Pausing the video at specific moments and asking children what they just saw helps them engage actively rather than passively watching." (IT2, interview, Zoom)

Guidance also involves connecting the video's content to children's daily experiences. Teachers provide real-life examples from their surroundings to help children better understand and remember new vocabulary.

"Linking words from the video to objects around them helps children recall vocabulary more quickly." (IT7, interview, Zoom)

After watching, teachers conduct brief discussions to reinforce children's understanding and give them opportunities to use newly learned vocabulary in conversations.

"Asking children what they learned from the video encourages them to explain in their own words, even if they are hesitant." (IT5, interview, Zoom)

These findings align with research by Pertiwi et al., (2022), which states that teacher guidance in digital learning helps children better understand content and enhances their engagement. Asmiarti & Winangun, (2018)

found that children who receive direct guidance while watching videos achieve better comprehension than those who watch independently. Additionally, Choiriyah et al., (2023) highlight that teachers' questioning strategies can improve children's ability to recall and use new vocabulary in various contexts.

Supporting Activities After Watching YouTube Videos

Early childhood educators emphasize that learning does not stop after watching YouTube videos; follow-up activities play a crucial role in reinforcing vocabulary acquisition. Engaging children in interactive and meaningful experiences helps internalize new words effectively.

"After watching a video about animals, children were encouraged to imitate the sounds and movements of the animals they saw. This method helped them not only remember the words but also connect them to real experiences." (IT5, interview, Zoom)

Storytelling and role-playing activities further deepen children's understanding. Picture cards, hand puppets, and dramatization of scenes from the video make vocabulary learning more engaging and memorable.

"Flashcards and simple games like 'guess the word' were used to help children recall the vocabulary learned from the video, making learning more interactive and enjoyable." (IT3, interview, Zoom)

Technology is also utilized to extend learning beyond video-watching sessions. Digital storytelling apps and recording children as they practice using new words in sentences provide additional reinforcement. Research by Donohue & Schomburg, (2012)

supports the integration of digital media in language learning, highlighting its role in enhancing vocabulary retention, critical thinking, and collaborative learning. Xu & Gao, (2021) found that video-based learning combined with reflective activities, such as group discussions and project-based tasks, improves children's comprehension and retention of new vocabulary. Puspitasari et al., (2023) demonstrated that combining visualization, role-playing, and context-based repetition enhances engagement and understanding in vocabulary learning. Additionally, Warmansyah et al., (2024) confirmed that integrating multisensory activities, such as dancing and singing along with videos, significantly contributes to early childhood language learning by involving multiple sensory modalities that reinforce memory.



Figure 2. Teacher uses Story Telling Method with Hand Puppets for Supporting Activities After Watching YouTube Videos

CONCLUSIONS

This phenomenological study reveals early childhood educators view YouTube as a valuable IT tool for enhancing English vocabulary when integrated with structured teaching strategies. Teacher lived experiences demonstrate that YouTube effectiveness depends on three interconnected elements: selecting age-appropriate content, actively guiding learners during viewing, and implementing reinforcement activities such as

storytelling, role-playing, and interactive games. The phenomenological essence of teacher experiences centres on the mediating role educators play in transforming YouTube from passive video consumption into active vocabulary learning. Teachers perceive themselves not merely as content selectors but as essential bridges connecting IT platforms with meaningful language acquisition. Research novelty lies in the integrated examination of teacher perception, YouTube as specific IT platform, vocabulary acquisition as targeted outcome, and phenomenology as methodological lens. Theoretical contributions connect teacher experiences to dual coding theory, multimedia learning principles, and constructivist frameworks, demonstrating how IT-mediated instruction aligns with established learning theories.

Study limitations include the sample size of 20 teachers limiting generalizability, online interview constraints potentially affecting data richness, subjective interpretation despite peer checking, exclusive focus on teacher perspectives without examining learner responses, and four-month observation period not capturing seasonal variations. Future research should examine learner direct responses through observational studies and vocabulary assessments, compare different digital platforms for vocabulary development effectiveness, conduct classroom experiments testing identified implementation strategies, investigate teacher training program design for effective IT integration, and explore parental roles in supporting YouTube-based vocabulary learning. Equipping educators with evidence-based strategies can maximize YouTube's potential as an effective vocabulary development tool in early childhood education, contributing to broader IT integration in language instruction.

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