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A study on the use of youtube videos for learning English pronunciation by EFL students at HUFLIS

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ABSTRACT

The current study explored EFL university students' use of YouTube videos as additional resources to learn English pronunciation and the features of these videos that assisted the students in learning pronunciation. A total of 100 students from HUFLIS participated in the study, and data were gathered through questionnaire, journal writing, and interview. The findings show that EFL university students believed YouTube videos were very important and used them to practice pronouncing words correctly in English. They discovered that watching YouTube videos helped them pronounce words more correctly and gave them more self-assurance, drive, and enjoyment during their studies. Also, the research emphasized the particular aspects of YouTube videos, including visual aids, interactive features, speaker demonstrations, and easy-to-understand pronunciation examples that were beneficial to students. Based on the study's findings, recommendations are given on how to use YouTube videos for pronunciation learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Investigating how college students majoring in English use YouTube videos for learning pronunciation independently is the goal of the current study. Exploring YouTube videos as resources is crucial because many EFL students do not have enough opportunities to practice pronunciation in regular classroom settings. Along with investigating the range of resources accessible on the platform for pronunciation practice, the study also seeks to determine the popularity of particular YouTube channels that are employed for self-directed learning pronunciation by university students. The study aims to add insight into our knowledge of how YouTube supports EFL students' self-study of English pronunciation by looking at how it fosters community development and engagement among EFL university students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

English Pronunciation Learning in EFL Contexts

For EFL learners, mastering English pronunciation is essential since it enhances language competency overall and promotes effective communication. Pronunciation is a common challenge for learners because English and their native tongue differ phonologically. But more options to improve pronunciation are now available thanks to technology improvements and online tools. Accurate pronunciation improves speaking,

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listening, reading, and comprehension as well as intelligibility. In social, professional, and academic contexts, especially in English-speaking countries or international settings where English is the universal language, clear pronunciation is crucial for effective communication.

The Role of Technology in Pronunciation Instruction

The use of technology in language learning, especially in pronunciation instruction, is revolutionary. Speech recognition softwares, online courses, video platforms, and pronunciation apps are just a few of the resources and tools available thanks to technology for bettering pronunciation. The absence of personalized feedback based on each individual's distinct pronunciation challenges is a drawback of technology-based pronunciation training, though. According to a study by Wang et al. (2018), automated speech recognition systems might not be able to precisely detect pronunciation mistakes and provide helpful feedback. Furthermore, the absence of human interaction—which is crucial for language learning—in technology-based pronunciation instruction may hurt students' motivation and engagement. To overcome these limitations, learners should supplement technology-based instruction with opportunities for individualized feedback and communication with teachers or native speakers.

The Use of YouTube videos in learning English pronunciation

YouTube videos have gained popularity as a teaching and learning tool for English pronunciation because of their accessibility, interactivity, and wide range of information. Students may watch the speaker's lip motions and hear the pronunciation at the same time in these videos, which helps them better comprehend where their tongue and lips are placed. Learners can improve their listening comprehension by concentrating on certain pronunciation or accent issues with the abundance of videos that showcase native English speakers from many backgrounds. Furthermore, YouTube videos also frequently provide pronunciation demonstrations in real-world English, which adds to the practicality and interest of the learning process. Two well-known YouTube channels that focus on English pronunciation are Rachel's English and PronunciationPro. They provide thorough explanations and activities to assist non-native speakers in improving their pronunciation. Pronunciation lessons are available in the video collections of language-learning websites and platforms such as EngVid and FluentU, in addition to these channels. While YouTube videos can be a great source of information for improving English pronunciation, it's advisable to use them in conjunction with other resources and practice speaking with teachers or native speakers to get feedback and improve pronunciation abilities.

Theoretical Framework

This study looks at how HUFLIS EFL students utilize YouTube videos to learn how to pronounce words in English. The social cognitive theory put out by Bandura (1986) and constructivism by Vygotsky (1978) are included in the theoretical framework. These theories highlight how modeling, active engagement with learning resources, and observational learning can all improve language acquisition. The goal of the project is to assist in the development of data collection tools by investigating the factors that influence students' use of YouTube for pronunciation learning and to gain insight into how EFL students utilize the platform to learn pronunciation through videos. The study also takes into account the self-efficacy theory, which holds that students will be more motivated and involved in the learning process if they have confidence in their capacity to acquire pronunciation from YouTube videos. All things considered, these theoretical stances offer a conceptual foundation for comprehending how YouTube videos can improve EFL students' pronunciation of the English language.

Previous Studies on YouTube for Pronunciation Learning

Previous studies have examined the effects of using mobile and digital resources for teaching English pronunciation. For example, Anisimova et al (2020) also looked at the effectiveness of YouTube videos for pronunciation instruction, while Rachmawati and Cahyani (2020) investigated the potential of YouTube videos for pronunciation instruction for non-English majors. More recent studies, like Putri and Karmila (2024) have further explored the impact of YouTube videos on pronunciation learning of high school students, while Purnamasari (2018) focused on EFL university students' perceptions of YouTube as a tool in a blended learning.

In the context of Vietnam, a study on the effects of using films in English-speaking lessons on high school students in Kien Giang Province was carried out Dinh and Phung (2023). The students were split into two groups for the research: one group watched videos to learn English speaking, while the other group took regular speaking sessions. In comparison to the control group, the video-using group significantly improved their speaking proficiency, exhibiting more accuracy, fluency, and complexity, according to the study. The study conducted by Phuong and Loi (2023) examined the potential of YouTube videos to improve English pronunciation by students in Vietnam. According to the research, using YouTube videos boosted students'

writing process motivation, engagement, and independence. The study by Van Truong and Le (2022) investigated the use of YouTube by Vietnamese EFL tertiary students to improve their communicative English. According to the study, because YouTube offered them real-world language input, students valued the opportunity to practice pronouncing words correctly, listen to native speakers, and gain conversational confidence in English.

Overall, the reviewed studies concentrated on learning a language generally. However, there is a dearth of studies on how to use YouTube videos in pronunciation lessons. The current study intends to fill these gaps by concentrating on the particular context of EFL students at HUFLIS. The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do EFL university students use YouTube videos to learn English pronunciation by themselves?

2. What features of YouTube videos do EFL university students report to help them with learning English pronunciation?

3. METHODOLOGY

A mixed-methods research design was employed in the current study, involving both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative component used questionnaires to collect data on students' opinions of the usefulness of YouTube videos for learning English pronunciation, while the qualitative component involved journals and interviews. Data was collected from 100 students at HUFLIS using a convenient sampling method. Ten students out of these 100 students were invited for interviews and journal writing. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Data collection procedures included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and learning journals. The questionnaire comprised 20 questions in English organized into three distinct clusters including participants' backgrounds and experiences with learning English via Youtube videos, how they used YouTube videos to improve English pronunciation, and features of YouTube videos facilitating their pronunciation learning. Data analysis used thematic and inferential statistical methods. The questionnaire focuses on exploring how EFL university students utilize YouTube videos for self-learning in English pronunciation. The second issue investigates the specific attributes of YouTube videos that EFL university students find beneficial in improving their English pronunciation. All the questionnaire items were written in English and translated into Vietnamese for the students to understand. The interview includes 6 open-ended questions about the participants' experiences with using YouTube videos for learning English pronunciation and their opinions on their effectiveness and the features of YouTube videos that participants find most helpful for learning English pronunciation. Four questions in the journal writing provided prompts to students to reflect on their learning of English pronunciation through YouTube videos. By documenting their reflections, students can track their progress and insights gained from using online resources for language learning.

4. FINDINGS

The questionnaire was delivered to 100 EFL university students. The reliability of the questionnaire was processed with the SPSS software, achieving the Cronbach alpha coefficient of .902, larger than .8, indicating good reliability.

Demographic Information of the Participants

Table 1. Statistic information of the participants

Back ground information		Number (N=100)	%
Age	19 years old	25	25.0
	20 years old	69	69.0
	21 years old	4	4.0
	22 years old	2	2.0
Gender	Male	14	14.0
	Female	84	84.0
	Other	1	1.0
	Prefer not to say	1	1.0
Class standing	Year 1	25	25.0
	Year 2	75	75.0
Time for studying English	< than 10 years	15	15.0
	10 years	24	24.0
	>than 10 years	61	61.0

Table 1 indicates that the majority of participants (61%) had studied English for more than ten years. These results imply that participants' language ability and performance in English-language activities may be impacted by the duration of their English language study.

EFL university students' use of YouTube videos to learn English pronunciation

This section presents students' reported use of YouTube videos from the data gathered through questionnaires, journals, and interviews. The descriptive statistics from the questionnaire are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. EFL students' use of YouTube videos to learn English pronunciation

Descriptive Statistics (N=100)		
Statement	Mean	SD
1 . I usually use YouTube videos to learn English pronunciation.	4.30	.644
2 . I have noticed improvement in my English pronunciation after using YouTube videos.	4.22	.660
3. I feel more confident in speaking English after using YouTube videos for pronunciation practice.	4.40	.620
4. I find it helpful to watch native speakers pronounce English words on YouTube.	4.36	.644
5 . I feel motivated to practice English pronunciation when using YouTube videos.	4.38	.663
6. I think watching YouTube videos has helped me to have a better understanding of the nuances of English pronunciation.	4.46	.626
7. Learning English pronunciation through YouTube videos is more enjoyable than the traditional methods of learning in the classrooms.	4.42	.654
8. I use YouTube videos to practice pronunciation and learn the correct usage of new vocabulary to me.	4.28	.668
9 . I set up a routine to learn English pronunciation via YouTube videos	4.27	.851
10. YouTube videos have enabled me to learn English pronunciation at my own pace and convenience, which has been very helpful.	4.22	.645

It can be seen from Table 2 that the respondents generally have positive attitudes toward using YouTube videos for learning English pronunciation. The mean values for all statements range from 4.22 to 4.46, indicating high agreement with the statements. Standard deviations suggest variability in responses among participants, with some statements showing stronger agreement than others.

Besides data from the questionnaire, twenty journal entries were also analyzed with information gathered from interviews. The analysis of the data revealed several noteworthy findings regarding HUFLIS students' perceptions of learning English pronunciation through YouTube videos. For example, Duy Anh wrote,

"I learn with Lucy channel which provides many useful videos about pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary usage in English. She has a lot of great tips on how to pronounce like a real British person." (Journal - Duy Anh).

An wrote,

"I learn English through short videos by native speakers. Usually when watching videos on Rachel's English channel, I try to imitate them and talk about new words many times, especially adjusting my tone, speed, and stress." (Journal - An).

In the interview, the majority of the participants had positive perceptions of using YouTube vidoes for learning. Most of the participants feel that using YouTube videos have positively impacted their English pronunciation learning. They feel more confident and able to hear and pronounce English words accurately. For example, Nhi said, *"Learning pronunciation with videos on YouTube helps me pronounce better because videos on YouTube are made with standard British or American conversations" (Interview, Nhi). Dang pointed out, "When learning English on YouTube, first I discovered my common mistakes. Then, I could practice reading like a native speaker such as standard British or American"* (Interview, Dang).

The participants also mentioned the importance of choosing videos based on their interests and preferences. This personalized approach to selecting videos can enhance engagement and make the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

Phuong Uyen and Khanh Linh said in turn,

"We choose videos that are related to our current interests. We also choose music-themed videos and watch movies so that I can pick up vocabulary that is difficult for me to remember. As a result, I can pronounce it

more accurately and correctly." (Interview, Phuong Uyen and Khanh Linh)

Overall, the interview highlighted the benefits and challenges of using YouTube for English pronunciation learning, as well as the importance of personalized learning strategies in utilizing online resources effectively. The analysis of twenty journal entries and interviews with the students revealed their favorable assessment of YouTube videos. They appreciated the effectiveness, personal progress, learning strategies, user experience, benefits, and limitations. The students reported enhanced motivation, engagement, confidence, and overall effectiveness in learning English pronunciation via YouTube videos.

Features of YouTube videos assisting EFL university students in learning English pronunciation

This section presents the descriptive statistics of the 10 statements regarding the features of YouTube videos that help EFL university students with learning English pronunciation.

Table 3. Features of YouTube videos assisting EFL university students in learning English pronunciation

Descriptive Statistics (N=100)		
Statement	Mean	SD
11. I think clear and concise pronunciation demonstrations from YouTube videos help me with my English pronunciation learning.	4.30	.745
12. Observing other people pronouncing English words in YouTube videos facilitates my English pronunciation learning.	4.25	.809
13. I think the quality of the audio in YouTube videos is important for learning English pronunciation.	4.34	.781
14. I find YouTube videos engaging for learning English pronunciation.	4.20	.841
15. YouTube videos that include visual aids, such as subtitles or mouth movements, for pronunciation practice are very useful for my English pronunciation learning.	4.35	.770
16. I find videos with clear explanations and demonstrations of pronunciation more helpful than videos without explanations.	4.34	.794
17. I prefer videos that incorporate pronunciation practice into conversations or dialogues to videos that focus solely on pronunciation practice.	4.27	.851
18. The demonstrations of pronouncing English words of speakers in YouTube videos help me pronunce English correctly.	4.23	.863
19. I find it useful to learn from the interactive elements (quizzes, exercises) in English pronunciation videos.	4.35	.845
20. Viewing others pronounce English words in YouTube videos helps me improve my pronunciation skills through observation and modeling.	4.18	.903

Table 3 shows that, on average, the participants felt that watching YouTube videos improves their ability to pronounce words correctly in English. The participants praised precise explanations, high-quality audio, interactive pronunciation practice features, and visual aids like lip gestures or subtitles.

Another finding related to the features of the online videos for English pronunication learning is that the 10 participants found such features as subtitles, diverse video sources, and the ability to adjust video speed helpful for learning English pronunciation. These features enable them to hear, see, and repeat words and phrases clearly, aiding in their pronunciation practice. For example, An wrote, *"Useful features in watching YouTube videos to learn pronunciation are: There are a variety of topics related to daily life, a feature to adjust the speed to fast or slow, especially there is a subtitle for easy following" (Journal, An). Similarly, Nhu Y wrote, "I think maybe it's the subtitles because there are so many new words that I haven't met yet and don't know how to pronounce. With subtitles, it will be easier for me to look up and imitate the speaker's pronunciation."* (Journal, Nhu Y)

Besides, in the interviews, Khanh Huyen said,

"Firstly, videos on YouTube can be repeated many times and I can also adjust the speed, and hearing level to be able to hear more clearly. There are sounds that I find difficult to pronounce so I can listen to them over and over again." (Interview, Khanh Huyen)

A common complaint among participants is the presence of advertisements in YouTube videos, which can be distracting and cause a loss of motivation. This suggests that while YouTube can be a helpful platform for learning, it can also have drawbacks that impact the learning experience.

For example, An and Minh Anh said

"I think there are ads inserted into videos that make me lose my motivation and mood to study like I don't want to study anymore. Besides, there are so many topics that I don't know which topic to choose and it can be very difficult to listen to a certain part because it's so fast, I can't keep up with the lecture mode." (Interview,

An and Minh Anh).

In general, the 10 students who kept journals and participated in the interviews generally show that the participants find the subtitles, diverse video sources, and the ability to adjust video speed helpful for learning English pronunciation and make them gain improvement in their English pronunciation.

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to find out how HUFLIS students utilize YouTube videos to learn English pronunciation and what aspects of these films they find helpful. With mean ratings for all 10 claims ranging from 4.22 to 4.46, the descriptive statistics show that EFL university students highly value and use YouTube videos for pronunciation learning. This suggests that YouTube videos are often helpful and efficient for students looking to improve their pronunciation. Data from the questionnaire demonstrate that students view YouTube videos as an important self-learning tool, boosting their confidence, motivation, and enjoyment more than traditional classroom methods.

These findings align with previous studies, such as Anisimova et al. (2020), Putri and Karmila (2024), and Wang and Vásquez (2012), which also discovered that practicing pronunciation with YouTube videos boosts learners' confidence and motivation. YouTube videos assist students in improving pronunciation through observation and modeling, according to a study that used a combined theoretical framework from constructivist theory by Vygotsky (1978) and social learning theory by Bandura (1986).

Regarding the features of YouTube videos that EFL university students reported to help them learn English pronunciation, the findings show that they appreciated such features as clear pronunciation demonstrations, peer observation, high-quality audio, visual aids, explanations, integrated practice into conversations, and interactive elements. These findings are in line with those by Rachmawati and Cahyani (2020) and Van Truong and Le (2022) which emphasized the value of YouTube learning resources for pronunciation. The current study added that improving pronunciation learning materials' efficacy can involve adding interactive features, visual aids, and clear demonstrations.

The study's findings, which support constructivism and social learning theory, revealed strong agreement among HUFLIS students regarding the advantages of watching YouTube videos to acquire pronunciation. Future studies might examine certain strategies and tactics used by students to learn pronunciation on YouTube.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concentrated on how EFL students learned English pronunciation by watching YouTube videos. The results demonstrated that, according to questionnaires, journals, and interviews, HUFLIS students largely agreed on the significance of using YouTube videos for this purpose. YouTube videos were found to offer a more modern approach as compared to conventional approaches, which improved pronunciation and boosted confidence. The films also give students the chance to watch native speakers pronounce words, which enhances their comprehension of subtle pronunciation differences and adds to the enjoyment of learning. The study emphasized the benefits of efficiently using online resources as well as tailored learning tactics. During the discussion, participants agreed that exact demonstrations, high-quality audio, visual aids, interactive components, and the incorporation of practice into conversations are valuable features of YouTube videos that help EFL students acquire pronunciation. On the other hand, the existence of advertisements was seen negatively. All things considered, the study provided evidence in favor of the claim that EFL students can improve their pronunciation by using YouTube videos.

From the findings of the current study, implications are put forward for EFL teachers and students. First, by using interactive features, visual aids, and clear demonstrations in their courses, EFL teachers can help their students improve their pronunciation skills. More effective learning outcomes may result from encouraging students to explore different YouTube channels and videos that match their interests. Additionally, YouTube videos can be an even more effective teaching tool for English pronunciation when they are combined with interactive exercises that encourage engagement. Proper pronunciation can be reinforced in class by assigning assignments that have students watch particular films and participate in discussions or activities. Making films of pupils pronouncing words correctly might give them insightful feedback on how they're doing. Instructors may also utilize YouTube videos as a technique for peer evaluation, letting students correct one another's pronunciations and provide helpful feedback.

Students who want to study language usage might watch films with native speakers to improve their pronunciation and intonation; they can watch movies that include drills or exercises, and they can also practice certain pronunciation problems. Speaking with peers about pronunciation might yield constructive criticism and motivation. Students can become familiar with a variety of accents and dialects by watching films from

different English-speaking countries. Including video-based games or challenges can add interest to practicing. Pronunciation notebooks are useful for tracking development and identifying particular requirements. Taken together, these methods can increase how successful it is to use YouTube videos to practice pronouncing words correctly in English.

The current study on EFL university students' use of YouTube videos for English pronunciation has some limitations. These include the lack of a control group for comparison, variations in student demographics that impact generalizability, and the requirement for a bigger sample size to guarantee wider application.

Future studies should concentrate on how various kinds of YouTube videos affect EFL students' pronunciation learning outcomes and how engagement in videos affects students' motivation and aids in pronunciation acquisition. Additionally, research might examine how YouTube videos' subtitles and visual aids help students comprehend pronunciation conventions and nuances. The usefulness of YouTube videos in teaching English pronunciation may also be ascertained by conducting studies that contrast them with conventional teaching techniques. Furthermore, studies might look into the possible disadvantages of utilizing YouTube videos to teach pronunciation as well as how students can use self-assessment tools to track their progress and set goals. Future research could look at peer feedback and collaborative learning with YouTube videos, as well as how EFL teachers can use the platform to enhance learning experiences in their lessons.

The results of the current study demonstrate how effective YouTube videos are for helping EFL university students pronounce words more correctly. They said these films have given them more self-assurance when speaking English and have improved their understanding of the subtleties of pronunciation. When practicing pronouncing words correctly, participants favored interactive films that had thorough explanations, crisp audio, eye-catching graphics, and pronunciation demonstrations. The study emphasizes how beneficial YouTube videos are as an online tool for EFL students to improve their pronunciation and general learning process. The significance of multimedia learning materials with a range of characteristics for enhancing pronunciation skills is emphasized. The benefits and drawbacks of using YouTube videos to learn English as a foreign language are acknowledged in this study, which advances our knowledge of how EFL students use online resources like YouTube to perfect their English pronunciation.

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Nghiên cứu việc sử dụng Youtube để học phát âm tiếng Anh của sinh viên tại Trường Đại Học Ngoại Ngữ, Đại học Huế HUFLIS

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Từ khóa:
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TÓM TẮT

Nghiên cứu này tìm hiểu việc sử dụng video YouTube của sinh viên đại học như một nguồn tài nguyên bổ sung để học phát âm tiếng Anh, cũng như các đặc điểm của những video này hỗ trợ người học trong quá trình luyện phát âm. Tổng cộng có 100 sinh viên từ Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ, Đại học Huế (HUFLIS) tham gia nghiên cứu, và dữ liệu được thu thập thông qua bảng hỏi, nhật ký học tập và phỏng vấn. Kết quả cho thấy sinh viên tin rằng video YouTube đóng vai trò rất quan trọng và họ sử dụng chúng để luyện phát âm từ tiếng Anh một cách chính xác hơn. Người học nhận thấy rằng việc xem video YouTube giúp họ phát âm đúng hơn, tự tin hơn, có động lực và hứng thú hơn trong quá trình học. Ngoài ra, nghiên cứu cũng nhấn mạnh các đặc điểm cụ thể của video YouTube như hình ảnh minh họa, tính tương tác, cách trình bày mẫu của người nói, và ví dụ phát âm dễ hiểu, tất cả đều mang lại lợi ích cho người học. Dựa trên các kết quả, nghiên cứu đưa ra khuyến nghị về cách sử dụng video YouTube trong việc học phát âm tiếng Anh một cách hiệu quả.