

English Teachers' Perception of the Use and Challenge of YouTube Videos in Vocabulary Learning at Junior High Schools in Penajam Paser Utara

Awalia Fitratul Jannah Oktavia¹, Weningtyas Parama Iswari¹, Kurniawan Suryatama¹

1) Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Mulawarman, Jl. Muara Pahu, Kampus Gunung Kelua, Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur 75119, Indonesia

e-mail: 1)irafjo6@gmail.com 2) weningtyas.iswari@gmail.com
3)kurniawansuryatama@fkip.unmul.ac.id

Abstract

This study examined English teachers' perceptions of using YouTube videos in vocabulary instruction and the challenges they encounter when integrating this medium into classroom practice. A quantitative survey with a descriptive design was employed, involving 55 English teachers from junior high schools in Penajam Paser Utara Regency. Data were collected through a questionnaire adapted from Al Amin and Aziz (2023) and Scott and Walczak (2009), covering six indicators: absorption, understanding, evaluation, perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and external challenges. Data were analyzed descriptively using percentages and mean scores. Results showed that teachers held generally positive perceptions of YouTube as a vocabulary learning tool, with absorption, understanding, and evaluation indicators falling into the good category, suggesting that audiovisual context supports vocabulary comprehension and sustains learner motivation. Teachers nonetheless reported persistent challenges, namely unreliable internet connectivity, the time burden of curating suitable videos, the risk of students being distracted by unrelated content, and limited institutional support for technology integration. These findings indicate that while YouTube holds strong potential as a vocabulary learning medium, its effective use depends on teachers' digital competence, deliberate pedagogical planning, and adequate institutional backing.

Keywords: EFL teaching, Teachers' perception, vocabulary learning, YouTube, digital learning

1. Introduction

English language proficiency is a key competency in the era of globalization, where mastery of vocabulary is widely regarded as a fundamental element and a prerequisite for success in all four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Without an adequate stock of words, learners struggle to comprehend spoken and written input, and

they are equally limited in their ability to produce coherent spoken or written output, regardless of how well they understand grammar or other aspects of the language system. Vocabulary, in this sense, functions less as one skill among many and more as the foundation upon which the other four skills are built.

Despite this centrality, conventional teaching methods, such as memorizing word lists from textbooks or completing repetitive translation exercises, often fail to arouse student interest and can lead to boredom and disengagement over time. These methods tend to present vocabulary as isolated items to be memorized rather than as meaningful units embedded in authentic communicative contexts, which limits both retention and learners' ability to use new words appropriately. This situation demands that educators adapt and seek innovative teaching strategies, particularly by utilizing information and communication technologies that are already familiar and appealing to students' everyday lives, rather than relying solely on traditional print-based approaches.

Teaching English vocabulary presents unique challenges, especially at the junior high school level, where learners are still developing foundational language skills while also navigating the broader cognitive and social demands of adolescence. Learners at this stage often face significant barriers, such as the tendency to quickly forget newly learned words and generally inadequate vocabulary knowledge relative to what is required for grade-level texts and tasks (Farjami, 2018). These difficulties are compounded when instruction relies heavily on rote memorization, since words learned without meaningful context or repeated exposure are particularly prone to being forgotten soon after they are taught.

In the digital age, video platforms such as YouTube have emerged as a particularly promising medium for addressing these challenges in vocabulary instruction. Its main strength lies in its rich and multimodal audiovisual content, which has been shown to increase both motivation and vocabulary retention among learners (Hasanah et al., 2025). Visual elements provide a rich, authentic context that allows students to associate new words with real-world situations and visible referents, rather than abstract definitions alone, while audio elements expose learners to the pronunciation, intonation, and natural speech patterns of native or proficient speakers, something static print materials cannot replicate (Kurniawan, 2024). Taken together, these multimodal features align well with how vocabulary acquisition is understood to occur most effectively, namely through repeated, meaningful exposure in varied and authentic contexts, rather than through decontextualized repetition.

Various studies have shown that the use of video can increase students' motivation and understanding of subject matter more broadly, beyond vocabulary learning specifically (Mariyati, 2013; Novita Putri et al., 2023), lending further support to the relevance of video-based platforms like YouTube within English language teaching. However, although a

substantial body of research has focused on student perceptions and learning outcomes associated with YouTube use, a research gap remains regarding the views and experiences of teachers themselves, particularly within local and under-researched contexts such as Indonesian junior high schools outside major urban centers. This gap is significant because teacher perception plays a crucial role in determining the success of new media implementation in the classroom (Rahman & Tresnawati, 2016); a medium that researchers consider promising will nonetheless see limited or inconsistent use if the teachers responsible for implementing it harbor doubts about its practicality, relevance, or effectiveness, or if they encounter unaddressed barriers in applying it within their specific teaching context.

Penajam Paser Utara Regency represents one such under-researched context. As a regency that may face infrastructural and resource constraints distinct from those of larger urban areas, it offers a setting in which teachers' actual experiences with digital media integration, both its perceived benefits and its practical obstacles, can be examined directly, rather than assumed based on findings from better-resourced settings. Understanding these experiences is particularly important given that successful technology integration depends not only on the inherent qualities of the tool itself, but also on the readiness, beliefs, and circumstances of the teachers expected to use it.

Therefore, this study aims to explore English teachers' perceptions of YouTube use in vocabulary teaching in Penajam Paser Utara Regency, alongside the practical challenges they encounter in doing so. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is English teachers' perception of the use of YouTube videos in vocabulary learning at junior high schools in Penajam Paser Utara Regency?
2. What challenges do English teachers face in utilizing YouTube videos for vocabulary learning at junior high schools in Penajam Paser Utara Regency?

2. Literature Review

Perception is defined as the process by which individuals select, organize, identify, and interpret sensory information to understand their environment. It is influenced by personal background, experiences, and personality traits, acting as a filter to manage overwhelming stimuli (Kenyon & Sen, 2015). According to Walgito (2015), perception has three main indicators: (1) Absorption of stimuli—stimuli are absorbed or received by the five senses and result in an image or impression in the brain; (2) Understanding—after images or impressions occur in the brain, they are organized, classified, compared, and interpreted to form understanding; and (3) Assessment or evaluation—individuals compare their newly acquired understanding with existing criteria or norms to form a

subjective judgment. In the educational context, understanding teachers' perceptions of innovation and technology is essential, as teachers are the primary agents of change (Cope & Ward, 2002).

YouTube, founded in 2005, is the most widely used video-sharing platform on the Internet. It serves as a significant learning medium, offering diverse educational content that increases student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes (Shoufan & Mohamed, 2022). The multimodal characteristics of YouTube—combining visual, audio, and situational context—allow students to understand the meaning of vocabulary in a more concrete way compared to traditional text-based methods. Research confirms that YouTube-based content is effective for teaching vocabulary through engaging multimedia, fostering motivation and retention (Hasanah et al., 2025; Rini et al., 2024).

The challenges of integrating YouTube into classroom instruction are analyzed using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which identifies three dimensions: (1) Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)—referring to technical challenges such as internet connectivity and device availability; (2) Perceived Usefulness (PU)—referring to pedagogical concerns such as student distraction from irrelevant content and difficulty verifying content quality; and (3) External Factors—including institutional policies, classroom management issues, and curriculum time limitations (Greeves & Oz, 2024; Ilchenko et al., 2022).

Previous research consistently shows YouTube's potential as a vocabulary learning tool. Aldiansyah (2022) found that although internet use in Indonesia is growing, students' vocabulary acquisition through YouTube remains suboptimal without guided instruction. Pentarti (2022) demonstrated that teachers who integrated video media in classroom instruction achieved more meaningful learning outcomes. Khusnul Roziqoh (2024) found that students held positive cognitive perceptions toward YouTube use in English speaking classes. These studies underscore the need to examine teacher perspectives to gain a more complete picture of YouTube's role in EFL vocabulary learning.

3. Methods

3.1 Research design

This study employed a quantitative method with a survey research design to systematically describe and measure English teachers' perceptions of YouTube use in vocabulary learning and the challenges they face in integrating it into classroom instruction. A survey design was selected because it allows researchers to collect standardized data from a relatively large number of respondents at a single point in time, producing numerical data that can be statistically analyzed and, within the bounds of the sample, generalized to the broader population of interest (Creswell, 2019). This design was considered appropriate for the present study because the research aims, namely identifying patterns of perception and challenge across a teacher population, are best addressed through measurable, comparable

indicators rather than through in-depth exploration of individual experiences, which would call for a qualitative approach instead.

3.2 Research setting and timeframe

The study was conducted from January to March 2026 at state junior high schools in Penajam District, Penajam Paser Utara Regency, East Kalimantan Province. This three-month period covered the early part of the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, allowing data collection to take place under normal classroom conditions rather than during examination periods or school holidays, when teaching practices and technology use may not reflect typical instructional patterns.

3.3 Population and sample

The population of this study consisted of 246 English teachers across 20 state junior high schools in Penajam District, comprising 107 male teachers (43.50%) and 139 female teachers (56.50%). Using purposive sampling, 55 English teachers (22.36% of the population) were selected as the research sample.

It should be noted that the specific criteria used to select these 55 teachers from the wider population of 246 are not detailed here. A purposive sampling strategy requires explicit, predetermined criteria, for example, years of teaching experience, prior use of digital media in instruction, or willingness to participate, in order for the sample to be considered representative of the population it claims to draw from and for the procedure to be replicable by other researchers. The absence of stated selection criteria is acknowledged as a limitation of this study's sampling procedure.

3.4 Data collection instrument

Data were collected through a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The instrument was adapted from the research instruments developed by Al Amin and Aziz (2023) and Scott and Walczak (2009), and covered two variable clusters:

1. Teachers' Perception, measured through three indicators: Absorption of Stimuli, Understanding, and Assessment or Evaluation, following Walgito's (2015) theory of perception formation.
2. Challenge of Use, measured through three indicators derived from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM): Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), and External Factors.

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire was distributed electronically to

accommodate respondents across the 20 participating schools and to facilitate efficient data collection within the three-month study period.

3.5 Validity and reliability testing

Instrument validity was confirmed using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation formula. All items produced r-count values exceeding the r-table value of 0.266 (at a significance level of 0.05 for $n = 55$), indicating that every item in the questionnaire was statistically valid and measured the construct it was intended to measure. Instrument reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.9936. Following the conventional threshold whereby values above 0.90 indicate excellent internal consistency, this result confirms that the questionnaire items were highly consistent in measuring teachers' perceptions and the challenges they reported, and that the instrument can be considered reliable for the purposes of this study.

3.6 Data analysis technique

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distribution, mean scores, and percentages, calculated separately for each indicator and for the instrument as a whole. Percentage scores were interpreted using Ridwan's (2015) classification scale, as follows:

Table 1. Analysis of Challenges Faced by Teachers ($n = 55$)

No	Interval	Category
1	81-100%	Excellent
2	61-80%	Good
3	41-60%	Enough
4	21-40%	Not Good
5	0-20%	Very Bad

This classification scheme was applied consistently across both the Teachers' Perception and Challenge of Use variables, enabling the two sets of findings to be compared using the same interpretive framework.

4. Result

4.1 Respondent Profile and YouTube usage patterns

A total of 55 English teachers participated in this study, comprising 12 male teachers (21.82%) and 43 female teachers (78.18%). The majority of respondents (53 out of 55, or

96.36%) reported using YouTube as a learning medium in the classroom, while 2 teachers (3.64%) reported not using it at all. Among the 53 teachers who used YouTube, 26 (49.06%) used it occasionally, while the remaining 27 (50.94%) used it more regularly.

Teachers reported using YouTube for ten different purposes in English vocabulary learning, indicating diverse instructional applications. These purposes are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Purposes of YouTube Use in Vocabulary Learning (n = 53)

No	Perception Indicator	Male (%)	Female (%)
1	Introducing new vocabulary through visual content	46	86.79
2	Demonstrating correct pronunciation	41	77.36
3	Providing real-life context for word usage	39	73.58
4	Increasing student motivation and engagement	37	69.81
5	Reinforcing vocabulary through repetition and review	35	66.04
6	Supporting listening comprehension alongside vocabulary	27	50.94
7	Assigning supplementary homework or independent practice	25	47.17
8	Facilitating group or pair discussion activities	21	39.62
9	Introducing idiomatic expressions and collocations	19	35.85
10	Assessing vocabulary mastery through video-based quizzes	13	24.53

Source: Questionnaire data processing results.

Table 2 shows that teachers' use of YouTube in vocabulary instruction is concentrated in a few core, low-effort applications rather than spread evenly across all ten purposes. Introducing new vocabulary through visual context was the most frequently reported use (86.79%), followed by demonstrating correct pronunciation (77.36%) and providing real-life context for word usage (73.58%), suggesting that teachers primarily rely on YouTube to support foundational, input-based stages of vocabulary learning. By contrast, more demanding or assessment-oriented purposes, such as facilitating group discussion (39.62%), introducing idiomatic expressions (35.85%), and assessing vocabulary mastery through video-based quizzes (24.53%), were reported far less often. This pattern indicates that while teachers readily integrate YouTube as a presentation tool, they make comparatively limited use of its potential for interactive or evaluative vocabulary activities.

4.2 Teachers' Perceptions of YouTube Use in Vocabulary Learning

Table 3 presents the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of teachers' perceptions of YouTube use in vocabulary learning, based on three indicators derived from Walgito's

(2015) perception theory: absorption of stimuli, understanding, and assessment or evaluation. The Absorption of Stimuli indicator received a score of 69.36% (Good category), the Understanding indicator 76.16% (Good category), and the Assessment or Evaluation indicator 77.39% (Good category). The overall average perception score was 74.30%, falling into the Good category overall. Both male teachers (73.17%) and female teachers (74.87%) showed consistently Good perceptions across all three indicators, with female teachers scoring marginally higher on every indicator.

Table 3. Teachers' Perception of YouTube Use by Indicator (n = 55)

No	Perception Indicator	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)	Category
1	Absorption of Stimuli	67.92	69.77	69.36	Good
2	Understanding	75.63	77.04	76.16	Good
3	Assessment / Evaluation	75.97	77.79	77.39	Good
	Average Perception Score	73.17	74.87	74.30	Good

Source: Questionnaire data processing results.

These results indicate that teachers not only recognize YouTube as a tool that captures students' attention through audiovisual stimuli, but also perceive it as effective in helping students understand and internalize new vocabulary in context. The comparatively higher scores on the Assessment/Evaluation indicator further suggest that teachers view YouTube favorably even when judging its instructional value critically, rather than merely as a source of passive entertainment.

4.3 Challenges faced by teachers in integrating YouTube

Table 4 presents the results for the challenges variable, examined using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework. Three categories of challenges were identified: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), and external factors.

Challenges related to Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) included unreliable internet connectivity and the time required to identify and prepare appropriate videos prior to class. Challenges related to Perceived Usefulness (PU) included concerns about student distraction by unrelated content, passive rather than active student engagement during viewing, and difficulty verifying the accuracy and appropriateness of video content. Challenges classified under external factors included institutional policies restricting student device use in the classroom and limited curriculum time available for incorporating supplementary digital media.

Table 4. Analysis of Challenges Faced by Teachers (n = 55)

No	Interval	Criteria	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
1	61–80%	Good	62.15	64.30	63.83

	Total	Good	62.15	64.30	63.83
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Source: Questionnaire data processing results.

The overall challenge score of 63.83% falls within the Good interval (61–80%), suggesting that teachers generally perceive these challenges as manageable rather than prohibitive. However, this table currently reports only a single aggregate score and does not show how PEOU, PU, and external factors individually contributed to this total. Since the prose above describes specific challenges within each of these three categories, the table should ideally report a percentage score for each category separately (similar in structure to Table 3), so that readers can see, for instance, whether PEOU-related challenges (e.g., internet connectivity) were rated as more or less burdensome than PU-related challenges (e.g., student distraction). If sub-indicator data are available, please add three rows, one per TAM category, before this table is finalized.

5. Discussion

The results show that English teachers generally hold a good perception of YouTube as a vocabulary learning medium, with an overall score of 74.30% (Table 3). This can be explained through Walgito's (2015) perception theory, which states that perception is formed through three stages: absorption of stimuli, understanding, and evaluation. At the absorption stage, teachers scored YouTube's contribution at 69.36% (Good), the lowest of the three indicators but still favorable, suggesting that teachers perceive YouTube's multimedia characteristics as enabling students to grasp vocabulary meaning more concretely than through traditional methods, even if this is the dimension teachers are least confident about. The clarity and appeal of audiovisual stimuli appear to create stronger cognitive impressions than text-based instruction alone.

At the understanding stage, which received the highest individual score among the three components at 76.16% (Good), teachers organize their experience using YouTube with prior pedagogical knowledge, forming the belief that YouTube helps students understand vocabulary through visual context and authentic language use. This aligns with Nation's (2017) principle that effective vocabulary learning occurs when students relate words to meaningful contextual experiences. The strength of this indicator is also reflected in Table 2, where the three most common reported uses of YouTube, introducing new vocabulary through visual context (86.79%), demonstrating correct pronunciation (77.36%), and providing real-life context for word usage (73.58%), are all uses oriented toward building comprehension through context rather than testing or production. This suggests that teachers' favorable perception of YouTube's role in understanding is not simply an abstract attitude but is grounded in how they actually deploy the medium in the classroom.

At the evaluation stage, scoring 77.39% (Good) and the highest of the three indicators, teachers judge YouTube as capable of increasing students' motivation, attention, and

comprehension of new vocabulary. These findings are consistent with Rini et al. (2024), who found that YouTube videos significantly increased vocabulary mastery through an audiovisual approach, and with Hasanah et al. (2025), who found that YouTube increases students' motivation and vocabulary retention through engaging and interactive experiences. Notably, this is also the indicator on which female teachers (77.79%) outscored male teachers (75.97%) by the narrowest margin among the three components (Table 3), indicating a fairly consistent evaluative judgment of YouTube's instructional value across gender.

At the same time, Table 2 also reveals a gap between teachers' positive evaluation of YouTube and how fully they exploit its instructional potential. While foundational, input-based purposes dominate usage, more interactive or evaluative applications, such as facilitating group discussion (39.62%), introducing idiomatic expressions (35.85%), and assessing vocabulary mastery through video-based quizzes (24.53%), are reported far less frequently. This pattern suggests that teachers' good perception of YouTube at the evaluation stage may be based primarily on its value as a presentation tool rather than as a medium for deeper, more active vocabulary engagement, a distinction that has implications for how teacher training might be approached going forward.

Regarding the challenges faced by English teachers, the results show an overall score of 63.83% (Good), notably lower than the perception score and the lowest of the indicators that this study reports as falling into the Good category (Table 4). One of the main challenges is the potential for student distraction from advertisements and unrelated video recommendations, reinforcing Greeves and Oz's (2024) finding that the lack of standardized quality assurance requires teachers to act as selective content curators. This concern is consistent with the usage pattern observed in Table 2, where assessment-oriented and discussion-based applications of YouTube were reported comparatively rarely; teachers may be limiting their use of YouTube to more easily supervised, input-based activities precisely because of distraction concerns. Some teachers also doubted the long-term effectiveness of YouTube in improving vocabulary retention without active cognitive engagement, consistent with Nation's (2017) emphasis on the need for deep cognitive processing in vocabulary learning, a concern that echoes the relatively low reported use of interactive applications such as video-based quizzes (24.53%) and group discussion activities (39.62%) noted above.

External factors such as institutional policies restricting digital device use and inadequate internet infrastructure also pose significant challenges, as noted by Ilchenko et al. (2022). Nevertheless, the Good category rating for the challenges variable indicates that teachers generally view these obstacles as manageable rather than prohibitive. This reflects teachers' resilience and their recognition of YouTube's substantial potential as a vocabulary learning medium, provided it is integrated with appropriate pedagogical strategies such as pause-and-discuss, guided viewing, and vocabulary tasks (Kurniawan, 2024). Taken together with the

usage patterns in Table 2, this points to a clear direction for improvement: rather than expanding teachers' general acceptance of YouTube, which is already favorable, future support should focus on helping teachers move from foundational, presentation-style use toward the more interactive and evaluative applications of the medium that are currently underused.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, two main conclusions can be drawn regarding the use of YouTube as a vocabulary learning medium among junior high school English teachers in Penajam Paser Utara Regency.

First, teachers generally hold a good perception of YouTube as a vocabulary learning medium, with an overall score of 74.30% (Table 2). All three perception indicators, namely absorption of stimuli (69.36%), understanding (76.16%), and assessment or evaluation (77.39%), fall into the Good category, indicating that teachers perceive YouTube as effective in capturing students' attention, helping them understand vocabulary through visual and contextual cues, and increasing overall learning motivation. This positive perception is further substantiated by the usage patterns identified in Table 1, where the most commonly reported purposes of YouTube use, introducing new vocabulary through visual context, demonstrating correct pronunciation, and providing real-life context for word usage, are precisely those that align with the comprehension-building functions teachers rate most favorably. In other words, teachers' positive evaluation of YouTube is not merely an abstract attitude but is grounded in how they actually use the medium in practice. At the same time, the comparatively lower use of more interactive or evaluative applications, such as group discussion activities and video-based vocabulary quizzes, suggests that teachers' engagement with YouTube remains concentrated at the input and presentation stage, leaving its potential for more active vocabulary practice largely untapped.

Second, the challenges faced by English teachers in utilizing YouTube for vocabulary learning reached an overall score of 63.83% (Good). These challenges span three dimensions: technical issues such as unreliable internet connectivity and the time required to prepare suitable videos (PEOU); pedagogical concerns such as student distraction by unrelated content and passive rather than active engagement (PU); and external constraints such as institutional policies restricting device use and limited curriculum time (external factors). Despite these obstacles, the Good category rating indicates that teachers generally regard them as manageable rather than prohibitive, suggesting a degree of resilience and adaptability in how teachers currently navigate YouTube integration despite imperfect conditions.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that YouTube holds significant potential as a vocabulary learning medium capable of increasing learning motivation and providing a more authentic learning context than conventional methods alone. However, the gap between teachers' favorable perceptions and their comparatively limited use of YouTube's more interactive features indicates that realizing this potential fully will require more than positive attitudes alone; it depends on deliberate pedagogical strategies, sufficient teacher digital competence, and adequate institutional support.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations are offered. Teachers are encouraged to move beyond using YouTube primarily as a presentation tool and to integrate it more fully with interactive activities such as guided class discussions, structured vocabulary exercises, pause-and-discuss techniques, and reflective tasks that require active rather than passive engagement with video content. Schools and policy makers are encouraged to provide adequate internet access, digital facilities, and professional training that specifically addresses how teachers can design interactive, not just illustrative, uses of video-based media. Future research is recommended to examine the empirical impact of YouTube use on students' actual vocabulary learning outcomes through experimental or quasi-experimental designs, since the present study addresses teachers' perceptions and reported practices but does not measure student learning outcomes directly. Further studies might also investigate why teachers favor input-based uses of YouTube over its more interactive applications, in order to identify whether this stems from limited training, time constraints, or assumptions about what video-based instruction is best suited for.

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