

## The Use of Youtube as a Learning Media to Enhance EFL Students' Speaking Skills: A Systematic Literature Review

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### ABSTRACT

*Speaking is an essential skill in English language learning; however, many EFL students still experience difficulties due to limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and lack of confidence. Although YouTube has been widely used in language learning, evidence regarding its benefits and challenges remains scattered across individual studies. Therefore, this study aims to systematically review the use of YouTube as a learning medium for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills. Six empirical studies published between 2019 and 2024 were selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The findings indicate that YouTube contributes to the improvement of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and overall speaking performance. In addition, YouTube enhances learners' motivation, confidence, engagement, and autonomy by providing authentic language input and flexible learning opportunities. However, challenges such as limited interaction, passive learning tendencies, and technological constraints were also identified. This review contributes to the literature by synthesizing recurring patterns, benefits, and challenges of YouTube-based learning across different EFL contexts. The findings provide practical implications for EFL instructors and offer directions for future research on effective YouTube integration in speaking instruction.*

**Keywords:** Learning Media, Speaking Skills, Youtube

### INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an essential component of communication and one of the primary indicators of English language proficiency. Effective speaking requires not only adequate vocabulary and background knowledge but also accurate pronunciation and fluency. For students whose academic and professional fields require English proficiency, particularly those enrolled in the English Education Study Program, speaking is considered one of the most essential language skills. It plays a crucial role in communication, as it allows individuals to express their thoughts, exchange

information, and interact effectively with others. Without sufficient speaking ability, learners may face difficulties in understanding and conveying meaning, which can hinder successful communication. information, and interact effectively with others. Without sufficient speaking ability, learners may face difficulties in understanding and conveying meaning, which can hinder successful communication.

One of the key factors that supports speaking proficiency is vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary learning is a fundamental aspect of English language acquisition because it contributes significantly to the development of language skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Maesaroh & Sari, 2021). Moreover, vocabulary mastery refers to an individual's ability to understand, process, and appropriately use words in communication. This ability is influenced by various factors, such as learners' motivation, interests, and communicative needs (Alqahtani, 2015 as cited in Saefudin et al., 2025). Therefore, a rich vocabulary enables learners to express ideas more clearly and confidently during communication.

To develop speaking skills, students need to actively engage in English communication and speaking activities. Brown (2004) defines speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Similarly, Nunan (2003) considers speaking to be the most important skill in language learning because it directly reflects learners' ability to use language in real communicative situations.

In this context, educators need to identify effective methods and select appropriate materials to improve EFL students' speaking skills and classroom engagement. Mayer (2009) states that multimedia learning is effective because it involves both auditory and visual channels at the same time, which assists students in processing and retaining information more thoroughly. One example of multimedia that can be used in learning is YouTube. As a platform for sharing videos, YouTube offers a wide variety of content, from educational videos to real-life interactions, making it a useful resource for English language learners (Miller, 2019). Furthermore, Harmer (2007) explains that audio-visual media can increase students' motivation and support language learning by providing contextual input that is often not available in textbooks alone.

Previous studies have consistently reported positive effects of YouTube on EFL learners' speaking development. Research has shown improvements in pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, fluency, confidence, and learning motivation (Putri, 2020; Syafiq et al., 2020; Hasan & Khalid, 2023). In addition, YouTube provides authentic language exposure and supports learner autonomy, making it a valuable resource for language learning (Benson, 2011; Kristiani & Pradnyadewi, 2021). More recent studies

have further highlighted its potential to support interactive learning, self-regulated learning, and digital literacy in EFL contexts.

Despite these promising findings, several issues remain insufficiently understood. Existing studies have largely examined specific aspects of speaking development or particular learning contexts, resulting in fragmented evidence regarding the overall effectiveness of YouTube for enhancing speaking skills. Moreover, variations in research settings, participant characteristics, instructional designs, and evaluation measures have produced diverse findings, making it difficult to identify consistent pedagogical implications. While the number of empirical studies continues to grow, there remains a lack of comprehensive reviews that systematically synthesize recent evidence, map major research trends, and identify emerging challenges in the use of YouTube for EFL speaking instruction. Therefore, this study aims to systematically review recent research on the use of YouTube as a learning medium for improving EFL students' speaking skills. By synthesizing findings across studies, this review contributes to the literature by providing a comprehensive understanding of YouTube's pedagogical benefits, challenges, and implications, while also identifying directions for future research and instructional practice.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework to ensure a transparent and reproducible review process (Page et al., 2021). The review aimed to synthesize empirical evidence on the use of YouTube to improve EFL students' speaking skills. Literature was retrieved from Google Scholar using keywords such as "YouTube and speaking skills," "YouTube and EFL speaking," and "YouTube in English language learning." The search focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020 and 2025. Studies were included if they investigated the use of YouTube in EFL or ESL contexts and examined speaking skills as a primary learning outcome. Studies were excluded if they were review articles, conference papers, theses, book chapters, duplicate records, or unrelated to speaking instruction. Following the PRISMA stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, articles were screened based on titles, abstracts, and full-text assessment. Six eligible studies were ultimately selected for analysis. The selected articles were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to the benefits, challenges, and pedagogical implications of using YouTube for developing students' speaking skills. This approach enabled a comprehensive synthesis of current evidence and the identification of emerging research trends and gaps in the literature.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this review reveal several recurring patterns regarding the use of YouTube in EFL speaking instruction. First, the reviewed studies consistently reported improvements in multiple dimensions of speaking competence, particularly pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and overall speaking performance. Although the studies were conducted in different educational contexts, ranging from secondary schools to higher education institutions, the positive outcomes were remarkably consistent. This pattern suggests that the effectiveness of YouTube is not limited to a specific educational level but may be attributed to the platform’s ability to provide authentic linguistic input and repeated exposure to spoken English.

A second notable pattern concerns the role of YouTube in supporting affective aspects of language learning. Across the reviewed studies, increased motivation and confidence emerged as the most frequently reported outcomes. While linguistic gains are important, these affective improvements may be equally significant because speaking anxiety is widely recognized as one of the major barriers to oral communication in EFL contexts. The reviewed evidence indicates that YouTube creates a less threatening learning environment where students can observe, imitate, and practice language use independently before participating in classroom communication. This finding supports the argument that technology-enhanced language learning can facilitate both cognitive and psychological dimensions of language development.

**Table 1.** The analysis result

Article	Objective	Result
Muhammad Ilyas, Miranti Eka Putri. (2020). YouTube Channel: An Alternative Social Media to Enhance EFL Students’ Speaking Skill	Speaking is one of the important skills that should be mastered by English Students who are in an English study program. In this case, some students in the English language study program of Universitas Islam Riau lack interest and motivation in learning English, especially in speaking class. Nowadays social media including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and other applications are used to teach English for students. This study aimed to investigate whether YouTube Channels significantly	The study found that YouTube channels significantly improved students’ speaking skills. The statistical result showed sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000 < 0.05, indicating a significant improvement after students were taught using YouTube. The findings also showed that YouTube increased students motivation, confidence, and understanding in speaking activities

affect students' speaking achievement in EFL learning.

<p>Ni Komang ratna Purwanti, Ni Komang Arie Suswatini, Ni Luh Putu Sri Adnyani, Ummi Kultsum. (2022). YouTube Videos for Improving Speaking Skills: The Benefits and Challenges According to Recent Research in EFL Context.</p>	<p>The study aimed to analyze previous research regarding the benefits and challenges of using YouTube videos to improve students' skill in EFL context. . In the context of globalization, social media have become a medium of communication that can enhance students' speaking skill.</p>	<p>The finding revealed that YouTube videos improved pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, intonation, and comprehension. YouTube also promoted learner autonomy and motivation. However, several challenges were identified, such as unstable internet connection, low student readiness, lack of interaction, and unstable video duration. The study concluded that YouTube is an effective tool if supported with appropriate teaching strategies</p>
<p>Ahmad Nur Syafiq, Amalia Rahmawati, Anwari, Tyas Oktaviana. (2021). Increasing Speaking Skill through YouTube Video as English Learning Material during Online Learning in Pandemic Covid-19</p>	<p>The educational system in Indonesia was adjusted because of the spread of Covid 19 virus in 2020. The distance learning was applied for all levels of education. It also happened in English teaching. An online teaching system is the alternative solution to teach English, especially speaking skill. The objectives of the study was to investigate the use of YouTube videos in improving students' speaking skills during online learning in the Covid-19 pandemic</p>	<p>The study showed that YouTube videos improved students' fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and speaking content. The use of YouTube also increased students' motivation and participation during online learning. The researchers concluded that YouTube videos were an effective alternative learning material for speaking classes during pandemic situation</p>
<p>Putu Enik Kristiani, Diah Ayu Manik Pradnyadewi. (2021). The Effectiveness of YouTube as Learning Media in Improving</p>	<p>One of the technologies that can be used to improve students' speaking skill is YouTube. The study aimed to explain the effectiveness of YouTube as learning media in improving learners' speaking skills according to several previous studies.</p>	<p>The findings indicate that YouTube effectively improved students' vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, confidence, grammar, and speaking performance. Students responded positively to the use of YouTube because</p>

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it created an enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere. The study also highlighted that YouTube helped students practice English independently both inside and outside the classroom.

<p>Ferdy Hasan, M. Khalid. (2023). The effect of Watching a Video YouTube Toward English Speaking Mastery on Students Class XI at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Deli Serdang</p>	<p>YouTube is a popular media among all users, especially students, because it offers various videos which can be used to assist students improve their skill especially speaking. The study aimed to determine the effect of watching YouTube videos on students' English Speaking Mastery.</p>	<p>The results showed significant improvement in students' speaking skill after using YouTube cartoon videos. The experimental class mean score increased from 30.4 (pre-test) to 71.6 (post-test), while the control class improved from 26.4 to 54.8. The researchers concluded that YouTube videos effectively enhance students' speaking mastery, especially vocabulary and speaking confidence.</p>
<p>Euis Meinawati, Nazzala Aulia Rahmah, Danang Dwi Harmoko, Nurmala Dewi. (2020). Increasing English Speaking Skills through YouTube</p>	<p>The English teachers still use a monotonous teaching style to teach English. It needs the media to support their technique. The purpose of the study was to find out if the ability to speak English effectively by 10<sup>th</sup> graders at SMA IT Rahmaniya was improved by using YouTube.</p>	<p>The result showed that using YouTube was very effective because it allowed students to speak with more confidence and expression. The students also did not have to worry about the phrases they used when speaking because they were able to see how foreigners speak English properly and correctly.</p>

Most studies consistently demonstrated that YouTube is an effective learning medium for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills. A clear pattern emerging from the reviewed studies is that YouTube contributes not only to linguistic development but also to affective aspects of language learning. Across different educational contexts, students who learned through YouTube showed improvements in various speaking components, including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and overall speaking performance. Hasan and Khalid (2023) found that students using YouTube

videos achieved substantially higher speaking scores than those in the control group, with the experimental group's mean score increasing from 30.4 to 71.6. Similarly, Kristiani and Pradnyadewi (2021) reported improvements in vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and speaking performance. These findings suggest that the benefits of YouTube extend beyond isolated speaking components and contribute to comprehensive speaking development.

A notable pattern across the reviewed studies is the consistent improvement in pronunciation and fluency. These two aspects were reported in almost all studies, including those conducted by Purwanti et al. (2022), Syafiq et al. (2021), and Kristiani and Pradnyadewi (2021). This consistency may be explained by the audiovisual characteristics of YouTube, which provide learners with authentic exposure to spoken English. Unlike conventional textbooks, YouTube enables students to observe pronunciation, intonation, facial expressions, and communicative strategies simultaneously. Such exposure facilitates observational learning and allows learners to imitate authentic language use in meaningful contexts.

Another important pattern concerns the affective benefits of YouTube. While improvements in speaking performance were expected, several studies revealed that increased motivation and confidence emerged as equally significant outcomes. The experimental study by Ilyas and Putri (2020) revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' speaking achievement after the implementation of YouTube channels, with a sig. value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . The study also highlighted increased student motivation and confidence in speaking activities. Likewise, Meinawati et al. (2020) found that YouTube helped students speak more confidently and expressively by providing authentic models of native speakers. The recurrence of these findings across different studies suggests that YouTube may help reduce foreign language anxiety, which is frequently recognized as one of the major barriers to speaking performance in EFL classrooms. Therefore, the effectiveness of YouTube appears to be associated not only with cognitive learning processes but also with its capacity to create a less threatening and more engaging learning environment.

The reviewed studies also indicate that YouTube supports learner autonomy. Syafiq et al. (2021) reported that YouTube videos improved students' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and content during online learning while simultaneously increasing participation and engagement. Similarly, Purwanti et al. (2022) identified learner autonomy as one of the major benefits of YouTube-based learning. This finding suggests that YouTube facilitates self-directed learning by allowing students to access materials repeatedly according to their individual learning needs. Such flexibility is particularly valuable in EFL contexts where opportunities for authentic English exposure outside the classroom are often limited.

Despite the overall positive findings, the reviewed studies reveal an important inconsistency regarding implementation conditions. Although all studies reported beneficial outcomes, only Purwanti et al. (2022) explicitly discussed the challenges associated with YouTube-based learning, including unstable internet connections, limited student readiness, lack of interaction, and issues related to video duration. This suggests that the effectiveness of YouTube cannot be attributed solely to the platform itself but is influenced by contextual and pedagogical factors. In other words, YouTube should not be viewed as a universally effective solution; rather, its success depends on how teachers integrate videos into meaningful learning activities and provide sufficient instructional support.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings imply that teachers should move beyond using YouTube merely as a source of video content. Instead, YouTube should be integrated into structured speaking activities that encourage interaction, reflection, and communicative practice. The reviewed studies indicate that the greatest benefits occur when YouTube videos are combined with guided discussions, speaking tasks, pronunciation practice, and opportunities for learner engagement. Therefore, effective implementation requires careful video selection, alignment with learning objectives, and active teacher facilitation.

Overall, the reviewed studies demonstrate a strong consensus regarding the positive contribution of YouTube to EFL speaking development. The evidence suggests that YouTube enhances speaking skills through three interconnected mechanisms: providing authentic language input, increasing learner motivation and confidence, and promoting autonomous learning. However, the extent of these benefits depends on technological accessibility and the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers. Consequently, future research should explore how different instructional approaches mediate the effectiveness of YouTube in diverse EFL learning contexts.

## **CONCLUSION**

This systematic literature review examined the use of YouTube as a learning medium for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills by synthesizing findings from six selected studies. The review revealed that YouTube consistently improves various speaking components, including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and overall speaking performance, while also positively influencing affective factors such as motivation, confidence, learner autonomy, and classroom engagement. The main contribution of this study lies in providing a synthesized understanding of how YouTube supports both the linguistic and psychological dimensions of speaking development across different EFL learning contexts, highlighting its role as more than merely a supplementary learning resource. Nevertheless, this review has several

limitations, including the relatively small number of studies analyzed, the predominance of Indonesian EFL contexts, and variations in research designs that may limit the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research should examine the effectiveness of YouTube in diverse educational and cultural settings, investigate the impact of different types of YouTube content and instructional strategies on speaking outcomes, and conduct longitudinal or experimental studies to provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of YouTube-based learning on EFL students' speaking development.

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